



Conclusions and Recommendations

General

1. The Friends of the Chair expressed appreciation to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía of Mexico and the United Nations Statistics Division for effective preparation, warm hospitality and efficient conduct of this meeting.
2. The Friends of the Chair reiterate the conclusion in their Report to the United Nations Statistical Commission that quantifying violence against women requires both the use of statistical surveys and administrative records, depending on the form of violence experienced by women. Consequently, this meeting focuses on three major outcomes:
 - i. The content of the recommended set of indicators, irrespective of the source of statistics
 - ii. The list of indicators for statistical surveys on violence against women, including substantive deliberations and conclusions on their content and dimensions
 - iii. The future work related to developing international statistical guidelines to conduct statistical surveys on violence against women.
3. In a follow-up to the work and the report of the Friends of the Chair to the United Nations Statistical Commission in February this year, the Friends of the Chair concluded that the interim set of indicators adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission needs to be expanded and constituted as a core set of statistical indicators for measuring violence against women, as follows:
 - i. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to physical violence in the last 12 months by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency

- ii. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to physical violence during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
- iii. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence in the last 12 months by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
- iv. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator and frequency
- v. Total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months by frequency
- vi. Total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by current or former intimate partner during lifetime by frequency
- vii. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to psychological violence in the past 12 months by the intimate partner
- viii. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to economic violence in the past 12 months by the intimate partner
- ix. Total and age specific rate of women subjected to female genital mutilation

4. The instrument of choice for producing accurate and relevant statistics on the first nine core statistical indicators on violence against women is a dedicated statistical survey on violence against women representative for the national and major sub-national levels. Taking into consideration the fact that implementing this recommendation would not be possible in all national circumstances due to the lack of statistical capacity and/or funding, a module attached preferably to a health and demographic survey would be a viable alternative.

5. The Friends of the Chair adopted a number of specific conclusions relative to different dimensions of the core indicators and they are elaborated below under each separate item.

Indicators on physical violence

6. The Friends of the Chair endorsed the approach of designating the indicators on physical violence – total and age specific rate of women subjected to physical violence in the last 12 months and during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to perpetrator and frequency – as core indicators for measuring violence against women. This form of violence is most frequent, as surveys conducted so far clearly indicate.

7. Up-to-date experience in conducting surveys on violence against women points to the need to list different acts of violence rather than attempting to develop a general and generic definition of physical violence, which is dependant on the national circumstances, cultural background, tradition, subjective perception and so forth. Consequently, the list/preliminary classification of individual acts of physical violence presented in the draft outline of the *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women, Volume I: Statistical Survey* is generally an adequate basis for further deliberations. The list should not be exhaustive and closed-ended, as country specific violence needs to be incorporated as distinct modalities. In that context, the wording of the modalities requires careful consideration due to linguistic and substantial peculiarities and also from the point of view of developing a more aggregated list of acts consisting of groupings of individual acts.

8. As similar acts of physical violence often have very different consequences due to a number of circumstances (prolonged violence as opposed to single incidence, for example) it is not recommended to attach the severity of violence to the act of violence. It is necessary to enumerate individual acts of violence as they occur and then to assess the severity separately, by developing a scale based on consequences suffered by the victim.

9. The frequency of physical violence carries a different weight depending of the recollection period. In the case of the experience of physical violence in the last 12 months, frequency should consist, ideally, of counting each individual violent act that the victim suffered in that period of time. In the view of results of available surveys showing that counting individual events presents considerable difficulties, certainly the framing of the question can be elaborated in such a way not to request the exact count (for example, if the violence occurred once a week, twice a month, and so forth) but always enabling to ultimately compute the total number of occurrences. As for the physical violence experienced in the lifetime, the frequency refers to a different count, allowing a less precise approximation, such as once, few times, many times.

10. Recognizing different risks to women depending of their life cycles, the Friends of the Chair suggest to explore a more reliable approximation of frequency of physical violence during lifetime on the basis of different life periods/segments/phases (such as pregnancy, for example) and measure frequency within each of those periods.

11. Relationship to the perpetrator is a key element of violence against women. Consequently, this is a crucial variable that has to be included in all surveys on violence against women. The classification of relationships to the perpetrator presented in the *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women, Volume I: Statistical Survey* represents a solid basis for further deliberations. It would benefit from adding sub-categories of relationship by further disaggregating main categories (relatives, for example, should be further broken down based on the degree of relationship).

12. Another critical dimension for assessing the instruments that are available to women in terms of protecting themselves from violence refers to the reporting (or the lack of thereof) of suffered violence to authorities or other institutions. The Friends of the Chair recommend that this dimension – reporting of violent events to the authorities or other institutions – needs to be always incorporated in the set of the four indicators on physical and sexual violence.

13. Lifetime experience of violence against women, irrespective of its form, i.e. whether physical, sexual, psychological or economic, should be assessed as of 15 years of age and above. Experience of violence at earlier ages, while extremely important in terms of the need to prevent it, may not fall within the scope of the phenomenon of violence against women as considered by the Friends of the Chair.

Indicators on sexual violence

14. The Friends of the Chair endorsed the approach of designating the indicators on sexual violence – total and age specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence in the last 12 months and during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to perpetrator and frequency – as core indicators for measuring violence against women.

15. While adopting the same approach as for physical violence, in terms of listing individual acts of sexual violence rather than attempting to develop a general definition, it was concluded that it would be necessary to break down the classification based on the severity of violence. More specifically, while it is

doubtless that the lack of consent is the key determinant of sexual violence, there is a need to invest additional efforts in assessing the optimal method for distinguishing acts such as sexual harassment from acts such as sexual assault and rape. Combining both of these statistics in one general rate of sexual violence experienced by women may result in conclusions that might be misleading.

16. Therefore, the Friends of the Chair concluded that in the development of the *Guidelines* the classification of acts of sexual violence and their breakdown by severity requires special consideration.

17. As for the classification of relationships to the offender and the frequency, the same approach as for the indicators on physical violence applies to the sexual violence indicators as well.

Indicators on intimate partner violence

18. The Friends of the Chair concluded that the two intimate partner violence indicators – total and age specific rate of ever-partnered women that experienced physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months and in their lifetime – should remain in the core set of indicators. It has to be emphasized that these two indicators are primarily dissemination indicators, i.e. that they do not require additional collection of statistics. Rather, they require additional data processing of data already collected by core indicators on physical and sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner.

19. Joining the two forms of violence – physical and sexual – together is a consequence of the fact that, in the case of intimate partnership, the two are inflicted often simultaneously over a period of time. The purpose, therefore, is to have a cumulative indication of intimate partner violence.

20. The meeting concluded that more work needs to be done with regards to definition of intimate partner, keeping it as broad as possible, not limited to marriage and taking into consideration national settings.

Indicator on psychological violence

21. The Friends of the Chair concluded that the indicator on psychological violence – total and age specific rate of women subjected to psychological violence in the past 12 months by the intimate partner – should be incorporated in the core set of statistical indicators on violence against women.

22. Humiliation, emotional violence and controlling behavior are some of the modalities of psychological violence. This form of violence more often than not accompanies physical violence and is a precursor of it. Consequently, there is a need for a review of available data to develop a classification of psychological violence that will provide guidelines to national statistical authorities in designing surveys on violence against women.

Indicator on economic violence

23. The Friends of the Chair concluded that the indicator on economic violence – total and age specific rate of women subjected to economic violence in the past 12 months by the intimate partner – should be incorporated in the core set of statistical indicators on violence against women.

24. Modalities of economic violence are identified as:

- i. Denying access to financial resources resulting in adverse consequences to the wellbeing of the woman
- ii. Denying access to property and durable goods
- iii. Deliberate non-compliance of the intimate partner regarding economic responsibilities, such as alimony, often resulting in considerable exposure of the victim to poverty and hardship
- iv. Denying access to the labor market, health care and education
- v. Denying participation in decision-making relevant to economic status

25. It has to be outlined that the above examples are illustrative and that the full elaboration of economic violence suffered by women requires additional research and analysis.

26. Taking into account the nature of this indicator in terms that it consists of a behavior over a period of time, this indicator's dimensions of severity, frequency and consequences are assessed as not fully relevant.

27. The Friends of the Chair concluded that, aside from economic violence within intimate partnership, women experience this particular form of violence outside of the partnership, such as discrimination by employers based solely on gender or age or both; harassment at work that results in abandoning employment; discrepancies in salaries based on gender and so forth. These issues, such as discrimination and economic violence at work, may represent additional topics in the dedicated survey on violence against women.

Early and forced marriage

28. The Friends of the Chair, building on the conclusions presented in their report to the United Nations Statistical Commission, deliberated at length in regard the inclusion of the phenomenon of early marriage in the core set of statistical indicators for measuring violence against women. Noting that the term "early" still has very different connotations, on one side, and that the adverse consequences suffered by young women entering at an early age into marriage, on the other, the Friends of the Chair concluded that there is an apparent lack of universally accepted statistical threshold that would enable statistical comparability and consistency.

29. Consequently, the Friends of the Chair recommend that early marriage remains an additional indicator as a proxy for violence against women and that national statistical authorities depending on national circumstances, assess the appropriateness of including early marriage in statistical surveys on violence against women.

30. As for the phenomenon of forced marriage, irrespective of the age of the bride, the Friends of the Chair recommend that this phenomenon should be considered as an additional statistical indicator of violence against women. Consequently, there is a need to assess the best way of assessing statistics on forced marriage, whether through the statistical survey on violence against women or some other health and demographic survey.

Female genital mutilation

31. The Friends of the Chair concluded that female genital mutilation is a peculiar form of violence against women and that the total and age specific rate of women subjected to female genital mutilation should be incorporated in the core set of indicators of violence against women.

32. Recognizing that the survey on violence against women is not the instrument of choice for producing statistics on this indicator, the Friends of the Chair recommend that this topic is included as a core topic in all demographic and health surveys conducted at national and sub-national levels, where relevant.

Other indicators

Femicide in general and spousal homicide in particular

33. The Friends of the Chair concluded that given the nature of the phenomenon the most adequate sources of data for this indicator are administrative records. Thus, the Friends of the Chair recommend that this indicator be elaborated in the follow-up stage, in terms of a unifying definition, statistical methodology, characteristics of the aggressors, quality of administrative records and the possibility of being incorporated in the core set of indicators on violence against women.

34. In that context, it has to be emphasized that a particular attention in the next phases of the work of the Friends of the Chair group should be placed on crime and criminal justice statistics, as these are the most reliable source of data for this indicator.

Stalking

35. Recognizing that the definition of this phenomenon is unclear or not consistent at the international level, particularly because of the fact that it might or might not include sexual harassment, the Friends of the Chair decided that this topic remains for further work. A comprehensive list of acts needs to be developed, as well as survey methodology to collect data on this issue. The Friends of the chair recognized the need of taking into consideration the different national legal frameworks.

Physical and sexual violence in childhood

36. The Friends of the Chair considered pertinent to make a clear distinction between indicators on current child abuse and adult women who were abused in their childhood. The Friends of the Chair concluded that only the latter falls within the scope of its mandate and agreed to limit it to sexual violence, given that physical violence during childhood is not necessarily associated with gender. The meeting concluded that this indicator should be included as an additional topic to be addressed retrospectively via a dedicated survey on violence against women.

Discrimination and violence at work

37. The Friends of the Chair decided to address this indicator through the indicators on economic violence, discussed above.

Trafficking of women

38. The Friends of the Chair concluded that the indicator on trafficking of women should be incorporated in the additional set of statistical indicators on violence against women. The data available so far shows that a survey on violence against women is not the ideal vehicle to collect data on such phenomenon, but administrative records could be. The Friends of the Chair recommend the elaboration of this indicator at a later stage.

Impact of sexual violence on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS

39. Considering that violence against women in general has a wide range of associations with women's health and wellbeing, the Friends of Chair considered that the rationale for singling out the case of HIV/AIDS as a standalone indicator might be of doubtful value. Therefore the Friends of the concluded to exclude the indicator on impact of sexual violence against women on sexually transmitted diseases from the global set of indicators on violence against women.

Extent to which women recognize they suffered violence as a crime

40. The Friends of the Chair recommend further work on this indicator regarding the extent to which women recognize suffered violence as a crime, as it is a perception indicator and needs particular methodology to be observed properly.

Hidden violence unreported to authorities

41. The Friends of the Chair concluded that the reporting of physical and sexual violence acts is of universal interest and included it as a specific dimension of the four indicators on physical and sexual violence, as stated in paragraph 12.

ECE Module on Violence against Women

42. Under the Development Account Project on Eradicating Violence against Women, the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe, Statistical Division, was assigned the development of a survey module that can be attached to an existing survey at the national level and provide an alternative for the dedicated statistical survey on violence against women. The draft module was developed and commented upon by an expert group meeting in September 2009.

43. The Friends of the Chair acknowledged the development of this module and its content. It was noted that, while the approach in principle meets the guidelines in terms of content, the implementation of the module requires a number of adjustments in terms of statistical strategy and methodology.

44. Specifically, concerns are raised in regard ensuring the safety of the respondents in the framework of the master survey that might focus on completely unrelated topic; the issues related to sampling, as the sample frame will be developed for the master survey, not the module on violence against women; the computation of the indicators, given the fact that the lack of randomness of the sampling may prevent accurate estimates; the need for extensive and additional training of the enumerators; translation to other languages; relatively short time-frame (mid-2011) to accomplish testing in ten countries.

45. It has to be emphasized that the participating countries may run this module only as a pilot – testing the protocols and methodology and questionnaire – while others might attempt at generating statistics for the core indicators.

46. In that context, the Friends of the Chair recommended that the follow-up work on the development and the implementation of the module needs to take these concern into consideration; to progress cautiously and be fully aware of adverse consequences that both the master survey and the module may incur in the process.

Draft guidelines for producing statistics on violence against women

47. The Friends of the Chair expressed the appreciation for the outline of the forthcoming *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women*. It was concluded that the outline represents a solid foundation for the future development of these Guidelines. It covers all the major topics in an appropriate manner.

48. A number of comments and suggestions were provided by the participants and all were noted and will be incorporated in the second draft of this handbook. For example, comments referred to issues of cluster sampling, training and selection of interviewers, time needed for interview and impact on planning and budgeting. Also, the issues of providing support to victims by the interviewers and ensuring safety of the enumerators requires further collection of national practices and elaboration.

Follow-up work of the Friends of the Chair

49. The Friends of the Chair discussed at length the future work programme of the Group. It was concluded that the work of the Friends of the Chair should be extended beyond the first phase, ultimately until 2015. The first phase of the work of the Group consists of identifying the set of core and additional statistical indicators on violence against women and adopting international guidelines for conducting statistical surveys on violence against women. The first phase is expected to be finalized by submitting the final draft of the *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women*, together with the report from this meeting held in Mexico, 9-11 December 2009, which presents the required sets of indicators, to the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 2011.

50. The Friends of the Chair concluded that there is a need to continue the work on two fronts. The first one refers to investigating the inclusion of indicators that have the source of data in administrative and civil society records in the core set, such as femicide, for example. The second front is to ensure that the statistical data collections that have a source in administrative records, such as crime statistics, are adjusted to provide source on gender statistics in general, and violence against women statistics, in particular.

51. In doing so, the Friends of the Chair group needs to coordinate closely with other international initiatives aimed at improving administrative records that are planned in the next several years. Also, the Group will provide its support to regional activities in that respect.

52. The Friends of the Chair will also explore the possibility of introducing a world-wide homogenous violence against women statistical data collection exercise, as initiated by the Chair of the Friends of the Chair.