



## **Information Note**

**Expert Group Meeting:  
“Step by Step towards Costing Violence Against Women in the Arab Region”  
20-21 September 2018  
United Nations House, Beirut- Lebanon**

### **1. Background:**

Violence against women (VAW) is a fundamental human rights violation that also has a wide-ranging impact on public health, societal well-being and economic development. VAW prevents women from living a life free from harm; it compromises their dignity, security and autonomy; and it can bear grave health consequences. It affects women’s participation in public life and slows down the development process. Despite the implementation of several measures and national strategies to combat this phenomenon around the globe, violence against women and girls continues to pose a significant challenge to the accomplishment of women’s economic, social, civil and political rights. It is related to multiple levels of vulnerability and women and girls who experience violence may be unable to access justice, quality health services, specialized institutions and support systems. Most recently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) dedicated a standalone goal for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, namely SDG 5. This goal contains six targets, two of which are directly related to VAW.

VAW affects the entire Arab region. Available statistics show that about 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced at least one form of physical or sexual violence. Although nationally representative data on VAW in the Arab region are rare, studies hint at the breadth and severity of the problem.<sup>1</sup> Estimating the cost of all forms of VAW, including physical, psychological and emotional, is a concern for Arab States, who have recognized the economic consequences of VAW on their societies, as well as the budgetary implications of due diligence requirements. Measuring the cost of VAW has been increasingly used as a tool to raise awareness and promote legislative and policy change, mainly in European and North American states.

This meeting follows rigorous work organized previously by UNFPA in Egypt and more recently by ESCWA at the regional and national levels to support other countries’ efforts in estimating the cost of violence against women. These efforts sketched a working document/guideline on engaging in estimating the cost of violence in the Arab region. Therefore, the meeting aims to provide an opportunity for an in-depth discussion among a group of experts from the region and beyond on the initial draft of the guide; to bring in regional and international experiences on the impact and cost implications of violence against women, especially intimate partner/marital

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<sup>1</sup>[http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625\\_eng.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf)

violence against women; and to make concrete suggestions on how to enhance the draft guidelines and identify tools on estimating the cost of violence in the Arab region.

This said guideline is composed of two elements: a step by step guide on how to organize and carry out an estimation of cost of violence exercise and a set of case studies to show the process undertaken by selected states and various stakeholders to cost marital violence and the way to use the costing initiative as a tool to introduce policy change.

## **2. Objectives of the meeting:**

Given the variance in the experiences of states in costing VAW, this meeting is designed to explore the impact of costing VAW on the social and economic development of Arab States. It will discuss the methodologies used for costing VAW and factors impacting the process. The meeting will also shed light on global experiences in the area in addition to others from the Arab region. The discussion will lead to identifying the structure of the Step by Step Guide on costing VAW in the Arab region. Specific objectives of the meeting are to:

- Share experiences in conducting costing VAW studies and exercises;
- Identify the elements to consider when costing VAW in the Arab region; and
- Discuss the draft guidelines developed on costing VAW and agree on its final structure.

## **3. Meeting Venue and Time:**

The meeting will take place at the United Nations House in Beirut on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor (Room F-500) on 20-21 September 2018.

Registration starts at 8:30 am on 20 September 2018.

## **4. Language of the meeting:**

The official language of the meeting is English.

## **5. Information:**

The EGM webpage is available at: <https://www.unescwa.org/events/expert-group-meeting-step-step-towards-costing-violence-against-women-arab-region>

It will be updated regularly with information and documents related to the meeting.

## **For participants from outside Lebanon:**

### **6. Travel:**

ESCWA will purchase the round-trip ticket to Beirut for participants based outside Lebanon. Roundtrip tickets will be issued in economy class on the most economic route in accordance with United Nations travel rules and regulations.

Participants are requested **NOT** to purchase their own tickets.

Should participants have any preferences regarding date of arrival or departure, please inform Ms. Hala Attieh (hala.attieh@un.org) by 6 August 2018 at the latest.

Participants are also kindly requested to **send a coloured copy of their valid passport along with contact details** (telephone, fax number and e-mail) to Ms. Hala Attieh (hala.attieh@un.org) no later than **07 August 2018**.

#### **7. Entry Visas:**

Participants are required to secure their own visa for entry to Lebanon. Participants should check with the Embassy of Lebanon in their country of residence to see if a visa is necessary and to secure their visa prior to departure if needed. Related information is also available on the World Travel Guide via the following link: <http://www.worldtravelguide.net>.

Participants will be reimbursed the cost of their visa upon presentation of a receipt.

#### **8. Daily Subsistence Allowance and Terminal Expenses:**

Participants will receive a daily subsistence allowance (DSA), as per the United Nations travel rules and regulations, for up to 3 nights to cover the cost of their hotel, meals and incidental expenses during the meeting. A fixed terminal expenses allowance (US\$ 188) will also be provided to cover transfers to and from the airport. Daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses will be paid to the experts via bank transfer in United States Dollars.

Participants are kindly urged to fill the attached bank information form and send it back to Ms. Hala Attieh (hala.attieh@un.org) as soon as possible.

Participants are also kindly requested to present the following documents to the ESCWA representative at the registration desk on the day of the meeting: original passport, copy of airline ticket and original boarding pass. Review of these documents is necessary to allow for the issuance of DSA.

#### **9. Accommodation:**

Participants are responsible for making their own hotel bookings in Beirut. ESCWA Secretariat has taken the necessary arrangements to provide accommodations at discounted prices. To view a list of such hotels, kindly visit the following site:

[https://iseek-beirut.un.org/system/files/document\\_link/hotels\\_list\\_2018\\_0.pdf](https://iseek-beirut.un.org/system/files/document_link/hotels_list_2018_0.pdf)

Participants should contact the hotel directly for reservations as desired and indicate that they are participating in an expert group meeting at ESCWA, to be entitled for a reduced corporate UN rate. Participants are also responsible for settling their own accommodation bills and other expenses directly with the hotel before departure.

#### **10. Correspondence**

Please direct all correspondence and queries related to this meeting to the following staff members in ECW.

For inquiries regarding the program, please contact:

Nada Darwazeh (Ms.)	Chief of Section, ESCWA Centre for Women	<a href="mailto:darwazehn@un.org">darwazehn@un.org</a>	+961-1-978658
Sukaina Al Nasrawi (Ms.)	Social Affairs Officer, ESCWA Centre for Women	<a href="mailto:al-nasrawi@un.org">al-nasrawi@un.org</a>	+961-1-978551

For inquiries regarding logistical arrangements, please contact:

Hala Attieh (Ms.)	Research Assistant, ESCWA Centre for Women	<a href="mailto:hala.attieh@un.org">hala.attieh@un.org</a>	+961-1-978644
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