



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Recommendations for action against **gender-related killing of women and girls**



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This booklet is based on relevant United Nations Secretary-General reports and should not be considered a full précis of these official documents. Instead, this booklet provides a summary of general information about United Nations support and assistance to counter gender-related killing and offers recommendations on the subject.

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Every day, women and girls worldwide are murdered because of their gender.

Gender-related killing occurs in all our societies, be it as a result of intimate partner violence, in the name of “honour”, in connection with accusations of sorcery or witchcraft, or in the context of armed conflict. In many cases, the killing is the final step in a continuum of violence against women and girls. Too often, perpetrators are not held accountable and impunity prevails.

The United Nations recommends a number of practical measures to more effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish gender-related killing of women and girls.

Several United Nations entities are supporting Member States in taking action against gender-related killing. This booklet aims to raise awareness among criminal justice practitioners, policy and decision makers, as well as United Nations staff and civil society. It presents the recommendations and the tools and assistance offered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN-Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to implement them.



A mother shows a picture of her murdered daughter in Mexico City, Mexico

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UNITED NATIONS REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Report of the Secretary-General on the outcome of the intergovernmental expert group meeting on gender-related killing of women and girls (E/CN.15/2015/16)

Report of the Secretary-General on action against gender-related killing of women and girls (A/70/93)

Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo (A/HRC/10/16)

United Nations support and assistance to promote action against gender-related killing

Promoting international action

The United Nations has the mandate and capacity to convene stakeholders from around the globe, build consensus and promote action. On 11-13 November 2014, delegates representing over 30 Member States came together in Bangkok to develop the recommendations presented in this booklet. They provide practical guidance on ways and means to more effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish gender-related killing of women and girls. The meeting was convened by UNODC, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, OHCHR, UN-Women and UNFPA.

More accurate and consistent statistics are crucial to understand and respond to trends of gender-related killing and related violence. UNODC supports international efforts to improve and compare crime and criminal justice data. Its global studies on homicide found that women and girls are disproportionately affected by lethal violence at home or in intimate relationships. A key achievement is the new International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes. It can bring together data from different sources for analysis at the country level. In addition to covering “femicide” as a form of intentional homicide, it allows for disaggregation that may provide information on specific forms of gender-related killing.

Providing regional guidance

Regional initiatives are crucial in guiding and promoting national action. UN-Women and OHCHR developed the *Latin American Model Protocol for the Investigation of Gender-related Killings of Women* and support its adaptation and implementation in different countries. This comprehensive and interdisciplinary tool focuses on the investigation and prosecution of violent deaths of women. It provides practical guidelines for the judiciary, prosecutors, police and forensic institutions.

Supporting national action

The United Nations can help countries to prevent and address gender-related killing. This includes technical assistance to adapt legal and policy frameworks and develop the capacity of institutions. It entails working with criminal justice officials to strengthen their investigation and prosecution skills, but also supporting data collection and analysis to build a knowledge base for targeted action. United Nations efforts at country-level also raise awareness of the issue among key stakeholders and the general population. These measures complement ongoing efforts to counter violence against women and girls before it escalates into gender-related killing.

Country examples



In Papua New Guinea, OHCHR participated in awareness-raising events on violence against women and provided technical assistance to the Government to end killings of individuals accused of sorcery and witchcraft, providing, in collaboration with Oxfam and the Ombudsman Commission, human rights trainings to local government officials.

[Source: A/70/93, para. 38]

UNFPA works across countries globally to address various forms of harmful practices that can result in gender-related killings. Such approaches entail great sensitivity to local cultural, religious and traditional beliefs and behaviours, while never losing sight of the imperative of adhering to rights-based approaches. Technical assistance and cooperation is provided in that regard to multi-stakeholders in more than 156 countries to support the implementation of legislation and programmes aimed at adopting long-term measures to enhance gender equality.

In Mexico, UN-Women carried out an analysis of penal codes and civil laws with a view to identifying elements that discriminate against women and supporting decision makers in addressing all forms of violence against women, including gender-related killing. UN-Women conducted a number of studies with current data on femicide in the country and prepared a protocol on how to investigate the crime of homicide with a gender perspective. UNODC complemented those efforts by working with police in order to strengthen investigation processes in cases of “femicide” and improve investigation protocols, based on a gender perspective. In the States of Durango and Coahuila, UNODC supported the development of gender-disaggregated criminal justice data and started supporting the State of Mexico in analysing the causes of femicide.

[Source: A/70/93, para. 37]

Particular forms of gender-related killing occur in conflict and post-conflict countries, where United Nations peace operations supported efforts to hold perpetrators accountable. Technical support and advice have been provided to help establish and operationalize a special court for the prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence in Liberia and to assist the transitional authorities in the Central African Republic in establishing a special criminal court to address the most serious crimes, including sexual and gender-based violence.

[Source: A/70/93, para. 40]



The following recommendations were developed by an open-ended intergovernmental expert group on gender-related killing of women and girls, which met in Bangkok on 11-13 November 2014. In his 2015 report to the General Assembly (A/70/93), the Secretary-General reiterated the recommendations, which envisage practical measures for action by Member States to more effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish gender-related killing of women and girls.

General recommendations

RATIFY AND IMPLEMENT RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONVENTIONS

- Consider ways to enhance international cooperation in these cases, including by ratifying and implementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protocols thereto, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and their follow-up mechanisms;

USE AND ADAPT TECHNICAL TOOLS

- Consider translating and disseminating the Latin American Model Protocol for the Investigation of Gender-related Killing of Women, to be used as a model for regional and country-level adaptation, and training justice officials on its contents and use, in collaboration with relevant entities of the United Nations system;

REVIEW AND UPDATE LEGISLATION

- Review, evaluate and update national laws to effectively address gender-related killing of women, including, where appropriate, by providing for specific offences or aggravating circumstances and by reviewing legislation to ensure that it does not include discriminating factors—"passion", "violent emotion", "honour" or "provocation"—that allow perpetrators to escape criminal responsibility;

DEVELOP CAPACITY

- Strengthen the capacity of criminal justice institutions to prevent, investigate, prosecute, punish and remedy gender-related killing of women, including by:
 - (i) Assessing the effectiveness of laws;
 - (ii) Implementing training programmes and awareness campaigns;
 - (iii) Identifying gender stereotypes and discrimination within institutions, providing adequate sanctions for discrimination, sexual misconduct and other misconduct, and ensuring that measures are taken to address them;
 - (iv) Promoting the recruitment, employment and appropriate working conditions of women in the legal and law enforcement professions, especially at the decision-making level;

ENHANCE COORDINATION BETWEEN ALL STAKEHOLDERS

- Promote and enhance coordination, at all levels of government, between institutions mandated to prevent, investigate, prosecute, punish and remedy gender-related killing of women, as well as coordination with other relevant sectors, including civil society and the education, health, social services and security sectors;

PROVIDE HUMAN, TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- Provide sufficient human, technical and financial resources for the implementation of laws, policies, procedures and practices to prevent and respond to gender-related killing of women, including by adopting gender-sensitive budget policies as well as monitoring and accountability procedures;

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Monitor the implementation of laws, policies, procedures and practices and gender-sensitive budget policies to prevent and respond to gender-related killing of women, and evaluate their effectiveness and impact, including from a gender perspective, through transparent, participatory and inclusive processes;

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Continue and enhance international cooperation and technical assistance to address capacity gaps and the exchange of information on the implementation of promising practices to prevent and address gender-related killing of women, with the support of relevant United Nations entities and competent regional institutions and civil society, including academic and research institutions.

Recommendations on data collection and analysis

IDENTIFY ELEMENTS TO DEFINE GENDER-RELATED KILLING

- Identify elements that could be used at the national and international levels to characterize and classify forms of gender-related killing of women, in particular for statistical purposes;

FOCUS ON QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

- Strengthen the collection, analysis and dissemination of qualitative and quantitative data on

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