



**United Nations Secretary-General's Campaign  
UNiTE by 2030 to End Violence against Women**

**ACTION CIRCULAR: June/ July 2021**

**Theme: RESPOND**

**ORANGE DAY**

*The United Nations Secretary-General's Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women has proclaimed the 25th of each month as "Orange Day," a day to raise awareness and take action to end violence against women and girls.*

*As a bright and optimistic colour, orange represents a future free from violence against women and girls, for the UNiTE Campaign.*

*Orange Day calls upon activists, governments, and UN partners to mobilize people and highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls, not only once a year, on 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), but every month.*

**1. BACKGROUND**

In April 2020, the [United Nations Secretary-General urged all governments](#)<sup>1</sup> to make the prevention and redress of violence against women and girls a key part of their national response plans for COVID-19. The appeal was answered in a [statement by 146 Member States and Observers](#) who expressed strong support.

As a follow up to the Secretary-General's call, the Secretary-General's Executive Committee also adopted a "*Political Engagement Strategy*" for the entire UN system to mobilize commitments and action to end gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19. The efforts will aim to:

- ✓ Accelerate concrete policy response to gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19; and
- ✓ Promote zero tolerance of gender-based violence across all spheres of society everywhere.

All Governments are called to make commitments and undertake policy actions around 4 key action areas<sup>2</sup>:

- ❖ **FUND**
- ❖ **PREVENT**
- ❖ **RESPOND**
- ❖ **COLLECT**

<sup>1</sup> [UN Policy Brief "The Impact of COVID-19 on Women"](#) – 9 April 2020

<sup>2</sup> This call to action was developed from the ["UN Inter-Agency Statement on Violence Against Women and Girls in the context of COVID-19"](#).

During **June and July 2021**, the UNiTE Campaign will be focusing its advocacy on the third action area of the “Political Engagement Strategy”, **RESPOND**:

- **Undertake explicit measures so that services for survivors of GBV are maintained as essential during COVID-19 lockdowns, including ensuring a continuum of adequate criminal justice response.**
- **Ensure minimum essential services are maintained and adopted where they are non-existent.**<sup>3</sup>

A woman’s right to live free from violence is upheld by international agreements such as [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) (1995), the [Vienna Declaration on Gender-Based Violence](#) (1993), [the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women](#) (1993) and [the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#), adopted in 1979.

According to the “[Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018](#)” report launched on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 (by WHO, in close collaboration with UN Women, on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women Estimation and Data), an estimated 736 million women - almost 1 in 3 - have been subjected to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence or both at least once in their life (30% of women aged 15 and older).

Although at least 158 countries have legislation specifically addressing domestic violence,<sup>4</sup> challenges remain in enforcing these laws limiting women and girls’ access to safety and justice. Less than 40 per cent of women seek help of any sort after experiencing violence and less than 10 per cent go to the police.<sup>5</sup> Several factors contribute to underreporting, including the stigma associated with VAW/G, fear of repercussions, the unavailability or prohibitive cost of services and a lack of knowledge about how and where to access support.<sup>6</sup>

For this reason, women and girls’ access to essential, specialist, safe and adequate multisectoral services are essential for their safety, protection and recovery, especially for those who already suffer multiple forms of discrimination.

## 2. MAIN PRINCIPLES OF UNiTE CAMPAIGN ADVOCACY

- **Honour and acknowledge women’s movements** and their leadership in preventing and ending violence against women and girls.
- **‘Leave No One Behind’**: Apply a human rights-based approach and focus attention on the most underserved and disadvantaged groups of women and girls in efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls.
- **Survivor-centred**: Take a respectful and ‘do no harm’ approach to the telling and retelling of survivor stories, only with their informed consent and under conditions in which they have agreed. This and the empowerment principles are vital for the engagement of survivor advocates/activists on their own terms. All UNiTE partners must ensure that survivor advocates’ rights, safety, dignity and confidentiality are prioritized and upheld.
- **Multi-sectoral**: Everyone in society has an important role to play in ending violence against women and girls and we all must work together across sectors to address the various aspects of violence against women and girls.
- **Transformative**: Fostering critical examination of gender roles, regimes and practices, while seeking to create or strengthen equitable gender norms and dynamics for fundamental, lasting changes for women and girls.
- **Elevate the voices of young feminists**: While the world’s reviewing progress made over the past 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, it is time to create platforms to elevate voices of the next generation feminists who are shaping their future now.
- The **colour orange continues to be a key tool unifying all activities** to bring global attention to the initiative.

<sup>3</sup> [Essential Services Package for women and Girls Subject to Violence](#) - UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP and UNODC

<sup>4</sup> [World Bank Women, Business and Law database](#)

<sup>5</sup> [UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, The World’s Women 2015: Trends and Statistics](#)

<sup>6</sup> [UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#)

### 3. RELEVANT UN FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

- **UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund)**

The UN Trust Fund's former Strategic Plan, for the period 2015–2020 set out three priority areas: improving access for women and girls to essential, safe, and adequate multisectoral services; furthering the implementation of legislation, policies, national action plans and accountability systems; and promoting the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Under the pillar of work on **improving access to multisectoral services**, the Trust Fund supported projects to improve the access of women and girls to **specialized support services**, including **psychological counselling, medical services, and shelters**, as well as **access to justice through the provision of legal aid**. Between 2016 and 2020, at least 1.6 million women and girls were directly served by UN Trust Fund grantees. The projects provided life-saving services and empowered women and girls directly, including changing lives of a minimum 150,000 survivors of violence. In total, the UN Trust Fund grantees reached 54.6 million direct and indirect beneficiaries between 2016 and 2020, aiming to create safe and thriving environments for women and girls.

[UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#), sets out priorities based on lessons learned during the previous Strategic Plan period and analysis of the current context and emerging issues. Based on this analysis and the issues that are identified and validated by key stakeholders through a consultation process, **“improved access for women and girls to essential, specialist, safe and adequate multisectoral services”** will continue to be one of the three broad programmatic thematic areas that the initiatives will be funded under.

#### **COVID-19 Response**

The work of the UN Trust Fund and its grantees in 2020 was marked by the impact of the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the adverse consequences generated by measures undertaken to curb its spread. COVID-19 exposed the lack of preparedness of societies **to respond to and deal with the existing, ongoing, and persistent pandemic of violence against women and girls** and prevalence rates that were already alarmingly high before COVID-19.

During its twenty-fourth funding cycle, which opened with a call for proposals in September 2020, the UN Trust Fund sought applications from civil society organizations working on the front lines of the **COVID-19 response and recovery to address and respond to the rise in violence against women and girls**. In all, 1,498 applications were received from Civil Society Organizations and Women's Right Organizations in over 70 countries globally, requesting a total of \$758,786,215. Applications from women's rights, women-led and small women's organizations were prioritized, in recognition of the fact that they are at the forefront of reaching at-risk women and girls and survivors and leaving no one behind.<sup>7</sup> You can read the summaries of the new cohort of grantees [here](#).

**Ensuring access to essential and adequate services** was a cornerstone of the COVID-19 response plans of many grantees. Where services for survivors could not be delivered face-to-face, grantees quickly moved services to phones or online. For example, civil society organizations in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya,**

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<sup>7</sup> [Report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women](#) – 10 December 2020.

**Rwanda and Zimbabwe** set up new helplines or expanded the reach of existing helplines to respond to increased caseloads. Grantees providing legal aid and psychosocial services moved online to ensure that there was no break in service and to maintain trust and communication with survivors. For example, **Rozaan in Pakistan** moved psychological counselling online and **Women's Forum-Tetovo in North Macedonia** offered online legal counselling. In **Albania**, the **Shelter for Abused Women and Girls** and its partner, the Streha Centre for Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Women Survivors of Domestic Violence, brought together two well-established shelters to provide multisectoral services for survivors of violence in four remote areas of the country.<sup>8</sup> UN Trust Fund's receptiveness, flexibility, and strong relationship with grantees including a thorough understanding of their and their beneficiaries' changing needs helped to promptly adapt and respond to the rapidly changing circumstances.

### ***Cluster Evaluation of three UN Trust Fund-supported projects in North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia***<sup>9</sup>

Three projects dedicated to the elimination of violence against women (EVAW): 'Improving Access to Life With No Violence for Women Survivors in Central and Northern Montenegro' implemented by **SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic (SOS Niksic)**, 'Empowering Survivors of Domestic Violence in the Tetovo Region' implemented by **Women's Forum Tetovo (WFT)** and 'Actively and Publicly Combating Discrimination - Gender Based Violence' implemented by the **Center for Girls (CfG)** were implemented between 1 March 2017 and 29 February 2020.

One of the main findings of the independent evaluation of these three small grant projects was that these projects enhanced protection services and improved systems for **responding to violence against women and girls** through multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms, improved capacity of professionals and better service standards.<sup>10</sup>

*These findings show that despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of UN Trust Fund grantees is crucial to continue to shape responses that meet the needs of survivors and those at risk of violence during the pandemic and after.*

- **Action Coalition on Gender-based Violence**

The [Generation Equality Action Coalitions](#) are mobilizing governments, women's, feminist and youth-led organizations, international organizations, and the private sector to: catalyze collective action; spark global and local conversations among generations; drive increased public and private investment; and deliver concrete progress on gender equality across generations for girls and women.

Six specific themes are being addressed by the Action Coalitions: i) Gender-Based Violence; ii) Economic Justice and Rights; iii) Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); iv) Feminist action for climate justice; v) Technology and innovation for Gender Equality; vi) Feminist movements and leadership.

[Action Coalition leaders](#) have come together to define a targeted set of actions that are concrete, game-changing, measurable and require multi-stakeholder collaboration. The actions have been informed by a

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<sup>8</sup> [Report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women](#) – 10 December 2020.

<sup>9</sup> [UN Trust Fund Learning Hub – Evaluations Library](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Cluster Evaluation of three UN Trust Fund-supported projects in North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia implemented during 2017 – 2020](#) - Publication year: 2020.

rigorous analysis of threats and challenges to women's and girls' human rights, as well as evidence about what strategies and tactics are effective in securing change. Actions are a central part of a [Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality](#) designed by the Action Coalitions leaders and that articulates an ambitious agenda that will accelerate progress towards gender equality in this UN Decade of Action in the six Action Coalitions themes.

- The Action Coalition on Gender-Based violence (GBV) aims to deliver transformational progress towards the elimination and prevention of gender-based violence through four [concrete actions](#):

**1** **More states and regional actors ratify international and regional conventions and public and private sector institutions strengthen, implement and finance evidence-driven laws, policies and action plans to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity.** *In so doing, 550 million more women and girls will live in countries with laws and policies prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls by 2026.*

**2** **Scale up implementation and financing of evidence-driven prevention strategies by public and private sector institutions and women's rights organizations to drive down prevalence of gender-based violence against women, adolescent girls and young women in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings.** *In so doing, increase by 50% the number of countries that include one or more evidence-driven prevention strategies on gender-based violence against women and girls in national policies by 2026.*

**3** **Scale up implementation and financing of coordinated survivor-centered, comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable services for survivors of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings.** *In so doing, more women and girls will live in countries with multi-sectoral action plans on GBV which include provision of police, justice, health and social sector services by 2026.*

**4** **Enhance support and increase accountability and quality, flexible funding from states, private sector, foundations, and other donors to autonomous girl-led & women's rights organizations working to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity.** *In so doing, progressively improve and increase international funding by 50% to Women's rights organizations, activists and movements including those working to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity by 2026*

These actions align squarely with the four pillars and key areas of policy actions in SG's "Political Engagement Strategy on GBV and COVID-19". The coalition brings together [seventeen leaders](#) (constituting multiple, diverse stakeholders, which includes UN Women and WHO as co leads from the UN system) to realize the vision of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and SDG targets 5.2 and 5.3; by [making and implementing concrete new comprehensive commitments](#) to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity through a survivor-centered approach that is backed by targeted and adequate financial and political resources.

Delivering on the promise of making gender equality a lived reality for all women and girls, the seventeen GBV Action Coalition leaders together with [several commitment makers](#) across the globe will commit to the effective implementation of the defined actions to deliver transformational change to prevent and address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity.

The next phase of the Generation Equality Forum journey focuses on driving concrete commitments for gender equality which will be showcased in Paris this June (30 June – 02 July 2021). More information on the "Action Coalitions" and how to become an "Action Coalition Commitment Maker" can be reached [here](#).

- **Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund**

- The **Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)** is a global partnership mobilizing critical financing for local women-led and women’s rights organizations to respond to crises and emergencies, prevent conflict and sexual and gender-based violence, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities in fragile settings around the world. Having established itself as a highly relevant and credible multi-partner trust fund, WPHF is rapidly channeling urgently needed support to local civil society organizations (CSOs) working on women, peace and security and humanitarian action worldwide.
- Since its launch in 2016, WPHF has invested over **36 Million USD** through three funding windows to support over **200 projects** implemented by **345 local women’s organizations** in **25 countries** around the world: **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, Colombia, D.R.C., Haiti, Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan, Sudan, the Pacific (Fiji, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu), Uganda and Yemen.**
- The COVID-19 global pandemic has presented grave new threats to the critical work and very existence of women civil society organizations working on the front lines of crises, making the mandate of WPHF to mobilize support and advocate for their efforts to respond to crises and build peace more urgent than ever before. Through its **COVID-19 Emergency Response Window** launched in April 2020, WPHF has provided a flexible combination of programmatic and institutional financing for over **42 projects** implemented by **62 local organizations** in **18 countries** across the globe.

#### ***Highlights of WPHF Partner Response Worldwide***

- In **Bangladesh**, WPHF is supporting **Light House** - a community-based women’s rights organization active in Cox’s Bazar - to respond to the gendered impacts of the global pandemic. In partnership with the Program for Helpless and Lagged Societies (PHALs) and Loving Care for Oppressed Societies (LoCos), Light House is being supported through WPHF’s COVID-19 Emergency Response window to implement a project that is providing survivors of Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) with a safe space and ensuring their access to SRHR services and psychosocial support in the context of COVID-19. With this support, Light House and its partners have built the capacities of 9 local women’s civil society organizations on techniques to report cases of SGBV and have engaged men and boys in awareness-raising sessions on SGBV and trafficking, while conducting group dialogues on the positive roles of men in addressing domestic violence and engaging in daily household activities. In response to the dire economic repercussion of the pandemic on women in Cox’s Bazar, Lighthouse established five women’s “soft skills” training centers, empowering women to start their own businesses and enhance their economic independence. So far nearly 22,000 women - including Rohingya women refugees, survivors of SGBV, women sex workers, and LGBTQI women - have directly benefited from the project.



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- In the D.R.C., WPHF is supporting **Together for the Promotion of the Family (EPF)** on a project that promotes women’s sexual and reproductive rights, provides holistic assistance to women’s survivors of sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), and assures women’s safety, physical and mental health. With support provided through the WPHF Regular Funding Cycle, EPF has trained and sensitized 15 local women’s organizations to respond to SGBV and the urgent need to jointly advocate for the involvement of local authorities in the promotion of SRHR. EPF established three local women’s committees in Mboko, Baraka and Fizi Center to raise awareness of and monitor violence against women

and girls, while providing them with psychosocial support, medical referrals, economic opportunities and legal guidance. These committees have thus far supported 43 survivors of SGBV, who were enabled to resume their economic activities – 25 of which have now secured access to land and can work on their own fields with the assistance of small credits from EPF.

- **United Nations-European Union Spotlight Initiative**

The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. As the largest global investment to eliminate violence against women and girls, the Initiative is incorporating a focus on COVID-19 into its programming<sup>11</sup>.

Through a partnership that fosters collaborative, innovative and participatory approaches, over the past two years, the Spotlight Initiative has focused on policy and law reform; the strengthening of institutions; prevention through transformative change of social norms, attitudes and behaviours; access to high-quality, comprehensive and multisectoral services; the strengthening of data collection; and support for women’s rights organizations.

Several programmes under the Spotlight Initiative include a **response to COVID-19**. At the start of the pandemic, United Nations teams immediately repurposed \$21 million, developing COVID-19 plans in all country programmes and ensuring that prevention and **response** efforts can continue, including by supporting online services, innovative access methods and the use of technology.

Through the Spotlight Initiative, UN Women has supported efforts to respond to the increase in VAWG as a result of the pandemic. Some examples include:

- a) Supporting youth innovators against GBV in **Zimbabwe** who used WhatsApp as a space for those experiencing violence, to receive support and help,
- b) Developing a COVID-19 protocol in **Timor Leste** that was adopted for shelters during lockdown in partnership with Ministry for Women,
- c) Providing women and children with accommodation, food, psychosocial services and dignity kits [through a partnership with hotel group Grupo Posadas](#) in **Mexico**.

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<sup>11</sup> [The United Nations Secretary General’s Report on “Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls”](#) – 30 July 2020

- **UN Joint Programmes and Initiatives**

Through the [UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence](#), which is co-managed by UN Women and UNFPA (in partnership with UNODC, WHO, and UNDP), agencies are working to improve the quality of, and access to, comprehensive essential services for survivors of violence. With support from various government partners, UN agencies are providing technical guidance on how to develop and implement global norms on quality multi-sectoral services and responses. “Essential services package for women and girls subject to violence” can be reached [here](#).

- **OHCHR**

During the period covered, OHCHR continues to pursue its engagements with the aim to contribute to **responding** to gender – based violence in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

OHCHR, ILO and several other partners jointly conducted a [global survey on the impacts of COVID-19 on young people](#). This survey found that the impacts of the pandemic on young people, particularly among young women, younger youth and youth in lower income countries, are systematic, deep, and disproportionate. The results of this survey are meant to guide the efforts to place young women and people’s voices at the centre of the recovery from COVID-19 impacts.

### ***Highlights from the field***

- **Cameroon, Central African Republic, Niger, and Tunisia**

OHCHR developed quantitative survey results on the impact of COVID-19 on women. The quantitative surveys enable the collection of disaggregated data on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, with a particular focus on women. Collaboration involves UNICEF, UN Women and national authorities (in particular the National Statistical Offices and Ministries in eight countries in the region) of the following countries **Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Togo and the Central African Republic**.

- **Ukraine**

OHCHR Ukraine (HRMMU) assessed the impact the global COVID-19 and the response by authorities on the rights of individuals, particularly those marginalized and exposed to vulnerabilities, when preparing a thematic report on the impact of the pandemic on the human rights in Ukraine. As a result, HRMMU found that women and healthcare workers (83% women) are suffering the most from the pandemic. The pandemic has further exacerbated inequalities and discrimination and increased risks for women subjected to domestic violence. Svitlana, a nurse who was interviewed in Toretsk city in Eastern Ukraine, said that she faces both the pandemic and the ongoing-armed conflict. She has been treating people with COVID-19 since the pandemic began in spring 2020. While the pandemic created new vulnerabilities, affecting the lives of thousands of healthcare workers involved in COVID-19 response, the vast majority of whom are women, it also motivated her to take actions to build back better.

- **Colombia**

Working jointly with UN Women, the OHCHR Colombia implemented a model for access to justice of youth and women victims of sexual violence and enforced disappearances during the armed conflict. The "protective environments" methodology was designed and implemented in Vista Hermosa (Meta). Thanks to this initiative,

bridges between public institutions and women's organizations have been strengthened. Women's organizations and government officials received capacity building on international human rights standards and discussed opportunities for the advancement of women's rights in the municipality. These activities have encouraged women to use their voices to participate actively in the implementation of this project and in other available platforms such as in the Territorial Development Plans. Achievements include: 14 local authorities' knowledge strengthened, 28 specific commitments to create protective environments expressed, 47 women empowered as community leaders.

- **Regional Office for the Pacific**

On 27 April, OHCHR Regional Office for the Pacific and ILO made a joint presentation to the Fiji Police on Fiji's international obligations to ensure freedom of association by highlighting core international human rights law obligations and in particular the recommendations of the ILO Conference Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) and the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR). The efforts aim to help developing Standard Operating procedures and training for Fiji Police Force on Freedom of Association.

- **UNDP**

***Highlights from the field***

- **UNDP Argentina:** In the Province of Jujuy, the Public Ministry of Accusation has been equipped for the start-up of an office for the [Victim Assistance Center and for a Unit Mobile](#), after receiving a donation of a bus from the Argentinian company Balut Hnos. SRL. With the support of the **UNDP Argentina**, the bus is going to be adapted to serve as a mobile office, clinic, and Geospatial camera, which will travel the north zone of the province. The action is mainly devoted to respond to gender-based violence focused on girls and boys in the province (Quebrada and Puna).
- Within the framework of the Spotlight Initiative, **UNDP Honduras** responded to violence against women and girls by supporting the development of a Diploma on "Local Agendas for the elimination of violence against women and girls and femicide". Course has been organized jointly by the Unión Iberoamericana de Municipios (UIM) and the Asociación Municipalista de Honduras (AMHON). The online [Diploma was launched on April 26<sup>th</sup>](#) with a total of 75 students from local entities of five prioritized municipalities: Choloma, Intibuca, La Ceiba, San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa. Under an intersectional and territory approach, the Diploma's goal is to respond to capacity-building needs of officials and civil servants, including CSO members, who must respond to violence against women and girls at local level.
- **UNDP Moldova:** A guide for the involvement of local public authorities in the prevention of gender-based violence was developed by the project team "Addressing violence against women in the Republic of Moldova". The material, available in Romanian, Russian and English, describes the creation of local intervention mechanisms, but also ways to access the resources needed for this purpose. Thus, the guide "5 steps to address domestic violence" comes to the aid of local authorities, who want to develop a Local Action Plan for preventing and combating domestic violence, in accordance with the National Strategy for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for 2018-2023.
- **UNDP Kyrgyzstan:** Nationwide legal awareness campaign to enhance access to justice and essential services for women and girls SGBV survivors will be held jointly with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of

Healthcare and Social Development from June 1<sup>st</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The campaign envisages several awareness raising initiatives, including “Bus of Solidarity” (BoS), a mobile legal services program run by the ministry that will bring free legal aid lawyers to under-served communities across the country. The BoS services have been recently adapted to VAWG context by prioritizing the confidentiality and security of survivors, as well as through a series of gender-transformative experiential learning sessions for BoS experts.

- **UNDP Ukraine:** As part of a joint UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP), UNDP and UNFPA set up [shelters and day centers for survivors](#) of gender-based violence (GBV) in the conflict-affected areas of Ukraine. UN Women also provides training on GBV prevention for judges, police officers, patrol police officers, state emergency service staff, local authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, pilots the safe cities programme in selected communities, and the programme also support the creation of ‘green rooms’ for ensuring child-friendly justice. In addition, UNDP has developed a mobile app 'Your Right' (available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#) devices) to provide information to conflict-affected people, including IDPs and GBV survivors.
- **Yemen:** In response to an increase in VAW cases due to COVID-19 lockdowns, **UNDP Yemen** launched a mobile application which maps out protection and aid services for GBV survivors across Yemen to provide them with guidance. The application was piloted in early 2020 in Aden and Lahj governorates and was rolled out across the country in December 2020. The application can be refined by geographical area and includes services in several categories including livelihoods, education, psycho-social support, legal services, food, and healthcare. The database of the services listed in the application are updated by National and International actors on a quarterly basis.
- In order to improve access to justice to women who suffered violence during lock-down, **UNDP Tunisia** supported coordination between the designated emergency “hotline” and specialized police units responding to alerts of domestic violence and provided the specialized units with adequate protection gear and training. Local security committees also raised awareness on gender-based violence in communities. Civil society initiatives supported by UNDP included awareness-raising campaigns on domestic and gender-based violence during the lock-down, legal advice and the provision of financial aid and protective gear to women subjected to violence.
- Under the umbrella of the Spotlight Initiative, **UNDP Uganda** supported the development of the National Strategy on GBV COVID-19 response plan by the Ministry of Gender, and a training manual for mainstreaming GBV in plans and budgets.
- **UNDP Niger:** 3,303 people were reached through sensitization/information dissemination activities on the challenges of persistent violence against women and girls, and the establishment of 22 Legal Clinics to create access to services.
- **UNFPA**

#### **UNFPA supported the integration of the Essential Service Package (ESP) into Spotlight:**

The ESP guidelines have been used as the standard package for GBV response. They have also been institutionalized as the response for GBV survivors in countries where this was not already the case (e.g.: **Malawi, El Salvador**). In **Tajikistan**, the ESP was adapted and made easily accessible through a GBV pocket guide to improve the quality-of-service delivery and strengthen a referral system and multi-sectoral cooperation. In **Mexico**, UNFPA

coordinated a local adaptation of the ESP through a participatory diagnostic, including local services providers, users and CSOs. In **Belize**, communities and service providers across the country were engaged in the development of an essential services mapping report in the areas of health, safety, and psychosocial support.

**UNFPA supported the mapping of GBV service providers and development of referral pathways and SOPs:**

In **Malawi, Uganda and Jamaica** to increase access to quality essential services and to facilitate a coordinated approach to the provision of care for GBV survivors, a mapping of referral pathways was completed and a directory of GBV services was established, followed by community outreach campaigns. The pathways took into account the Leave No One Behind principle, ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable populations.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, a participatory mapping survey of the essential services from the survivors` perspective based on the global methodology and approach was conducted.

Following the mapping of services, In **Niger, Nigeria and Malawi, Standard Operating Procedures for GBV prevention and response** were elaborated, specifying the roles and responsibilities of each actor in the areas of health/psychosocial, justice and security. A coordination structure as well as clear referrals and counter-referral mechanisms were also put in place.

**UNFPA equipped one stop centers and shelters:**

In **Nigeria, Niger, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Jamaica** one stop centers were established/renovated and equipped to bring them into compliance with security and confidentiality standards. Their focal points were trained on quality services and referral for GBV survivors, based on the Essential Service Package.

The establishment of a Child Advocacy Centre offering a one stop service model in **Guyana** resulted in increased access to quality essential services to boy and girl survivors and their families, including groups facing multiple and intersecting forms or discrimination. Longer-term recovery services were also provided.

In **Timor-Leste, The Rapid Healthcare Workers GBV Response** training is now embedded into the COVID-19 and Safe Delivery training.

**UNFPA contributed to strengthening coordination mechanisms:**

In **Tajikistan**, UNFPA supported the coordination of the Gender Theme Group (GTG) to ensure a consolidated response to COVID-19.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, technical support was provided to the government to develop a unified algorithm to GBV cases in the context of COVID-19.

In **Guyana**, UNFPA supported the establishment of local networks among authorities and communities to prevent and respond to VAWG in the COVID-19 context. Those networks supported GBV safe identification (via services delivery points in communities) and the linkage of individuals to supportive services, in addition to the provision of GBV psychosocial support.

- **UNHCR**

- UNHCR partners in **Jordan** strengthened access to the helpline and remote case management during the COVID-19 crisis. A project enabling the reception of text, audio messages and calls, made it easier for out-of-camp women to seek help for GBV services through pharmacies.
- As part of **India's** GBV/Child protection response, 173 female refugee volunteers have been provided with mobile phones to spread awareness on GBV, child protection and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), to act as psychosocial first aid service providers and to facilitate access to services and complaint mechanisms.
- In **Kenya**, UNHCR supported a refugee led organization to develop communication materials on GBV with the support of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), undertake mass printing and production in Braille of 450 posters and produce six animations videos (three in English and three in Kiswahili) on GBV and support services available.
- In **Iraq**, UNHCR continues delivering protection services, including remote and in-person case management for survivors of GBV and the provision of emergency protection cash assistance.
- In **Malawi**, 14 refugee-led community-based organizations (CBOs) serve as focal points within the community for referral to GBV services.
- In **Zambia**, hygiene promoters and community health workers were trained on GBV safe disclosure and referrals as well as psychological first aid; in addition, information about GBV response services was posted at Health and WASH facilities.
- In **Mexico**, an information campaign on GBV risks has been developed and disseminated through WhatsApp, online platforms, and printed materials.
- In **South Africa**, refugees and asylum seekers who contact the UNHCR hotline are being referred to the Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC) which operates under the Department of Social Development and runs a national, 24hr/7days-a-week call centre facility. The facility employs social workers who are responsible for call-taking and call referrals and has represented an additional resource for women refugees and asylum seekers during the lockdown months in South Africa.

- **UNODC**

About [1 in every 3 women worldwide](#) have experienced sexual and other form of violence, and women are more likely than men to being killed by [intimate partners or family members](#). Crimes involving violence against women are among the most under-reported and the least likely to end in conviction. Survivors often face significant obstacles due to gaps in criminal law and procedure, gender stereotypes, victim blaming and inadequate responses of criminal justice institutions and professionals, leading to secondary victimization. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has further reduced access to essential police and justice services for women, despite reports of increased levels of gender-based violence, especially in the home.

UNODC offers targeted technical assistance and advisory [services to enhance criminal justice responses to violence against women](#), including through its Global Programme on Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses to Violence against Women and in collaboration with its partners under the UN-EU

Spotlight Initiative and the Joint UN Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls subject to Violence. Since 2010, [UNODC has supported over 40 countries to promote survivor safety and offender accountability](#), in line with [international standards and norms](#), in particular the [updated Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice](#).

- In **Mexico**, UNODC is strengthening responses to “femicide” under a [Programme to enhance safety of groups in situations of vulnerability](#), training almost 13,000 police officers and emergency call operators to improve responses and due diligence in cases of violence against women and gender-related killing.
- In the **State of Palestine**, UNODC is helping to increase the likelihood of identifying perpetrators of gender-based violence and holding them accountable, by supporting forensic science and other essential services under the [HAYA Programme](#).
- In **Namibia**, UNODC is enhancing [police responses to gender-based violence](#) and [court support services for survivors](#), under a joint regional programme with the Southern African Development Community.
- In **West Africa**, UNODC and UN Women are [improving access to legal aid for women](#) under a joint project funded by the UN Development Account.

### **Global tools**

(For tools developed at field level, see this [repository](#)).

- The Impact of COVID-19 on Criminal Justice System Responses Gender-based based Violence Against Women: A Global Review of Emerging Evidence [English](#) **NEW!**
- Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses to Violence against Women [English](#)
- RESPECT - Preventing violence against women: A framework for policymakers [English](#)
- Handbook on Effective Police Responses to Violence against Women [English, Spanish, French](#)
- Training Curriculum on Effective Police Responses to Violence against Women [English, Spanish, French](#)
- Handbook on Effective Prosecution Responses to Violence against Women and Girls [English](#)
- Resource Book for Trainers on Effective Prosecution Responses to Violence against Women and Girls [English, Ukrainian](#)
- Handbook for the Judiciary on Effective Criminal Justice Responses to Gender-based Violence against Women and Girls [English](#)
- Toolkit on Strengthening the Medico-Legal Response to Sexual Violence [English](#)
- Gender-Related killing of Women and Girls Brochure [English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian](#)
- [Essential services package for women and girls subject to violence](#)
- The Trial of Rape: Understanding the criminal justice system response to sexual violence in Thailand and Viet Nam [English, Thai, Vietnamese](#)
- A Practitioner's Toolkit on Women's Access to Justice Programming [English, Spanish](#)

### **Learn more:**

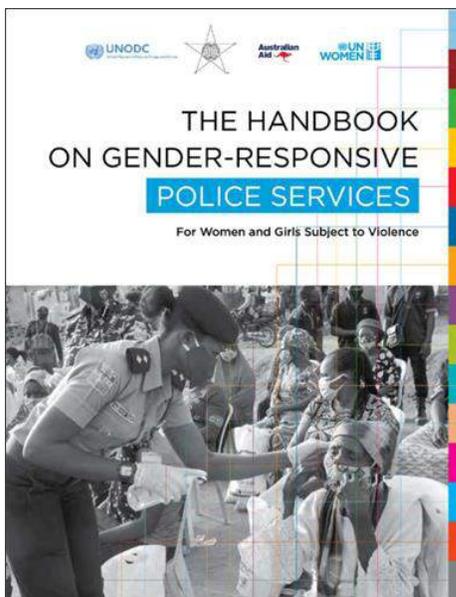
- Women face significant barriers in accessing justice, whether they are victims, witnesses, alleged offenders or prisoners. Learn more about UNODC’s broader work on [gender in the criminal justice system](#).
- While girls face similar levels and forms of gender-based violence, they should never be treated as women. Learn more about UNODC’s work to [end violence against children](#), including gender-based violence against girls.

- **UN WOMEN**

- UN Women is working with women on the front lines who are **responding** to the shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls every day. “What Happened after COVID-19 hit” series brings you some of their stories, and how UN Women programmes are backing solutions that leave no one behind. You can read more details of how six local women’s organizations supported by **UN Women and the EU** ensured access to justice for survivors of domestic violence in **Albania** [here](#) and more stories from **Bolivia, Ghana, Lebanon, Malawi, Nepal, Thailand, Uganda** [here](#).
- For more than 10 years, UN Women’s global initiative, [Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces](#), has worked to prevent and **respond to sexual harassment against women and girls in public spaces**, and since 2017 UN Women has also been a key member of the EUR 500 million [Spotlight Initiative](#) that deploys targeted, large-scale investments in ending violence in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific.
- In addition, [UN Women is advocating that shelters and crisis centers remain open and deemed essential during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), and that scaled-back or remote services are offered, while adhering to necessary safety precautions. For more details, please check “[Brief: COVID-19 and essential services provision for survivors of violence against women and girls](#)”. The document was developed under the UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services and provides recommendations for governments, civil society, and international organizations that are seeking to improve the quality of and access to coordinated health, police and justice, and social services for all women and girls, especially those who face multiple forms of discrimination and are at increased risk of experiencing violence, during the pandemic.
- For more information on COVID-19 response/ The Shadow Pandemic Campaign and UN Women’s resources, please visit relevant web page [here](#).

***Highlights from the field***

**Arab States Region**



**New handbook for a more effective police response to women survivors of violence launched in the Arab States**

**UN Women** Regional Office for the Arab States and **UNODC** Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa with support from the Government of Japan, briefed law enforcement representatives from the region on a [new Police Handbook](#) that provides guidance and practical knowledge for police middle managers to protect the rights of women survivors of violence when accessing police services around the world. [Read more](#).

Through the UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services, UN Women is working to improve the quality of, and access to, comprehensive essential services for survivors of violence. With support from various government partners, we are providing technical guidance on how to develop and implement global norms on quality multi-sectoral services and responses.



and civil society partners, including organizations of persons with disabilities across East and Southern in responding to the needs of women and girls with disabilities.

### **Europe and Central Asia Region**



PHOTO CREDIT: FOUNDATION OF SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S WORK (KEDV)

In **Turkey**, UN Women, under Refugee Response Programme, cooperated with 20 community women leaders from refugee and host communities who acted as agents in building resilient communities and response to COVID-19. Community women leaders played an active role as information focal point, conducted needs assessments, and carried out referrals to service providers during COVID-19 pandemic by reaching out 1,815 women and girls. With support from urban planning experts, community women leaders also identified communal risks and resources and shared their findings and suggestions with relevant governmental institutions and called for transforming their communities to a safer and more

resilient neighborhood. This community-based solidarity and leadership programme in Gaziantep, Turkey has been recognized as an innovative model by public agencies for fostering women's leadership at the community level as well as social cohesion in a protracted crisis response. UN Women started a new project in April 2021, which will replicate and expand the community-based solidary and women's leadership model in Gaziantep and in Istanbul.

## **4. SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES: TAKE ACTION THIS ORANGE DAY!**

All UNiTE Campaign partners, including UN agencies, civil society, private sector, sports associations, youth groups, universities, schools etc. are encouraged to:

- **Orange** their workplace, schools, communities and online spaces to raise awareness about UNiTE Campaign and its relevant theme on Orange Days: 25 June and 25 July.<sup>12</sup>
- **Call for political commitment and leadership** for the design, implementation and review of a sustainable, effective, quality response to violence against women and girls by health, social services, police and justice sectors.
- **Connect with survivor advocates, civil society and activist groups** in awareness raising about the support networks and services for those who have experienced gender-based violence.
- **Call for efforts by policymakers** and others for making flexible funding available for support services operated by State and especially civil society and women's rights organizations, as the latter groups more often support those most economically affected by crisis like COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Host discussion events** and advocate for allocations of resources to programmes and capacity-building of health, education, law enforcement, and social services.
- **Organize social media campaigns** and advocate for investing in civil society and women's right organizations.
- **Connect with private sector** for fund-raising events for organizations that support survivors of violence and those who work towards ending violence against women; and use their resources and platforms to support the amplification of voices of survivors.

<sup>12</sup> UN Women - [Orange the World Partners Kit](#)

- **Promote and showcase youth-led initiatives** in schools, universities and campuses to end violence women and girls. Education institutions to share information on the services their schools/campus provides in supporting survivors of violence and their families.
- **Donate** to their local shelter and/or women’s rights organization working to prevent and end violence against women and girls in their community.

## 5. SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

To download visuals and assets, click on the image to go to the high-resolution version.

### Facebook & LinkedIn

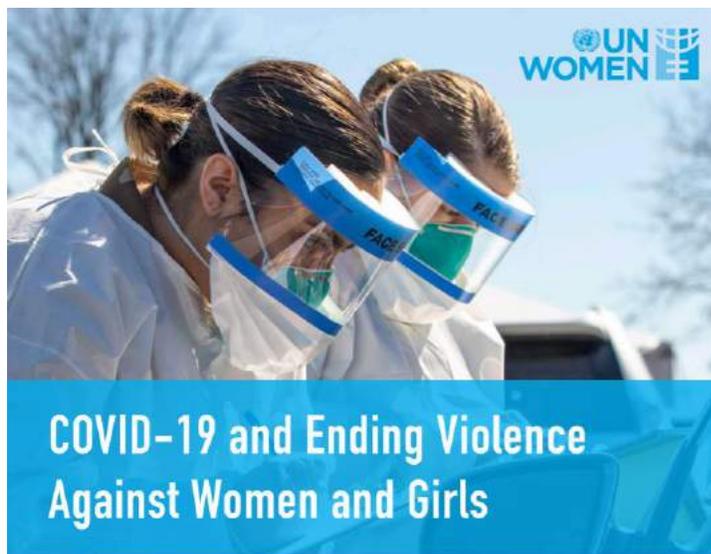


Photo: U.S. Army National Guard/  
Sgt. Amour's Cole

- Since the outbreak of #COVID19, violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, has intensified. The @unwomen COVID-19 Brief series make recommendations for all partners, including governments, civil society, and international organizations, on how to prevent and **respond to violence against women and girls** at the onset, during, and after the public health crisis, and include examples of actions already taken. <https://bit.ly/3unA9o2>  
#ViolenceAgainstWomen #OrangeDay #EVAW  
LinkedIn: @unwomen  
Facebook: @unwomen @SayNO.UNiTE

- Despite extensive commitments by women’s organizations, governments and other partners, many women and girls subjected to various forms of violence still lack access to #essentialservices. This lack of access to such services by women and girls means that they continue to suffer from the physical and mental impacts of violence.

Through the “**UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence**”, which is co-managed by UN Women and UNFPA (in partnership with UNODC, WHO, and UNDP), agencies are working to improve the quality of, and access to, comprehensive essential services for survivors of violence. With support from various government partners, UN agencies are providing technical guidance on how to develop and implement global norms on quality multi-sectoral services and responses. “**Essential services package for women and girls subject to violence**” can be reached here: <https://bit.ly/3yFWHnm> #ViolenceAgainstWomen #OrangeDay #EVAW

LinkedIn: @unwomen @unfpa @unodc @who @undp

Facebook: @unwomen @UNFPA @unodc @WHO @UNDP @SayNO.UNiTE



UN WOMEN

## Twitter

- Watch Sarah's story to learn why improving #essentialservices for survivors of #ViolenceAgainstWomen and girls is important. Spread the word. Take action. #OrangeDay #EVAW [https://youtu.be/WUGu-K\\_r4IQ](https://youtu.be/WUGu-K_r4IQ)
- Through the "UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence," @UN\_Women @UNFPA @WHO @UNDP @UNODC are working to improve the quality of, and access to, comprehensive essential services for survivors of violence. <https://bit.ly/3yFWHnm>



JUSTICE FOR  
SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

UN WOMEN

- Check out our infographic on #COVID19 and Essential Services for Women and Girls Survivors of Violence here: <https://bit.ly/3fJJOZ2U> @UN\_Women @UNFPA @WHO @UNDP @UNODC #ViolenceAgainstWomen #EVAW #OrangeDay

- Watch @UN\_Women video narrated by Academy Award-winning actor Kate Winslet delivering a vital message, urging people to act to support women experiencing violence during #COVID19. [https://youtu.be/IIINP\\_bW-o0](https://youtu.be/IIINP_bW-o0) #ViolenceAgainstWomen #OrangeDay @SayNO\_UNiTE
- The #COVID19 virus is not only attacking our physical health; it is also increasing psychological suffering. Mental health services should be an essential part of **government responses** to #COVID19. Quote by @UN Secretary-General @antonioguterres @UN\_Women @SayNO\_UNiTE #OrangeDay



- The @UN family is joining Secretary-General @antonioguterres in his appeal for peace everywhere. Together, we must ensure that women and girls stay safe during and after the #COVID19 pandemic. <https://youtu.be/8cY5ePRky6w> @GlobalSpotlight @SayNO\_UNiTE @UN\_Women #ViolenceAgainstWomen

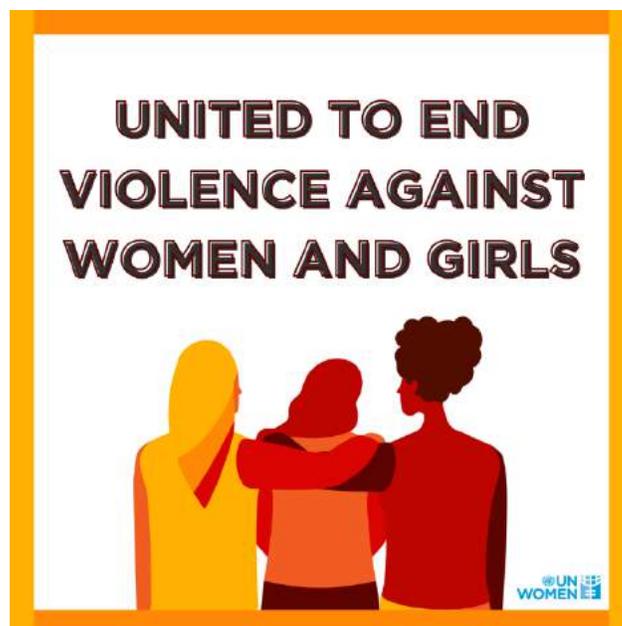
## Instagram



- As a @UN entity working to end #ViolenceAgainstWomen and girls, we support Secretary-General @antonioguterres' call to make the safety of women and girls a key part of #COVID19 response plans. Here's our joint statement with six critical areas for action: <https://bit.ly/3yK6kBe> @unwomen, #unodc, @undp, @un\_ocha, @who, @unicef, @unfpa, @unmigration, @unitednationshumanrights #OrangeDay

- As the @unitednations system, we are dedicated to ending #ViolenceAgainstWomen and girls and stand ready to support efforts in this regard. During these challenging times, we must, more than ever, be vigilant to end violence against women & girls. In our joint statement, we highlight six critical areas for action:
  1. Make urgent and flexible funding available for women's rights organizations and recognize their role as first responders,
  2. Support **health and social services** to continue their duty of care to VAW survivors and to remain accessible, especially to those most likely to be left behind,
  3. Ensure that **services for VAWG survivors** are regarded as essential, remain open and are resourced and made accessible especially to those most likely to be left behind,
  4. Place a high priority on **police and justice responses**,
  5. Put preventative measures in place,
  6. Collect data only if it is clear that it is needed, it will be used to improve services/ programmes and ethical and safety standards can be met.

<https://bit.ly/3yK6kBe>  
@unwomen, #unodc, @undp, @un\_ocha, @who, @unicef, @unfpa, @unmigration, @unitednationshumanrights #OrangeDay



## 6. USEFUL RESOURCES

- i. [United Nations Policy Brief: “The Impact of COVID-19 on Women”](#) (2020)
- ii. [Statement by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres on Gender-Based Violence and COVID-19 \(2020\)](#)
- iii. [Statement by 146 UN Member States and Observers](#) to the appeal by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Gender-Based Violence and COVID-19. (2020)
- iv. [UN Inter-Agency Statement on Violence against Women and Girls in the Context of COVID-19](#) (2020)
- v. [“Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018 Report”](#) - WHO (2021)
- vi. [Global Database on the Prevalence of Violence Against Women](#) and how to guide data platform ([video tour](#) and [pdf](#)) WHO (2021)
- vii. [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) (1995)
- viii. [Vienna Declaration on Gender-Based Violence](#) (1995)
- ix. [The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women](#) (1993)
- x. [The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#) (1979)
- xi. [Women, Business and Law database](#) - WorldBank
- xii. [Essential Services Package for women and Girls Subject to Violence](#) - UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP and UNODC (2015)
- xiii. [COVID-19 and essential services provision for survivors of violence against women and girls](#) – UN Women, WHO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC (2020)
- xiv. [Package of essentials for addressing violence against women](#) – UN Women (2016)
- xv. [UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, The World’s Women 2015: Trends and Statistics](#) (2015)
- xvi. [UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#)
- xvii. [16 Days - Orange The World 2020 Partners kit](#) UN Women - (2020)
- xviii. [Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls](#) - UN Women
- xix. [EVAW COVID-19 briefs](#) – UN Women