

## EVALUATION OFFICE BRIEF

# Thematic Evaluation on the Contribution of UN-Women to Prevent Violence Against Women and Expand Access to Services

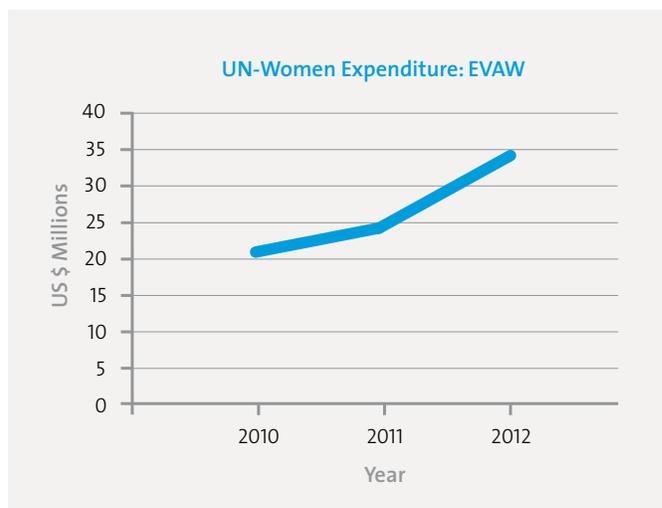


## BACKGROUND

Up to 7 out of every 10 women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes.<sup>1</sup>

Violence against women (VAW) includes physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, and wealth, and occurs in every country of the world. VAW is one of the most widespread violations of human rights and has been recognized as a form of discrimination. International and regional legal instruments have clarified obligations of States to prevent, eradicate and punish VAW.

Ending violence against women (EVAW) is a thematic priority for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the entity invests significantly in EVAW (see chart).<sup>2</sup>



During 2012-2013, the independent Evaluation Office of UN-Women undertook a corporate thematic evaluation in the area of EVAW. The evaluation sought to capture key results and lessons learned from the contributions of UN-Women's four predecessor entities<sup>3</sup> that could inform current and future work of UN-Women in this thematic area, and to analyze the extent that UN-Women strategically positioned itself to implement its mandate of normative, operational and coordination work in this thematic area. The scope of this evaluation covered all dimensions of UN-Women's work addressing EVAW from 2008 to 2013 at global, regional and national levels.

1 <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw57-stop-violence-against-women/>

2 Includes all programme expenditure, including programme support costs, but excludes expenditures incurred under the United Nations Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence against Women. See: Progress made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2011-2013 (UNW/2012/4 and UNW/2013/3).

3 Division of the Advancement of Women (DAW), the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI).

## KEY FINDINGS

The findings of the evaluation point to numerous contributions of UN-Women:

- Supporting the normative role of United Nations intergovernmental processes, such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which at its 57th session facilitated the first Agreed Conclusions on EAW in 15 years;
- New or strengthened VAW-related national legal frameworks, policies and action plans that resulted in an increased number of governments adopting laws targeting VAW between 2008 and 2012;
- Expanding the type, improving the quality and expanding the reach of services for VAW survivors at the country level, including to the most excluded or vulnerable women, such as indigenous women, women with HIV and AIDS and socially excluded women survivors of VAW;
- Raising awareness on VAW and engaging key actors (including men and boys) with the potential to influence perceptions of VAW and related behaviors in preventing VAW through global initiatives such as the UNITE 'Say No' and 'Safe Cities' programmes and many others at the regional and national level; and
- Strengthening coordination on EAW work through United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), joint programmes, gender theme groups, and specialized working groups on EAW.

## KEY CHALLENGES

- UN-Women is still in the process of defining its niche within EAW relative to other organizations;
- There is lack of clarity on the entity's larger mandate for convening of partners and coordinating and promoting accountability of the United Nations system;
- Continued internal fragmentation of work in EAW in terms of structure, division of labor, communications, and strategy; and
- The results based management practices and systems of the entity did not support the entity's ability to understand progress in EAW and internally share and learn from good practices.

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*The report concludes that UN-Women should seize the opportunity to build on the momentum in the international community emanating from the Agreed Conclusions of the 57th Session of the CSW to EAW.*

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation makes six strategic recommendations to UN-Women aimed at strengthening its work in this thematic area:

1. Continue substantive inputs and evidenced-based work in support of enhanced normative frameworks. Provide more guidance at the regional and country level on how to translate normative work into operational work.
2. Country-level activities should be more strategic: maximize the benefits of limited resources, work with partners, be selective in terms of where to engage, work to maximize buy-in of others, and use its leverage and legitimacy.
3. Further clarify, operationalize and enhance its coordination mandate, including the accountability dimension, at global, regional and national levels.
4. Develop a strategy or guidance document, for both internal and external use, outlining its EAW mandate and key priorities and approaches in EAW.
5. Continue to strengthen Results Based Management practices, encompassing improved monitoring and reporting, evaluation and knowledge management.
6. Pursue and encourage Member State contributions to core resources, but also develop creative ways of tapping into the resources of other partners so that there is a systemic approach to resourcing EAW.