VAW is widely recognized as a critical human rights violation with a wide-ranging impact on public health, societal well-being and economic development.

**VAW key facts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It can happen anywhere</td>
<td>It involves multiple actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most common form is violence perpetrated by husbands, referred to as marital violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- It has many forms:
  - Sexual
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Psychological

**VAW requires political commitment and leadership to prevent it**, protect those at risk, mitigate its consequences and prosecute its perpetrators.
HOW WIDESPREAD IS VAW IN THE ARAB REGION?

Women of every colour, race, social class, age or education, can experience violence.

1 IN 3 EVER-MARRIED WOMEN has experienced physical or sexual violence in their lives.

**EGYPT**
- 46% of ever-married women aged 18-64 have reported experiencing a form of marital violence.

**PALESTINE**
- West Bank: 30%
- Gaza Strip: 51%

Being a sensitive topic, data collection is limited. But indicative figures are alarming.
Protracted conflicts in the Arab region increase women’s exposure to various forms of violence in the public and the private sphere compared to non-conflict areas.
ARAB STATES’ RESPONSES TO VAW

CONSTITUTIONS

- Few Arab countries explicitly prohibit discrimination on basis of sex in their constitutions.
- Egypt & Tunisia have articles to protect women from violence.

LEGISLATION

- Five countries have adopted a specific law on VAW: Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia.
- But even these laws have limitations:
  - Narrow definitions of VAW that considers only physical abuse.
  - Focus on prosecuting perpetrators of violence, ignoring the pillars of prevention, protection and reintegration.
  - Absence of frameworks for providing needed services to survivors.

POLICIES

- Most Arab states have adopted policies on VAW, but their application is often inconsistent because:
  - They are not aligned with constitutional and legal frameworks, making their application inconsistent and practically difficult.
  - Reporting mechanisms are insufficient and poorly coordinated.
REPORTING VAW IN THE ARAB REGION

How can women report violence?

Formal channels
- Police, courts
- Government hospitals & other state institutions
- Government hotline where available

Informal channels
- NGOs
- Private hospitals
- Other informal channels (e.g. tribal leaders, shelters)

Who can report violence?

In Egypt & Lebanon
- Survivors

In Morocco
- Survivors
- Family members

In all other countries
- Survivors
- Family members
- A lawyer and/or public prosecutor

How do authorities follow up?
- Arrest the perpetrator if required
- Refer survivors to hospitals for medical examination
- Offer services to survivors (shelter, counseling etc.)
- Refer survivors to courts and public persecutors who are responsible to initiate investigations

Survivors of VAW have access to free legal services in almost all Arab countries

Almost all countries provide regular training to police officers on VAW and gender issues. However, in most cases the training is basic and does not, for example, cover the steps that survivors should follow to document VAW incidents.
WHY DO WOMEN NOT REPORT EPISODES OF VIOLENCE?

- Emotional reasons
- Fear of retaliation
- Illiteracy and lack of information
- Perception that the authorities will not provide adequate assistance
- Failure of the media to cover VAW and to provide information on reporting mechanisms
- Economic reasons (e.g., fear of high legal fees)
- Fear of losing children
- Culture and tradition; fear of stigmatization
- Perceived that the authorities will not provide adequate assistance

VAW coordination mechanisms:

- Most countries have several, non-unified reporting forms for VAW incidents, however:
  - **Morocco** has a standardized form to report VAW across all reporting channels
  - Tunisia & Palestine are piloting projects to standardize reporting

VAW database systems:

- Fragmented sources mean that responding agencies do not have consistent information or aggregated data on VAW
- Most countries have established/are establishing some form of VAW national database
- Few countries provide training for maintaining databases on VAW indicators

Channels for refugee and migrant women:

- There is a great disparity in the reporting mechanisms available to vulnerable groups such as migrant and refugee women
- Only Bahrain allows any woman full access to formal and informal channels, regardless of her nationality or residency status

IN EGYPT

- 7.9 MILLION WOMEN are estimated to experience some form of violence each year
- LESS THAN 1% REPORT such incidents to the police each year
**WHAT SHOULD ARAB STATES DO TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTITUTIONS</th>
<th>LAWS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>States should revise their constitutions to ensure they are gender-sensitive. As per UN recommendations, gender-sensitive constitutions:</td>
<td>States should adopt laws specifically geared at combating violence against women, this entails:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Enshrine gender equality and women’s rights</td>
<td>— Defining violence against women broadly to cover all its forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Explicitly forbid discrimination on basis of sex</td>
<td>— Creating a framework to improve access to the various services needed by survivors of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— Include articles specifically protecting women from violence</td>
<td>— Putting emphasis on preventing violence, protecting survivors of violence and reintegrating them into society, in addition to prosecuting perpetrators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**POLICIES**

States should adopt policy frameworks, such as national strategies, that give adequate resources and improve coordination between reporting mechanisms and the various services offered to survivors, including justice, law and order, health and social services.

Most recently, in July 2017, the Tunisian parliament adopted a new law on violence against women that sets an example for the region.
WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

- Health:
  - Affects women’s physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health
  - Reduces women’s employment opportunities and ability to perform + Increases medical expenses

- Education:
  - Increases medical expenses
  - Causes a loss in potential and productivity + Reduces women’s employment opportunities

- Work:
  - Discourages women from seeking & performing at work

- National Economy & Society:
  - Negative impact on women’s participation in the labour market and the economy
  - Increased expenditure on: Protection, Prevention, Compensation, Prosecution
  - Direct implications on NATIONAL ECONOMY & SOCIETY
### How does VAW impact the economy?

- Women exposed to violence tend to be less productive and more likely to take time off work, **resulting in a net loss both for them and the economy as a whole**
- Marital violence leads to huge expenses for the state, including costs associated with prevention, protection, prosecution, as well as compensation and reintegration of survivors and their children into their communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$500 billion</th>
<th>Cost of VAW in the US per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>Working days lost in Egypt each year due to marital violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3.9 billion</td>
<td>Burden in the UK from intimate-partner violence on health &amp; social services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How does VAW impact public health?

- **Sexual violence** can result in unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages and reproductive health issues
- **Physical violence** increases the risk of miscarriage. Average birth-weight of new-borns is significantly lower for women who experience violence during pregnancy
- **Children** who witness incidents of VAW are more likely to feel socially isolated and exhibit aggressive behaviour
- **Treating survivors puts pressure on health services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>98%</th>
<th>of surveyed Lebanese women who had experienced VAW displayed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$14.55 million</td>
<td>Estimated cost for the health sector in Egypt as a result of one quarter (600,000) of VAW survivors seeking healthcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$211</td>
<td>Average out-of-pocket expenditure in Morocco for health services following an incident of domestic violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COSTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

WHY COST VAW?

- Costing VAW is a key tool for policy reform
- It provides governments with an economic rationale and tools to reform legal frameworks
- It enables governments to revise their budget allocation to support prevention and protection

60+ STUDIES WORLDWIDE

have been conducted worldwide to estimate the costs of VAW

In the Arab region, ONLY EGYPT HAS CONDUCTED SUCH A STUDY

ESCWA - UN Women methodology for estimating the costs of VAW in the Arab region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLDS</th>
<th>COMMUNITY/BUSINESS</th>
<th>GOVERNMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES</td>
<td>lost of productivity + increased use of health services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accessing services, costs of leaving home, replacement of property, fines &amp; fees</td>
<td>loss of economic output + loss of productivity + workplace prevention programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOSS OF INCOME</td>
<td>community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missed paid work (women and men) + missed unpaid work</td>
<td>NGO/INGO services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT ON CHILDREN</td>
<td>businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gaps in education behavioural problems nutritional outcomes</td>
<td>welfare payments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH /TRAUMA</td>
<td>government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of productivity + increased use of health services</td>
<td>police, courts, shelters, health facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOSS OF QUALITY OF LIFE</td>
<td>prevention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OPERATIONAL MODEL FOR ESTIMATING THE COSTS OF VAW IN THE ARAB REGION

PHASE I: THEORETICAL GROUNDWORK 2016-2017

- Study on violence against women in the Arab Region
- Technical feasibility study for estimating the costs of violence
- Panel on violence against women at the 8th ESCWA Committee on Women
- Study launch

PHASE II: IMPLEMENTATION 2017-2018

- Piloting of the costing model in Palestine
- Replication in other ESCWA Member States
- Capacity development for all ESCWA Member States

TOTAL MONETARY COSTS