



Beijing+30: From Words to Action

# DATA AND RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

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**ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**UN Women**

New York, July 2025

# INTRODUCTION

In 1995, 189 governments unanimously adopted the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (BPfA) as a groundbreaking and far-reaching framework for the achievement of gender equality and the realization of the human rights of women and girls. The commitments made in the Platform for Action were forward thinking for its time, and many of the critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action remain pertinent for responding to the complex challenges of today, particularly the commitment to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

At the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), Member States reaffirmed their commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through the adoption by consensus of a powerful **Political Declaration**. This Beijing+30 series highlights key normative developments, best practice approaches and case studies of promising initiatives alongside key tools and resources to support implementation. It also highlights critical gaps, challenges and priority actions needed to accelerate efforts to eliminate VAWG.

It also complements and builds on the "**Beijing+30 Action Agenda**", particularly Action 3, For All Women and Girls: Zero Violence and offers evidence-based policy and programmatic solutions for member states who are invited to make concrete and transformative commitments to advance gender equality at the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Beijing+30 in September 2025.

## ACT to End Violence Against Women Programme

This paper was developed under the ACT to End Violence against Women and Girls programme funded by the EU. ACT is a new game-changing commitment between the European Commission and UN Women as co-leaders of the Action Coalition on Gender Based Violence (GBV), in collaboration with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. The **ACT shared advocacy agenda** is elevating the priorities and amplifying the voices of feminist women's rights movements and provides a collaborative framework focused on common priorities, strategies and actions.

To accelerate efforts in eliminating VAWG, ACT is calling for:

1. **Bold investments in prevention and responses to end violence against women and girls (VAWG);**
2. **Strengthened financing, protection and support to women's rights organizations;**
3. **Enhanced accountability, access to justice and the full and effective implementation of laws to prevent and respond to VAWG.**

These advocacy priorities reflect the core demands of the **Beijing+30 Action Agenda** and contribute to collective efforts toward the **High-level Meeting of the General Assembly in September 2025**, where Member States are called upon to make concrete and transformative commitments to advance gender equality.



# INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS

International norms and standards call for action to ensure robust data and research on violence against women and girls. In 1995, the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (BDPfA) recognized violence against women and girls (VAWG) as a violation of human rights as an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. The BDPfA further recognized VAWG as a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women requiring holistic and multidisciplinary approaches.

Specifically, the BDPfA noted that the absence of adequate gender-disaggregated data and statistics on VAWG makes the elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult. The BDPfA urged States and other stakeholders to promote research, collect data and compile statistics relating to the prevalence of different forms of violence against women, and encourage research into the causes, nature, seriousness and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of measures implemented to prevent and respond to violence against women.

Subsequently, in 2013, the **Agreed Conclusions of the 57<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women** represented a significant advance in international norms regarding VAWG, including data and research. The Agreed Conclusions called on States and other actors to collect, collate, analyse and disseminate reliable, comparable and anonymized data and statistics on a regular basis, disaggregated by sex and age at the national and local levels on different forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences to inform policies and programmes, and improve the collection, harmonization and use of administrative data, including, where appropriate, from the police, health sector and the judiciary, on incidents of violence against women and girls.

Other key normative developments include the adoption of the **VAW statistical indicators by Friends of the Chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission** and adoption of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals with for the first time two VAWG indicators under **target 5.2** (intimate-partner violence and non-partner sexual violence). Global standard methodologies have been developed to harmonize the availability and quality of comparable data such as the **statistical framework on the measurement of gender-related killings of women and girls** (femicides)

and a statistical framework on standardized global measures on technology-facilitated VAWG currently under development following a request from the UN Statistical Commission at its 55th session in 2024.

The vision of the BDPfA to eliminate VAWG can only be achieved with a robust evidence base to provide an accurate picture of the nature and scale of the problem, its health and economic costs, as well as evidence on what works to prevent and respond to VAWG. Without a full understanding of the scope, dimensions and correlates of violence against women, it is not possible to design appropriate responses aimed at properly addressing or preventing such violence at any level of government or civil society. A comprehensive approach to data and research, including prevalence, attitudinal, administrative and policy data is needed to drive impact at scale.



# PROMISING APPROACHES

Since the BDPfA was adopted in 1995, there has been a significant expansion of VAWG data collection and research, and best practice standards and approaches have also been further defined, particularly around the collection of prevalence, administrative and policy data and more recently innovative methods and new sources of data production.

## Prevalence data through population-based surveys

Population-based surveys are essential for estimating the prevalence of violence against women, as they can reach women regardless of whether they have reported the violence to authorities. Best practice approaches include:

- **Ethical considerations** are paramount when conducting surveys on violence against women, particularly ensuring the safety and well-being of respondents and interviewers. Robust protocols and procedures that adhere to international ethical and safety guidelines on researching violence against women are needed, including high-quality interviewer selection, training and support.
- **Dedicated surveys** are particularly reliable because they can employ trained interviewers to handle sensitive topics, minimizing underreporting. These surveys also allow for detailed questions on various types of violence and collect sociodemographic data, enabling analysis of how risks and impacts vary among different groups. Establishing a **regular schedule** for these surveys is important for monitoring changes over time.

- Survey should focus on **multiple forms of violence** including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, as well as female genital mutilation, attitudes towards violence, and reporting to authorities. This should include act-based measures of violence against women and adolescent girls and related variables that are valid and reliable, and aligned with international definitions.
- Survey analysis should **disaggregate key indicators of violence against women** in ways that conform to international good practice and country reporting obligations, for example to ensure coverage of all sub-groups of women and girls.
- Findings should be **disseminated** to raise awareness of violence against women and promote strategies to translate research into action and bring about substantive programme and policy changes.

### KEY RESOURCE

[Putting women first: Ethical and safety recommendations for research on domestic violence against women, World Health Organisation, 2001](#)

[Checklist for ensuring the quality of violence against women surveys, World Health Organisation, 2023](#)

[Violence against women 60 years and older: data availability, methodological issues and recommendations for good practice, WHO and UN Women 2024](#)

[Measuring violence against women with disabilities: data availability, methodological issues and recommendations for good practice, WHO and UN Women 2024](#)

[Understanding and Measuring Technology-Facilitated Violence Against Women for Better Prevention and Response | UN Women](#)



## Administrative data

VAW administrative data is critical for providing insight into the number of women utilizing services because of VAW, helping to estimate the need for such services and their costs; contributing to understanding sector responses to violence and unmet needs; quantifying the need for training among service providers; and providing information to evaluate programmes and policies and to

inform the generation of new or improved legislation, policies and procedures to prevent and respond to VAW.

UN Women and the World Health Organisation's 'Global technical guidance on improving the collection and use of administrative data on violence against women' set out the key steps and guiding principles to inform VAWG data collection from multiple sectors including health, justice, policing, social services and humanitarian sectors. The guidance ensures that data collection prioritizes the safety, needs and rights of survivors.

Key elements and principles include:

#### **Governance, coordination and collection of VAW administrative data**

- Include representatives of specialized VAW civil society organizations in the coordination mechanism and consult with survivor experts where possible
- Prioritize provision of services and care over data collection and emphasize survivor autonomy to decline to answer.

#### **Reduce the Response Burden on Survivors**

- Limit the number of questions asked and collect the minimum data set and avoid framing questions to imply blame or stigmatize survivors.
- Ensure that it is safe to collect any additional socio-demographic variables (e.g., ethnicity, disability status, citizenship/migration status, gender identity, and sexual orientation).

#### **Safety, Human Rights-Based and Survivor-Centred Approaches**

- Prioritize the safety and well-being of women and treat them with dignity, respect, and sensitivity.
- Involve survivors as appropriate and prioritize their safety and well-being, and respect survivors' wishes in data collection, analysis, sharing, and reporting.

##### **KEY RESOURCE**

[Global technical guidance: Improving the collection and use of administrative data on violence against women, WHO and UN Women 2024](#)

[Why collection of administrative data is vital to end VAWG? UN Women, 2022](#)

[Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killings of women and girls \(also referred to as "femicide/feminicide"\) | UN Women Data Hub](#)

[Gender-related killings of women and girls: Improving data to improve responses to femicide/feminicide | Publications | UN Women Knowledge portal](#)

## **Policy data**

There has been a growing focus on the collection of policy data, for example data on measures taken to prevent and respond to VAWG such as legislation and national action plans. This data has enabled analysis to understand the impact of policies and programmes on VAWG, including in the contexts of crises such as COVID-19.

Examples of policy data on VAWG responses include UN Women's **[Global database on Violence against Women and Girls](#)** and UNDP and UN Women's **[COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker](#)**.

##### **KEY RESOURCE**

[Global database on Violence against Women and Girls | UN Women Data Hub](#)

[COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker | Data Futures Exchange](#)

## **Innovative methods for data production**

Recent years have seen the emergence of innovative methods of VAWG data production, for example where data is needed to inform rapid responses and where more intensive population-based prevalence surveys using face-to-face data collection cannot be conducted. An example includes UN Women's **[guidance for the collection of VAWG data through telephone interviews](#)** in the context of COVID-19.

There are also innovative data collection methods emerging for VAWG in online spaces, for example by using **[big data](#)**.





# PROMISING PRACTICES

To address gaps in data collection, UNODC and UN Women developed the **statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls** (“femicide/feminicide”), approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2022. Since then, there has been growing efforts by Member States to produce femicide data which informs an **annual global report** produced by UN Women and UNODC to provide global and regional estimates of gender-related killings. Several promising practices at the regional and country levels have also emerged. For example, in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe, UN Women has led efforts to establish femicide watches, with Georgia being a notable success leading to similar approaches across the region. Various countries, including Serbia, Albania, and Montenegro, have committed to establishing femicide watches and improving their responses to gender-based violence. An **interactive map** tracking femicides in these countries

was launched in 2022, aiming to enhance data collection and advocacy efforts.

To enhance the collection of administrative data on VAWG and align with global guidance, the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) has endorsed new **guidelines and protocols** for collecting and using data on violence against women and girls across the region. The guidelines, developed by the UN Women Multi-Country Office-Caribbean in collaboration with CARICOM, aim to produce high-quality, harmonized administrative data and statistics to support regional integration and policy-making. The SCCS emphasized the need for national and regional resources to pilot these guidelines, highlighting their importance in addressing gender-based violence and promoting positive change, in line with the **Global technical guidance**.

## From Data to Action

Ultimately, the purpose of any data collection is for its use in informing programming and legal and policy reforms, and this is crucially important in the field of VAWG. Examples of how data has informed laws and policies include:

In Georgia, the results of measuring sexual harassment in their 2017 survey were used to

### » LOBBY FOR LEGISLATION

culminating in a sexual harassment bill that was passed in 2019.



In Morocco, the 2019 survey led to

### » THE REVISION OF THE NATIONAL VAWG STRATEGY

adopted in 2021. Survey results were also used to draft the National Intersectoral Programme on Women's Empowerment.



In Albania, survey data were used to

### » ADVOCATE FOR THE EXPANSION OF VAWG SURVIVOR SERVICES

resulting in the establishment of the country's first rape crisis centre. In addition, **psychological violence was added as an amendment to the criminal code**.



In Jamaica, survey data were used to

### » SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

against Gender-Based Violence 2017-2027.





# COMMON GAPS AND CHALLENGES IN VAWG DATA AND RESEARCH

Despite important advances, many countries lack reliable data on violence against women, and even among those that do, the quality and reliability vary significantly. Surveys often fail to provide the necessary detail for policy development or monitoring, and few, though increasing, countries conduct regular surveys to allow for time-series comparisons. Additionally, survey methodologies differ across settings, making it difficult to compare results over time or between countries. Efforts have been made to standardize meth-

odologies to achieve comparable statistics, but gaps and challenges remain, particularly as new forms of violence emerge such as technology-facilitated GBV. Data gaps remain critical on femicide, administrative data, sexual violence and sexual harassment, adolescent girls, and violence against marginalized groups of women and girls. There is also a lack of correlation data on the risks and drivers of VAWG and a lack of large-scale impact evaluation framework of EVAWG interventions.



# ACTION PRIORITIES TO FILL DATA GAPS ON VAWG

1

**Investing in regular, dedicated surveys** on violence against women and girls to provide comprehensive and time-series data on multiple forms of violence against women and girls

2

**Improve the availability, quality and standardization** of administrative data from police, judicial, health and social services records

3

**Expand the understanding, methods and use of non-official data sources** like citizen data and big data.

4

**Prioritize developing standards and methodologies** to fill quantitative and qualitative data gaps

5

**Invest in women's rights organizations capacities** to collect and analyze data on VAWG



# UN WOMEN EXISTS TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

As the lead UN entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social behaviors and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls.

Our partnerships with governments, women's movements and the private sector coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations translate progress into lasting changes. We make strides forward for women and girls in four areas: leadership, economic empowerment, freedom from violence, and women, peace and security as well as humanitarian action.

UN Women keeps the rights of women and girls at the centre of global progress – always, everywhere. Because gender equality is not just what we do. It is who we are.



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