
NGO CSW Outcome document for North America -- An open discussion paper on Violence Against Women and Girls

(DRAFT ONE - 6 February 2013)



This NGO CSW outcome document for the North America and Europe region is submitted by an independent editing committee appointed by the NGO CSW/New York (See Appendix for the list of NGOs). The purpose of NGO outcome documents is to ensure that civil society has a voice in the CSW Outcome document process. It remains an open platform for continued dialogue before, during and after the CSW.

What is this document?

At CSW 56 last year, governments failed to produce Agreed Conclusions. This event was a wake-up call for NGOs to become more collectively engaged, better focused, and articulate about what the UN must do to end gender inequality. In order to stimulate a discussion among NGOs BEFORE the CSW, the NGO CSW/NY appointed an independent editing committee to produce a draft paper for North America. The purpose of this draft is to open a space where NGOs can voice their concerns and influence on the CSW Agreed Conclusions. This draft is expected to evolve and invite continual discussion and inputs by more and more participants. NGOs may wish to consult with their NGOs, synthesize group comments into a single statement and post these online. The inputs will be reviewed before CSW and considered for a second draft that can be used for dialogue with governments during CSW 57 and beyond.

This consultation among NGOs will take place largely through a virtual dialogue due to lack of funds to bring participants together. For many women's groups, such an online discussion around an NGO CSW document is new and experimental. But working virtually has the advantage of being accessible to many participants, including women with disabilities, rural women and working women.

Developing collective ideas must begin with a small number of participants that grows over time. At its best, the hope of this project is to strengthen the impact of civil society voices in an inclusive and transparent manner. However, as a trial, it is important that you, the reader, participate in helping to make it better.

The editing committee would welcome your feedback both on process and outcomes this year so that we improve next year. In addition to feedback on the content of the draft document, please also consider submitting your ideas on the process for creating regional text: How could we improve this process next year? What timeline would you suggest? Would you/ your organization be interested in participating? (Please put in contact information so that we can keep in touch). By hearing from you, we hope to build even stronger ideas from a wider set of voices that are involved even earlier. Thank you for your participation!

NGOs are invited to post their organization's inputs on this draft:

<http://csw57ngos.ning.com/profiles/blogs/guidelines-for-csw57-ngo-voices-participation>

You must create an account and sign-in to participate. You may also send your submission to: Voices4NGOs@gmail.com

Please note that the NGO CSW/NY does not take responsibility for the content of this NGO CSW draft discussion paper.

Violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. The long-standing failure to protect and promote those rights and freedoms in the case of violence against women is a matter of concern to all States and should be addressed. (Beijing Platform for Action, Para 112)

INTRODUCTION

At the UN Commission on the Status of Women meeting in 2013 (CSW 57), the women's movement, governments, civil society organizations, feminist activists and other stakeholders will urgently bring violence against women and girls once again to the world's attention. There is mounting frustration that 20 years after the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) was adopted by 189 governments and numerous other efforts to end this epidemic, violence against women remains a societal pathology that must be addressed as a human rights issue. In particular, violence against women in Europe and North America persists, with approximately one European woman in four experiencing domestic violence at some point in her life,¹ and one U.S. woman in five experiencing rape or attempted rape.² If anything, the task to address violence has become more difficult. It has become clear that ending violence against women and girls requires more than providing shelters, passing laws or jailing perpetrators. A consensus is building that we need to find a long-term, sustainable solution, one that aims to transform social norms even as we implement new policies.

The UN and its member states must take the lead—yet in some ways, the challenge is growing. State-sanctioned violence and discrimination against women impede changing cultural and social norms and developing legal policy. States have a primary responsibility to shape the social, cultural and legal norms to end patriarchy.³ As the Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls noted, when laws and policies limit women's freedoms or deem women as 'complementary' instead of 'equal to' men, this attitude trickles down to public perceptions of women and girls and their role in society, undermining their safety and security within the State. Similarly, a culture of militarism combined with the proliferation of

¹ *Domestic Violence against Women Report*, European Commission, 2010.
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_344_en.pdf.

² *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010.
http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf.

³ Report of the United Nations special rapporteur, *Violence against women, its causes and consequences* (1994-2009), United Nations, 2009.

small arms and ammunitions can facilitate other arbitrary killings, torture and mutilation of women and girls.⁴ Experts have pointed out it is the responsibility of government to create an 'enabling environment' for effective prevention of violence against women and girls.⁵

In that spirit, CSW57 can be an historic landmark and an important moment to mobilize political will. Even with setbacks caused by the global financial crisis and fundamentalist backlash, there is reason to hope. This new call to action takes place in the context of extraordinary activity in political and legal mandates for action.

A major part of the groundwork was laid for UN and governments to live up to their commitments when, in 1995, governments agreed to the BPfA to accelerate progress for gender equality, development and peace. The BPfA outlines remarkably specific roadmaps in the right direction, and breaks down possible actions by sector. This global consensus document provides concrete policy recommendations to complement the legally binding *Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW). Under CEDAW, countries that have ratified it are obligated to protect and uphold the equal rights of women and girls to live free from discrimination and violence and to bring national legislation in line with treaty standards.

Gender equality and women's rights as human rights were also central themes in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the World Summit for Social Development and other inter-governmental meetings. These initiatives responded to civil society calls in the 1980s and 1990s to stop violence against women and uphold women's rights as human rights. Since then, agreements such as the 2000 *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons -- Especially Women and Children*, and the 2006 *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, have reinforced the importance of these goals.

CEDAW's General Recommendation 19 establishes the obligation of States to act with "due diligence" to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls; by 2012, most governments in North America and Europe had committed to uphold the principles of CEDAW in national laws.⁶ "Due diligence" means governments must take proactive steps to address root causes to protect women and girls, not merely respond to crimes once committed. CEDAW, combined with UN Security Council Resolutions (1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889), international human rights laws and international humanitarian law, helps hold the UN, non-states parties, the private sector and governments accountable for protecting women and girls. While these tools are important as international standards of good governance, legal structures and policies, they have an even more powerful potential—they can help shape social norms and behavior.

We can cite numerous other international policies and legal frameworks that have strengthened political will and highlighted the importance of prevention of violence against women and girls.

⁴ *Intersections of Violence Against Women and Militarism*, Center for Women's Global Leadership, 2011. <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/gender-based-violence/388-intersections-of-violence-against-women-and-militarism-meeting-report-2011>.

⁵ *The Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls*, UN Women, 2012. The link between the Arms Trade Treaty and CEDAW is critical, but is missing in the current negotiations.

⁶ The United States signed in 1980 but has not ratified CEDAW.

These include the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, in addition to the *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, the 1958 International Labour Organisation's *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention*, the 2011 International Labour Organization's *Domestic Worker's Convention* and the *Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development*.⁷

These principles have also been translated into major UN initiatives, including practical guidelines and training manuals. The UN Trust Fund to end violence against women was established in 1996 and the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women initiative provides support for primary prevention strategies, quality health care for survivors and assured access to justice. UN agencies have also played a support role. Some have focused on improving women's access to justice and the prevention of intimate partner violence while others have addressed violence against women and girls in education, engaged men and boys as advocates and trained peacekeepers and humanitarian aid workers.⁸

Many regional and national policy and legal instruments in North America and Europe have identified strategies for preventing violence against women and girls, including the *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (2011);⁹ and the *Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (2010) ('the Lanzarote Convention').¹⁰ In the United States, combatting trafficking of women and girls and supporting the rights of migrant workers have been highlighted in foreign aid policy as well as in domestic laws.¹¹ For example, the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 in the US states that foreign governments must provide the Department of State with data on trafficking.¹²

We applaud these milestones, but despite all of the activity and rhetoric, real progress to reduce the incidence of violence has been disappointing. Much of the activity has been focused on costly services and "treatment" measures that are difficult to sustain in the face of dramatic cuts in public funding for health and social services. With the loss of private and public financial support for NGOs and the international women's movement, advocacy efforts have faced major challenges. These trends have prompted renewed interest in cost-effective, strategic measures associated

⁷ This paper gratefully acknowledges the experts who contributed to the *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls*, UN Women, Bangkok, Thailand 17 – 20 September 2012 for many of the concepts and recommendations presented here. However, the editing committee takes responsibility for the final text.

⁸ Examples of leading agencies have been WHO, UNFPA and UN Women

⁹ *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* (2011) CETS 210, Chapter 3.

¹⁰ *Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (2010) CETS 201.

¹¹ For example, USAID has provided a guide for health sector program officers entitled, *Addressing gender-based violence through USAID's health programs*, USAID, Washington DC, 2006. In addition, in 2011 the US released its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/email-files/US_National_Action_Plan_on_Women_Peace_and_Security.pdf) and in 2012 released the *United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally* (<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/196468.pdf>).

¹² *Trafficking in persons report, June 2012*. Department of State Publication, Office of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. 2012.

with prevention. As is commonly known, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Now is the time to mobilize the world’s attention to speed up and scale up preventive efforts.

ISSUES

The scale of the problem is a silent yet visibly growing pandemic.¹³ It is important to begin the quest for solutions by identifying the problem. On the one hand, everyone knows that the threat of gender-based violence has become a part of the feminine psyche in modern times. While some women may not be victims of physical violence in their lifetimes, the majority of women and girls will experience fear and aggression because of their gender.¹⁴ This occurs at home, work and school, in popular media, in the streets and communities, and online. But what “everyone knows” is not always backed up by solid evidence. Despite its obvious high occurrence, large-scale research is uncommon.

The landmark WHO Multi-Country study on women’s health and domestic violence against women¹⁵ and large-scale population-based surveys such as the Demographic and Health Surveys are notable exceptions. The data in these studies lay bare what everyone knows—the problem is serious, global and often close to home. WHO estimates that at least one of every three women globally will be beaten, raped or otherwise abused during her lifetime. In most cases, the abuser is a member of her own family.¹⁶ In addition, in 2010 the Centers for Disease and Control published the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey* in the United States, which found that 1.3 million women were raped in the US during the year preceding the survey, over half by a current or former partner, and 42% of whom experienced their first rape before the age of eighteen.¹⁷

Still, such large surveys cannot accurately portray the possibility that in one’s lifetime a person experiences multiple forms of violence. Life-course studies are largely absent, particularly in diverse cultural and social settings.¹⁸ Besides intimate partner and domestic violence, more information is needed on the incidence of child abuse and sex trafficking. The plight of migrant

¹³ Violence against girls and women of all ages is defined 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 [or girls], including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.’ It exists in multiple, interrelated and sometimes recurring forms, and is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. This unequal relationship is socially constructed and is not biologically determined according to sex, as noted in the *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls*, 2012.

¹⁴ The health impact of gender-based violence on health includes fatal outcomes, acute and chronic physical injuries and disabilities, serious mental health problems and behavioral deviations increasing the risk of subsequent victimization and gynecological disorders, unwanted pregnancies, obstetric complications and HIV/AIDS. See *Public health at a glance – gender-based violence, health and the role of the health sector*, World Bank, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS>.

¹⁵ WHO multi-country study on women’s health and domestic violence against women was based on women’s responses from 15 sites in 10 countries. WHO. 2005.

¹⁶ Figures from *Facts on gender-based violence*, Center for Women’s Global Leadership, Rutgers University, 2012.

¹⁷ *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010. http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf.

¹⁸ *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women*, WHO. 2010.

laborers, as well as lesbians and transgender people, women and girls infected by HIV/AIDS, human rights defenders and incarcerated women are also seldom reflected in national research.

New challenges are posed by violence in virtual spaces, particularly for developed countries, where approximately 71% of people are online.¹⁹ New media is often a platform for the perpetuation of harmful masculine culture and the objectification of feminine sexuality. This can take a number of forms from hyper-sexualized, one-dimensional images of women and girls to hard-core pornography. Virtual spaces are also used for direct attacks on women and girls such as online harassment and threats, cyber-stalking and films of rapes.²⁰ Adolescents who are much more likely than adults to engage with social networking sites and instant messaging are particularly vulnerable to violence in virtual space.

The proliferation of small firearms increases risks for women and girls. Although the incidence of armed conflict has declined in recent years, the number of people killed by armed violence has not. Of the nearly 900 million small firearms in the world today, more than 75% are in the hands of private individuals²¹ and stored in homes.²² Having a small firearm in the home increases the overall risk of someone being murdered by 41%, and for women, that risk nearly triples.²³ The proliferation of small arms increases the vulnerability of women and girls to violence and exacerbates the seriousness of that violence whether in the home or in the streets. The violent deaths of approximately 66,000 women and girls each year are attributed to armed violence globally.²⁴ While more than 740,000 men, women, and children die each year as a result of armed violence, the majority of these deaths – 490,000 – occur in countries that are not affected by conflict.²⁵ According to a 2005 study in Canada, 7% of partnered women experienced violence at the hands of a spouse between 1999 and 2004. Of these women, 23% reported being beaten, choked or threatened with a knife or gun.²⁶ In the United States, where there are approximately nine firearms for every 10 people,²⁷ firearms accounted for over 31,000 deaths in 2009 alone.²⁸

¹⁹ *Voices from Digital Spaces: Technology related violence against women*, Association for Progressive Communications, 2011. https://www.apc.org/en/system/files/APCWNSP_MDG3advocacypaper_full_2011_EN_0.pdf.

²⁰ In the case of girls, under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, no consent can be given to sexual activity – the act is rape and any resulting film is child pornography.

²¹ *Intersections of Violence Against Women and Militarism*, Center for Women's Global Leadership, 2011. <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/gender-based-violence/388-intersections-of-violence-against-women-and-militarism-meeting-report-2011>.

²² Disarm Domestic Violence Campaign Bulletin and Action Kit, International Action Network on Small Arms Women's Network, 2009. <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/244>.

²³ Douglas J. Wiebe, 'Homicide and Suicide Risks Associated with Firearms in the Home: A National Case Control Study', *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, Volume 41, American College of Emergency Physicians, 2003. http://parliamentaryforum.org/sites/default/files/2%20-%20Violence_against_women_and_salw_parliamentary_handbook.pdf.

²⁴ Geneva Declaration Secretariat (2011) *Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011: Lethal Encounters*.

²⁵ Geneva Declaration Secretariat (2011) *Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011: Lethal Encounters*. See also the Small Arms Survey: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/security-programmes/armed-violence-prevention-and-reduction.html>.

²⁶ *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005*, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2005. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2005000-eng.pdf>.

²⁷ *Research Notes: Armed Actors*, Small Arms Survey, 2011. http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-9.pdf.

Exposure, vulnerability and development trends, including the results of natural disasters, all affect risk factors for women and girls. Many programs and policies on violence against women emphasize protections such as shelters, legal and social aid programs for survivors of trafficking, engaging men and boys, and provision of social and health services. Less attention has been paid to increasing the “resilience” of women and girls to experiences of violence thereby reducing their vulnerability.²⁹ Strategies at this broader level of prevention would enable women who experience violence to anticipate, accommodate or recover from traumatic experiences more quickly. More research is needed to understand how interventions can increase women’s ability to restore functioning in various environments. Interventions might include equal access to higher education (a known protective factor), credit and land rights, sufficient social and economic assets, job skills and legal rights.

The global financial crisis has resulted in increased unemployment and poverty, a shortage of housing and cutbacks in social spending including subsidies for health and education. These trends in some contexts have fuelled communal and ethnic tensions, mass migration and displacement, rendering millions of women and girls homeless and poor, and as a result, more vulnerable to trafficking and diverse forms of exploitation. These adverse conditions are occurring in an era of astounding military spending. In 2011, world military spending was estimated to be over \$1.7 trillion dollars, 65.8% of which was spent by Europe and North America alone.³⁰ This is the equivalent of over 600 years of the core annual UN budget.³¹

Climate change associated with rising sea levels and severe weather events, as well as environmental degradation and resource depletion, can all contribute to social and economic conditions in which violence against women and girls is known to increase. Climate change affects societies in all regions and people of all generations, ages, classes, genders, income groups and occupations. Women are the main consumers of household energy and products and producers of the world’s staple crops, but they face multiple discriminations such as unequal access to land, credit and information. Particularly at risk are poor urban and rural women who live in densely populated coastal and low-lying areas and remote islands. Older women, women with disabilities, indigenous women, minorities and low-income women face multiple layers of discrimination which add to already existing risk factors.³²

²⁸ *Deaths: Final Data for 2009*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011.
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr60/nvsr60_03.pdf.

²⁹ The definition of “resilience” is “The ability of a system and its component parts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner....” See the IPCC’s *Managing the risks of extreme events and disasters to advance climate change adaptation, a special report*, WHO and UNEP, 2012.

³⁰ *Background Paper on SIPRI Military Expenditure Data, 2011*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2012.
<http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/sipri-factsheet-on-military-expenditure-2011.pdf>.

³¹ Globally just six countries export 74 % of the world’s weapons: US, Russia, Germany, UK, China and France. The US sells 35% of the global total and is a major exporter of small arms. Adapted from the 2012 Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls, paragraph 34.

³² Adapted from the 2012 *Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of violence against women and girls*, paragraph 26; and the 2009 Statement of the CEDAW Committee on Gender and Climate Change, paragraph 2.

Violence against women and girls has economic and social costs; ending it has benefits.

Violence against women and girls is not a “women’s issue” -- the whole society bears the burden of social and economic costs. Recent studies show that governments face enormous costs due to reduced human capital and unequal educational opportunities. For example, the World Bank estimates that nine million Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) are lost annually, due to interpersonal violence, which primarily affects women. Domestic violence and rape ranks higher than cancer, motor vehicle accidents, war and malaria in the global estimates of risk factors accounting for an estimated 5 to 16 percent of health years of life lost by females aged 15 to 44 years. Domestic and sexual violence in the United Kingdom costs the country £5.7 billion per year, including costs to the criminal justice system, health care costs, housing and the loss to the economy. In the United States, the health care cost of intimate partner rape, physical assault and stalking totals \$5.8 billion each year, nearly \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health care services. Lost productivity from paid work and household chores and lifetime earnings lost by homicide victims total nearly \$1.8 billion.³³ Similar studies have been carried out in Canada, Holland and Switzerland.³⁴ Similarly, ending violence against women and girls contributes to economic welfare for all. The WHO reports that in 1994, passage of the Violence Against Women Act in the USA resulted in an estimated net benefit of \$16.4 billion. Implementation of a gun registration law in Canada cost \$70 million, in comparison with a total annual cost of \$5.6 billion for firearm-related injuries in that country.³⁵ Services that successfully intervene in domestic violence contribute to interruption of intergenerational transmission as children who grow up in violent homes are more likely to be perpetrators or psychologically vulnerable to abuse. Ending violence against women and girls can result in higher returns on investments in education and health, lowered costs to the criminal justice systems and an increase in political participation. In the workplace, for example, protecting the human rights of all diverse groups of women and girls-- including ethnic and religious minorities, gays, lesbians and transsexuals-- creates optimal environments for high work performance.

The wide diversity of violence against women and girls requires a tailored approach. In addition to the above concerns, there are specific groups in the North America and Europe region that are often overlooked. Preventive programs and services cannot be effective if they do not recognize the wide diversity of kinds and contexts of violence against women and girls. The following is not inclusive, but illustrative of priority concerns:

Survivors of school bullying Research from many nations and regions consistently documents the high levels of verbal, physical and sexual harassment, abuse and violence experienced by young people in schools.³⁶ Students around the world are routinely denied the basic, universal human

³³ *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in the United States*, United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2003. http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/ipv_cost/IPVBook-Final-Feb18.pdf.

³⁴ *Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries*, Sarah Bott, Andrew Morrison and Mary Ellsberg World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3618, June 2005.

³⁵ *The economic dimensions of interpersonal violence*, WHO, Geneva 2004.

³⁶ UNESCO’s 2011 Rio Statement on Homophobic Bullying and Education for All, available: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/hiv-and-aids/our-priorities-in-hiv/gender-equality/anti-bullying/>

right to education because of discrimination and violence they experience in school on the basis of their actual or perceived differences. These may be by ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability or race.

LGBTIQ People³⁷ Lesbians, bisexual women and transgender people experience both sexist and homophobic violence, discrimination and stereotyping. For example, in the United Kingdom, there were 1,294 homophobic crimes reported in 2006; however, it is estimated that this data represents only 10% of the total cases.³⁸ Some of the contributing/risk factors for violence against women and girls (e.g. around gender-role stereotyping) are shared in part with those for homophobic violence. To be effective, prevention strategies need to challenge explicitly homophobia and its relationship to gender stereotyping. Violence can also occur in same-sex relationships. Prevention work has to make it clear that violence in any relationship, perpetrated by either sex, is unacceptable.

Women and girls living with Disabilities³⁹ Women with disabilities experience violence at a significantly higher rate, and in different forms, than other women. A recent study in Canada found that women with disabilities are between 50% and 100% more likely to experience domestic violence.⁴⁰ Women with disabilities have greater difficulty in accessing support services, and many are isolated and marginalized from participating in various mainstream settings (e.g. educational institutions, workplaces and sporting clubs). Thus, it is vital that special schools, residential facilities and other services for those living with disabilities are also engaged in developing and implementing prevention strategies.⁴¹

Indigenous women and girls⁴² Women and girls in many of the world's indigenous communities face higher rates of violence than their non-indigenous counterparts⁴³, and this violence can be linked with issues of poverty, isolation and land rights. Native American women in the United States, for example, experience battering at nearly triple the rate of Caucasian women.⁴⁴ Article

³⁷ As reported in the *Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of Violence against women and girls*, paragraph 26; and the 2009 Statement of the CEDAW Committee on Gender and Climate Change, paragraph 96.

³⁸ *Homophobia: 2007 Hate Crime Survey*, Human Rights First, 2007. <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/07601-discrim-hc-homophobia-web.pdf>.

³⁹ Adapted from the 2012 *Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of violence against women and girls*, paragraph 89

⁴⁰ *Criminal Victimization and Health: A Profile of Victimization Among Persons with Activity Limitations or Other Health Problems*, Samuel Perreault. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2009.

⁴¹ Ortoleva S and Lewis H (2012) *Forgotten Sisters – A Report on Violence against Women with Disabilities: An Overview of its Nature, Scope, Causes and Consequences*, Northeastern University School of Law Research Paper No. 104-2012.

⁴² Adapted from the 2012 *Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of Violence against women and girls*, paragraphs 25 and 26

⁴³ For example, Indigenous women in Australia are at least ten times more likely to die as a result of domestic violence than are non-Indigenous women, and 28 times more likely than other Australian women to be admitted to hospital for assault injuries: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2006) *Family Violence among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*.

⁴⁴ "Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005." P.L. No. 109-162 § 901, 2006. In *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Rashida Manjoo: Mission to the United States of America* (A/HRC/17/26/Add.5), 2011. http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/17session/A.HRC.17.26.Add.5_en.pdf.

22 (2) of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* affirms the rights and special needs of indigenous women and children. It calls for States to adopt measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination. The January 2012 Expert Group Meeting on Combating Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls stresses that work to prevent violence against indigenous women and girls cannot be separated from efforts to address racism, dispossession and intergenerational trauma.⁴⁵ Integrated and culturally competent prevention strategies that incorporate indigenous history, understanding of kinship networks, values and experience are essential

Older women and widows⁴⁶ Women who are older and widows may be at increased risk of violence in similar ways, especially where they are economically or physically dependent. The demographic shift in age has been dramatic due to the trend of lower birth rates and lower death rates. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, one out of every ten people on the planet is now 60 years of age or older. If the current trend of lower birth and death rates continues, by the year 2050 one out of five people will be aged 60 years or older, and by 2150, one out of every three people will be aged 60 years or older. In the U.S., this has resulted in high numbers of women living in nursing home (71.2 % in 2004 of residents age 65 and over) and those dependent on personal care by other persons.⁴⁷ [Is this statistic correct?] As the life expectancy of American women exceeds that of men, the majority of single heads of household are older women. However, the limitations of support systems for older women, who face particular restrictions in access to support, create unique challenges for efforts to reduce discrimination, abuse and violence.

Urban, “serious youth” (e.g., gang) and organized crime⁴⁸ Emerging evidence indicates that adolescent girls and young women may also be targeted for sexual violence in the context of serious youth violence (e.g. youth gangs) and urban crime. Adolescent girls and young women are frequently overlooked in criminal justice policies designed for adult women or for children, yet they are the age group at greatest risk of sexual violence.⁴⁹ Organized crime presents challenges as they target migrant workers, refugees and internally displaced peoples for sex trafficking and trafficking in organs.

A multi-pronged approach is needed at local, regional as well as international levels. More is known about what has not been effective than what has been identified as a promising strategy or

⁴⁵ United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2012) *Final Report of the Expert Group Meeting on combating violence against indigenous women and girls*.

⁴⁶ See 2012 *Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of Violence against women and girls*, paragraph 90. Next section taken with minor revisions from the Human Rights Associates study guide on The Rights of the Aged, available at: http://www.hrea.org/index.php?doc_id=435.

⁴⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Faststats for Older Persons, http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/older_americans.htm

⁴⁸ Adapted from the 2012 *Report of the of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of violence against women and girls*, paragraph 31

⁴⁹ Johnson, Holly, Ollus, Natalia, Nevala, Sami (2008) *Violence against Women: An International Perspective* (drawing on the International Violence against Women surveys).

program. However, the emerging consensus is that the approaches most likely to succeed are those that transform unequal power relations between men and women. Gender-based violence and patriarchy are intrinsically linked and are not only experienced through physical coercion but also through the distribution of resources and authority within the home. Such personal dynamics shape the institutional and ideological determinants of gender relations and identity. The solutions must thus address gender equality and women's empowerment in all sectors including economic development, the military, foreign aid policy and trade. Furthermore, international agreements such as the BPfA and CEDAW should have synergistic implementation—one as a policy tool, the other as a legally binding instrument.

Prevention is interrelated with services. A common misunderstanding is that prevention can be put into place apart from the provision of services. While prevention (social awareness campaigns, school programs) and services (health and social services, criminal courts and tribunals) may have differing institutional structures, they exist in a continuum, are interrelated and can be mutually supportive. Similarly, public punishment of perpetrators or access to reparations may be effective deterrence events to prevent future violence against women during post-conflict situations or in refugee camps.

What is known about piecemeal approaches, such as job-training schemes or other efforts designed to empower survivors economically, does not necessarily result in reducing violence. Measures to reduce women's vulnerability must be combined with efforts to provide protection by the entire community, including men. More efforts are needed to use services as entry points for prevention or at least to offer remedies that interrupt "transmission" or "reoccurrence." For example, developing successful programs on date rapes for adolescents may be critical in preventing intergenerational transmission of violent behavior.

Measuring why prevention succeeds or fails is the weakest link. The question is why with a common understanding that violence against women and girls is persistent and widespread do we understand so little about how to prevent it? And why, despite decades of addressing the issue through legislative reforms, improvements in health and social services, school-based education programs and training of police and judges, is it difficult to pinpoint strategic prevention strategies? That is the challenge for developing a scientifically based direction for policy research. Several weaknesses seem evident. First, much of the existing data, policy and service attention has been centered on survivors, rather than perpetrators. Prevention programs require an understanding of how male attitudes and behaviours fit with the source of the problem, the pattern of transmission and evaluation of remedies that may influence outcomes. In fact, although data on women is limited, even less is known about the incidence of violent events in boys' and men's lives, their causes or risk factors.⁵⁰ Second, there are methodological issues to resolve related to the stigma and potential harm to survivors and the defenders of their rights. For example, little is known about the most vulnerable age groups—adolescents and young women – due, in part, to problems of underreporting and attempts by parents and health professionals to "protect" survivors. Neither does existing information give a clear picture of the wide diversity of

⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the WHO did not complete a study of men in a multi-country study due to financial constraints.

vulnerabilities experienced by women living with disabilities, indigenous women, older women, sex workers, women living with HIV/AIDS⁵¹, refugees and internally displaced women and girls in gangs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The efforts concerned with the post-2015 agenda should not work in parallel but be integrated with the campaigns to end violence against women and implement the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW. This includes an integrated approach between the UN sustainable development agenda and regional UN initiatives of the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign.

To this end, the UN and governments in consultation with women and youth organizations, civil society, media, businesses and other stakeholders should:

1. Develop, implement and fully fund comprehensive, multi-sectoral regional and national strategies aimed at addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls, including changing social norms as well as policies and laws.

- a) Pursue, by all appropriate means and without delay, policies to eliminate violence against women, strengthen the rule of law and the capacities of civilian and military justice systems to address gender-based violence and ensure that women have access to mechanisms of justice and equal protection of the law and affordable health care, including psycho-social care, providing for the full implementation of the BPfA and CEDAW;
- b) Ensure coordinated and sustained regional and national programming for prevention across different agencies and funding streams, in different sectors (e.g. health, judiciary and education), in economic development (e.g. food security), in homeland security and the military (e.g. foreign conflict-affected contexts and natural disaster relief) and foreign policy, and strengthen the capacities of all personnel in these sectors to meet the needs and secure the rights of victims and survivors of gender-based violence through education, training and other capacity-building programs;

⁵¹ An exception is *Strengthening Resistance: Confronting Violence against Women and HIV/AIDS*, Center for Women's Global Leadership, 2006. <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/gender-based-violence/296-strengthening-resistance-confronting-violence-against-women-and-hiv-aids-2006->.

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- c) Establish targets and clear institutional responsibilities, and develop a regional accountability framework with indicators to measure State responsiveness to the policy, identify legal and program-delivery goals and an independent monitoring mechanism using gender-budgeting across all sectors and in foreign aid policies;
 - d) Ensure long-term earmarked budgets are in place in each sector – including human and technical resources – to fund such strategies over the short-, mid- and long-term using gender-budgeting guidelines for all sectors;
 - e) Ensure that allocations of resources in the wake of natural disasters, urban conflicts or foreign wars support programs to prevent and provide services to victims of violence against women and girls and put in place temporary measures such as safe havens, schools and access to sexual and reproductive health services;
 - f) Use international and national mandates and enforcement authorities to stop the trade in illicit arms and ammunition, supporting a gender-sensitive approach in negotiations for an international Arms Trade Treaty. Consideration should be given to including the BPfA and CEDAW in the text of the Treaty;
 - g) Coordinate regional plans to help reduce military spending and promote full implementation of Critical Area E of the BPfA which links gender equality and the call for the control of excessive arms expenditure. Strengthen and implement disarmament agreements including Article 26 of the UN Charter, the Firearms Protocol, the Programme of Action on small arms and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, and invest in those programs and projects that promote human security;
 - h) Develop and fund regional and national plans on gender, peace and security (SCR 1325 & 1820), ensuring that monitoring and evaluation efforts incorporate gender equity in decision-making bodies, draw on gender experts, provide for women to be involved in the process and compile sex-disaggregated data on provisions, management, use and impact of small arms;
 - i) Ensure implementation and funding of agreements on gender and women's rights and the environment, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity's 2009 Gender Plan of Action and the Framework Convention on Climate Change's 2012 Resolution on Gender Equality, especially in the areas of increasing access and capacity for women in all levels of environmental decision making;
 - j) Ratify CEDAW and remove all reservations. These include provisions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination, including the wide diversity of women by age, ethnic and religious origin, level of disability, cultural situation, as well as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Questioning people;

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- k) Fund the implementation of other human rights instruments, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 29, which ensures the right to education, and Article 19, which obligates states to protect children from all forms of physical and mental violence, and the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. [U.S. hasn't ratified the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.]

2. Integrate prevention of violence against women and girls into provision of services and remedies while recognizing the full diversity of women in different social, economic, cultural, political and regional contexts.

National and community programs should:

- a) Reduce exposure and vulnerability to recurring incidence of violence by developing early warning systems that assess and avert the risk of violence against women and girls. Other measures may include community alert networks, safe spaces and shelters for women and girls as well as preventive sexual and reproductive health services, including for HIV/AIDS;
- b) Ensure that survivors have safe access to sexual and reproductive health services and ongoing care and treatment in all instances of sexual violence, including conflict-related transitional justice and reparations programs. Include an emphasis on the special needs of women and girls who were part of fighting forces in programs for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration;
- c) Integrate issues of gender equality and prevention of violence against women and girls into health and social welfare programs including sexual, reproductive and maternal health, HIV/AIDS programs and alternatives to youth incarceration programs;
- d) Develop, implement and monitor intensive early intervention programs for boys, adolescents and young men and empower them with the skills and inner resources for non-violent conflict resolution and healthy relationship building;⁵²
- e) Support leadership training in non-violent parenting programs, including those specifically involving men and boys, including in male-only membership organizations (e.g. faith-based organizations, sports clubs, business associations, men and boy's NGOs);
- f) Support the strengthening of community policing initiatives, including specially trained officers and members of the military with a focus on youth and family violence, violence against women and girls, and on human rights. Promote greater collaboration between police forces, the military, the criminal justice system and other security sectors for community-based prevention efforts;

⁵² For many recommendations on the girl-child, see the Commission on the Status of Women Report on the Fifty-First session, 26 February to 9 March 2007, United Nations, New York, 2007 and the Report of the Secretary-General, *The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl-child*, Economic and Social Council, 12 December, 2006.

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- g) Identify and address risks related to perpetration of violence, particularly among boys who have been exposed to violence, and in terms of limiting the availability of small arms;
 - h) Work with international and local human rights organizations to monitor the activities of armed groups to ensure that they adhere to the rules of combat and are held accountable for violence against women and girls. All peacekeeping operations must act in accordance with the standards set forth in the UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security.

3. Improve research and data collection, methodologies and indicators to monitor and evaluate progress.

National statistical agencies and relevant ministries, such as those of health or justice, should apply internationally agreed upon methodologies, technical and ethical standards, ensuring consistency of concepts, regularity of data collection and wide and timely dissemination of data. Special efforts are needed to provide global baseline data on men throughout their life cycle, particularly in middle- and low-income countries. Qualitative progress indicators, as well as subjective impact indicators that use participatory methods, should be included to reflect the social and cultural views of local communities. Data collection should be conducted with a wide range of stakeholders, including advocates and agencies providing services. It is also necessary that data be collected in a way that respects confidentiality and the rights of research participants and human rights defenders and does not jeopardize their safety. The UN and governments should:

- a) Develop indicators to measure progress on the prevention of violence against women and girls related to the UN post-2015 agenda. Such indicators should be context-specific and include impact indicators as well as measurements of short- and medium-term progress;
- b) Collect sex- and age-disaggregated data on the perceived needs of women and girls to reduce vulnerability and exposure to harm throughout their life cycle, producing information that can be used to develop tools and guidelines for service providers, health personnel, humanitarian workers and military or peace keepers;
- c) Gather accurate data on prevalence and characteristics of the wide diversity and cultural/social situations of all forms of violence against women and girls, including violence experienced by particular groups (e.g. women with disabilities, older women, indigenous women, or women affected by armed conflict and/or natural disasters);
- d) Conduct a global multi-country study, modeled after the WHO study, on men and boys so as to identify risks and protective factors for men. The study should focus also on the diversity of men and boys, the non-violent men as well as perpetrators, as to their knowledge, attitudes and practices to respond to services;
- e) Improve standardized methodologies for cost-benefit analyses of early interventions, scaling up of services and effectiveness of policies and legislation related to social and economic benefits (e.g. increased institutional capacity, interruption of intergenerational transmission);

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- f) Support 'learning labs' as collaborative centers to research, monitor and evaluate innovative approaches for the prevention of violence against women and girls such as the early warning systems to prevent outbreaks of conflict during elections;
 - g) Support research on the link between the international trade in illicit arms and ammunitions, incidences of intimate partner/domestic violence and armed urban violence, including the role of firearms in violence against women and girls among families of ex-combatants.

4. The UN should launch a Global Campaign to celebrate Beijing Plus 20 that includes implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW on violence against women and girls.

The UN should launch a global campaign on the prevention of violence against women and girls that aims to end violence against women within a generation. This calls for the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW. The purpose of this global campaign is to speed up and scale up awareness of violence against women and girls and to address its root causes in unequal power relations. The campaign will also “engender” the UN post-2015 on sustainable development goals, help define the gender equality targets for the SDG themes and address the relevance of gender equality and women’s empowerment to emerging issues such as social media, urban violence and natural disasters. A key message of the campaign is that violence against women and girls is a social and economic development issue and that gender equality and women’s rights is critical to achieving the MDG and sustainable development targets. The key target group will be the next generation of youth leaders. The CSW 57 should:

- a) Launch a Global Campaign in 2013 to end violence against women and girls through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW. This campaign should be launched at CSW 57 culminating in a celebration at a high-level segment of the General Assembly in 2015, but be funded through the next five years. This campaign should work with other global campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign,⁵³ the White Ribbon Campaign,⁵⁴ the “Global campaign for violence prevention initiative” launched in 2012⁵⁵ and other efforts by human rights, health, and education organizations;

⁵³ The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is a global campaign dedicated to ending gender-based violence. Coordinated by the Center for Women’s Global Leadership, it is used as organizing strategies by groups and individuals to promote the elimination of gender-based violence, and call governments to account for such violence. Since its formation in 1991, over 4,100 organizations in 172 countries have participated. More information is available at <http://16dayscwgj.rutgers.edu/>.

⁵⁴ Organized by men working to end men’s violence against women, the White Ribbon Campaign is a response to the female engineering students killed during a gender-based attack in Montreal in 1989. More information is available at: <http://www.whiteribbon.ca/>.

⁵⁵ See *Global Campaign for Violence Prevention: Plan of Action for 2012-2020*, a WHO initiative to increase the priority of evidence-informed violence prevention as a global public health and development issue, to build the foundation for violence prevention and implement violence prevention strategies.

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- b) Strongly support the regional process to ensure that regional diversity and priorities are considered. Regional UN economic and social commissions (ESCAP, ECE, ECA, ESCWA and ECLAC) should commission 12 expert papers that address the linkages between the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW with the post-2015 agenda;
 - c) Provide sufficient funding for IT and social media campaigns to reach the next generation and focus on intergenerational dialogues. Social media, IT and other communications tools, including TV, video and film, should be used in schools and made available on the Internet. The target groups of young women and men and youth should be those working in international organizations, foundations, governments, the media and businesses as well as NGOs;
 - d) Engage non-violent men as leaders in IT, communications, entertainment and social media that currently produce or provide platforms that objectify the sexuality of girls and women and which promote a culture of violence and militarism. This includes the Internet, the music and games industries and advertisers;
 - e) Engage leaders in schools, educational settings, universities and research institutes to reach teachers, administrators and students in a global campaign. Special training and resource materials should be developed for online courses about the BPfA, CEDAW and CRCs and their relevance to problems of sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying, and urban violence, HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health and economic consequences of violence against young women and girls;
 - f) Mobilize men and boys at various levels including States, city and town authorities, businesses, faith-based organizations and sporting clubs, to raise awareness about violence against women. Mayors should work towards “women-friendly” cities by reducing urban crime and gang violence;
 - g) Employers, citizens’ rights groups, police and criminal justice groups should be given gender training and information about the BPfA and CEDAW and their own human rights.

LOOKING FORWARD

Violence against women and girls—once regarded as a personal problem—is a societal pathology that affects and is influenced by all 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. Policies and program must address the root causes of violence against women in all sectors related to unequal power relations between men and women. This agenda is an urgent economic and social development issue. The goals for sustainable development to combat climate change and ensure environmental sustainability, reduce poverty, ensure peace and security and assure inclusive economic development depends upon resolution of this underlying problem. To accomplish that, we must prioritize, fund and build capacity through our words and actions.

The Global Campaign on implementing the Beijing Platform for Action can begin at CSW 57 as a launching point for government commitments. CSW 57 must be the historic moment to proclaim that the next generation will be free from gender-based violence.

APPENDIX I.

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NGOs are invited to post their organization's inputs on this draft:

<http://csw57ngos.ning.com/profiles/blogs/guidelines-for-csw57-ngo-voices-participation>

You must create an account and sign-in to participate.

Organisations consulted include the Center for Women's Global Leadership, (to add others here as process evolves)