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kNOwVAWdata: an innovative model for improving national and regional capacities to measure and monitor violence against women in Asia and the Pacific

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Effectively addressing VAW is key to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Further, reliable and comparable data on VAW prevalence are essential to inform and monitor transformative prevention and response efforts. But despite growing awareness of the causes and consequences of VAW, there remains a persistent lack of data on its prevalence. This largely stems from a lack of technical capacity to collect VAW data which creates major obstacles to developing appropriate and contexts-specific VAW policies, and hampers programming, monitoring and evaluation.

In light of growing demand for more accurate and reliable measurement of VAW prevalence, the kNOwVAWdata initiative launched in 2016. kNOwVAWdata is a partnership currently composed of UNFPA, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the University of Melbourne and Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS). Building on the partners' track records in supporting VAW data collection and use in the Asia Pacific region, kNOwVAWdata's main objective is to strengthen regional and national capacity to measure VAW. By developing the skillsets of national institutions and professionals to conduct VAW surveys and data analysis in Asia and the Pacific, kNOwVAWdata is helping to ensure sustainable availability of reliable, high quality VAW data. During the presentation a snapshot of available VAW prevalence data in Asia and the Pacific will be shown.

A hallmark component of the kNOwVAWdata initiative is a four-week long comprehensive curriculum hosted by the University of Melbourne, which successfully piloted this year. The kNOwVAWdata course covers all key concepts of VAW measurement, including: tools to generate reliable and comparable data; processes involved in undertaking a national prevalence survey; strategies for keeping interviewed women safe and for ensuring an inclusive approach to understanding VAW; and data analysis, interpretation and use, among other topics.

The kNOwVAWdata course will be conducted annually, and in time it will be offered by other institutions as well—initially in the Asia-Pacific region but eventually in other regions too—through partnership agreements. The course is solidifying kNOwVAWdata's long-term impact by forming a professional pool of regional experts who have participated in the course and can support one another in measuring national prevalence of VAW. This will help to strengthen the availability and quality of data and inform more effective policy and programme responses to prevent and end VAW.