



Shelters for Women Survivors of Violence: Availability and Accessibility in the Arab Region

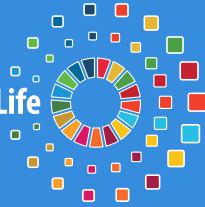


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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Shelters for Women Survivors of Violence: Availability and Accessibility in the Arab Region



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Executive Summary

Violence against women is a global pandemic and a violation of an individual's human rights. Data show that 35.4 per cent of ever-married women in the Arab region have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime. Eradicating violence against women requires a comprehensive, holistic approach to address the impact on women's physical and psychosocial health, as well as her participation in the economy and public life. Shelters for survivors of violence are an essential component of such a comprehensive and coordinated response and are globally recognized as a useful option for women escaping violence. This is because shelters provide survivors with the opportunity to distance themselves from abusive relationships and consider their choices for a life free from violence.

The provision of shelter is closely linked to State obligations under international human rights instruments to address violence against women and protect survivors. Under due diligence obligations, States are held responsible for ensuring that women and children are safe from violence, even when violence occurs within the home. This includes prevention, protection, prosecution, penalization and the provision of redress for acts of violence against women. Shelters are central to the overall protection mechanism offered by the State and non-governmental organizations and access to shelters can play a vital role in the prevention of violence through awareness-raising and social

change. Notably, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences has declared the availability of shelters and protection orders as part of a State's due diligence. Furthermore, the United Nations Handbook for Legislation on Violence Against Women (2012) emphasizes that comprehensive and robust services should be reflected in national legislation and implemented through a robust criminal justice system.

This study, produced by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund – Regional Office for Arab States (UNFPA-ROAS), Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and ABAAD Resource Centre for Gender Equality (ABAAD), examines the importance, as well as the availability and accessibility, of shelters in the Arab region, providing a nuanced understanding of the relationship between overall national legal frameworks and the daily operation of shelters.

States in the Arab region acknowledge the pandemic nature of violence against women, which has resulted in the development of legislation, policies and services, including shelters. Despite these advances, this study reveals several concerns across the region regarding the prevalence and accessibility of shelters; gaps in legislation governing shelters; and the capacity, financing and service provision of shelters.

While most of the States in the Arab region have shelters, their number and geographic distribution is extremely limited. Based on the data received for this study, it appears that the number of shelters in Arab States does not exceed 50. The scarcity of shelters and their services, combined with limited knowledge of their existence, restricts women's access across the region. In addition, the sociocultural dimensions of the region - such as the social construct of extended families, laws governing marriage and guardianship and the negative perceptions of women living on their own - may lead to women not accessing shelters.

Furthermore, no State in the Arab region has enacted comprehensive legislation that encompasses all necessary protocols by the United Nations Handbook to respond to the specific needs of survivors, particularly regarding shelter. While contexts vary, many national legislative frameworks – such as religious and customary laws, constitutions and penal codes – lack consistency and harmonization, leading to a lack of clarity on the definition and right to shelter in the region. Moreover, these frameworks often fail to address the legal establishment, regulation and funding of shelters and other protection mechanisms. Many Arab States have created national action plans and strategies as a commitment to addressing violence against women, however, the strategies contain little content on how to guarantee that such services will be available.

This study further identifies that many States in the Arab region do not follow the global standards issued by the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (ESP), which includes providing safe and secure accommodation; ensuring safety measures are in place; providing basic accommodation needs free of charge; ensuring there is a protocol for unaccompanied children, including for longer-term alternative care where necessary and appropriate; and ensuring that accommodation is accessible for women and girls with disabilities. In some States, service provision is based on a gender-neutral “whole family” approach with services, including shelters, provided for men and women together, while over half of shelters include mediation and/or reconciliation services, approaches which fail to recognize the imbalance of power between the survivor and perpetrator and put women at significant risk.

Based on the above, this study provides a series of recommendations to strengthen governmental commitment towards the comprehensive protection of women survivors of violence and to enhance the performance of existing shelters to ensure better quality of service for survivors. The recommendations are centred around four areas: (a) the availability of the service; (b) accessibility to the service; (c) professionalism of service; and (d) quality of services. It is also recommended that future in-depth studies on shelters in the Arab region be conducted to augment the findings of this study.

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Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BDPfA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW Committee	United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Convention of Belém do Pará	Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ESP	Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GWSN	Global Women's Shelter Network
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
SR-VAW	United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences
VAW	Violence against women
WAVE	Women Against Violence Europe

- 1. Violence against Women:
An Unfinished Agenda
in the Arab Region**



1. Violence against Women: An Unfinished Agenda in the Arab Region

Violence against women (VAW) affects all spheres of a woman's life, as well as her family and society as a whole. It is a highly prevalent occurrence in the Arab region that takes several forms. Data show that 35.4 per cent of ever-married women in the North Africa and the Middle East region have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime—an estimate that is slightly higher than the global average.¹ Other forms of violence in the region include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment in the public sphere, including school and work, child marriage, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called “honour-based” crimes. Consequences of such violence extend beyond the household and entail numerous social and economic costs, harming national economies. This impact is often unrecognized and underreported as VAW continues to be tolerated within the Arab region and is often justified by sociocultural norms.

Moreover, the extremely high levels of violence and displacement afflicting the Arab region have deepened and spread the effects of VAW. Humanitarian settings further expose women and girls to protection challenges associated with displacement and conflict. Though concrete data in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are difficult to come by, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) finds that VAW not only serves as a cause for flight for women in girls, but also

manifests in different ways in humanitarian settings,² especially in contexts where women and girls comprise the majority of the displaced.³ A study by UN Women found that refugee women in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq cited VAW as an increasing problem.⁴

Eradicating VAW is part of the unrealized agenda for women in the Arab region. The international framework governing efforts towards sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its associated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is also cognisant of the limited efforts to address violence against women and thus pledges in targets 2 and 3 of goal 5 eliminate violence. Target 5.2 of the SDGs specifically pledge to “eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation” and target 5.3 is committed to “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation”. In addition to impacting women's physical and psychosocial health, VAW impacts women's participation in the economy and political sphere. Ultimately, its existence is linked to the reality that Arab societies do not adequately recognize the extent of women's contribution to the social, economic and political development process. This status is reflected in the Arab States' ranking in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report, which highlights that all eight geographical regions assessed in the report have

achieved at least 60 per cent gender parity, with a global average of 68 per cent. However, the region⁵ ranks the lowest compared to the rest of the world and just barely crosses the 60 per cent threshold (60.2 per cent). If current rates were to be maintained, it would take 153 years to close the gender gap in the region.⁶ The overall situation of women in the Arab region is also evidenced in their labour market participation, which stood at 23 per cent in 2013 compared to a global average of 50 per cent,⁷ and their political participation, which is 18.1 per cent compared to a global average of 24.3 per cent.⁸ Discriminatory gender dynamics that favour men also shape the situation of women in the region and perpetuate inequalities. Thus, VAW in the Arab region is not practiced in vacuum but is part of a more deeply rooted problem.

Current strategic interventions point to the challenge of promoting a culture of accountability among governments to address VAW; this is evident in the variation among Arab States in responding to internationally identified obligations and standards. While most States acknowledge that VAW is rampant, the availability of national laws, policies and the provision of service have not been systematic. As of 2019, only six States in the region, namely Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, have adopted stand-alone VAW legislation and nine States have designed national strategies or policies to combat VAW.⁹ In many Arab States, most social services in response to VAW are provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with limited financial and human resources and little support from the government.¹⁰ Similarly, government services protecting women survivors¹¹ tend to be dispersed among various public sector institutions and rarely achieve nationwide coverage. Although there are

exceptions, generally this results in disconnected public service delivery chains.

The present study is part of a series by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to shed light on the progress in combating VAW in the region within the framework of international norms, while also sharing international experiences and good practices that may be applicable in the Arab region. To further contribute to the knowledge base on this topic, ESCWA undertook this study in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund – Regional Office for Arab States (UNFPA-ROAS), Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and ABAAD Resource Centre for Gender Equality (ABAAD), to focus on the provision of shelter in the Arab region, arguing that shelter is central to the overall protection mechanism offered by the State and NGOs. The study highlights the importance of safe sheltering service as a life-saving measure and as a means to empower survivors, when coupled with a range of protection services. Access to shelter can also play a vital role in the prevention of VAW through awareness-raising, advocacy and contributing to social change.

The study examines the availability and accessibility of shelters in the Arab region. It provides a more detailed picture and a nuanced understanding of how shelters operate in the region. It offers essential insights into the relationship between the overall legal framework in some States and the daily operation of shelters. The study aims to help State actors (as well as civil society) understand the obstacles to ensuring effective shelter provision in the region with the aim of addressing challenges and institutionalizing the benefits of such services.

The study argues that shelters are an essential component of a comprehensive response to VAW and that the availability and accessibility of shelters must be linked to national legislation. It also illustrates that the cultural context as well as the broadness or narrowness of the operational definition of VAW affects the availability and accessibility of shelter and the type of services available.

A. Research on Shelter Services

Shelters emerged out of the women's movement in Western Europe and the United States as part of a growing attempt to address the consequences of VAW. The first shelters for women fleeing abuse were established in England in the early 1970s.¹² Since then, the provision of shelter services has increased globally, as has research and discussions surrounding the central role of shelters in providing women survivors of violence with safe transitional accommodation. The provision of shelter services is also the result of decades of women's activism that was, to a large extent, initiated and organised by grassroots and women's organizations working with women survivors of violence. The term "women's shelter" (also known as a refuge)¹³ describes safe specialized accommodation for women and their children escaping violence, run mainly by women's NGOs who take a gender-specific and human rights-based approach.¹⁴ In the 1970s and 1980s, shelters were opened particularly in Western Europe, North America, and Australia, as part of a growing international movement. As the numbers of shelters increased, they began to form national networks, recognizing that many women escaping violence needed to travel some distance to reach safety; they also raised awareness of VAW.¹⁵

The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (SR-VAW) employs a wide definition for women's shelters. The SR-VAW has expanded upon the definition initially developed by WAVE: "A 'shelter'¹⁶ or 'refuge' denotes emergency and temporary 'safe accommodation for women and children who have been exposed to, or are at risk of (usually male) violence in a domestic context.'"¹⁷ Shelters "can also provide support for women and girls who have been subjected to, or are at risk of, other forms of violence, for instance trafficked persons, migrants and asylum seekers, and those fleeing from conflict to refugee and internally displaced persons camps, where the risk of gender-based violence is high".¹⁸ Providing protection in conflict-affected areas, when VAW is at an increased risk, is also a recommendation of the CEDAW Committee.¹⁹

A shelter is expected to provide a temporary emergency residential solution for women fleeing violence. It responds to their immediate needs and that of their children for protection from imminent, and on occasions, life threatening danger. Other available protection mechanisms include protection orders and the recently introduced "safe at home" model, "where the perpetrator of violence is removed and women and children can remain in their homes".²⁰ While resorting to shelters would imply relocation and tighter security measures, the other options are considered less disruptive for women, whereby they and their children remain in their social environment. Much of the theoretical discussion on best choices for preventing VAW revolves around shelter services confining women while keeping the perpetrator out. This is particularly relevant in existing literature on confidential shelters where "entering the shelter is much like going 'underground.'" Women are dropped off at a discreet distance from the building and must maintain strict rules

of secrecy about the location”.²¹ In contrast, the use of protection orders and the “safe at home” model calls upon States to take proactive and reliable actions to keep the perpetrator away by activating the criminal justice system.²² Research shows that both options are helpful for women and provide them with the opportunity to distance themselves from the abusive relations and consider choices for their life that are free from violence. However, on many occasions the option to stay at home may not be feasible given the violent nature of her partner, who could constitute a real threat to the woman’s life. In other instances, accessing shelter may not be possible for some survivors, which is why a comprehensive holistic approach that makes available an assortment of services is necessary.

Shelters’ responsiveness to women’s immediate need for safety and refuge has gradually developed to address other needs such as focused specialized and psychosocial support, health care, vocational training, employment opportunities, as well as individual and group counselling. A study by Tutty conducted in Canada with 282 women survivors upon their entry to a shelter shows that some of the available services are responsive to what women wanted from shelter. These included:

...emotional support or counselling from shelter staff (81 per cent of 282 women), closely followed by a safe, secure place to stay (79.9 per cent). Obtaining information about coping with stress and anger (73.3 per cent) and about improving self-esteem (73 per cent) and referrals for housing (67 per cent) were also high priorities. Taking a “break” from the abusive partner (55.7 per cent) [...] Of the 278 women with children, almost half had needs related to their offspring, including understanding how abuse affects them (55.4 per cent), child

care (43.5 per cent) and counselling for their children (40 per cent).²³

The results of the exit survey administered to the same group of women identified that “the most helpful aspect was a safe and secure place to stay, followed by a ‘break’ from abusive partner, a safe and secure place for their children to stay and emotional support/counselling from staff”.²⁴

Anecdotal evidence indicates that shelters in the Arab region were established in the late 1980s and early 1990s by several NGOs. In 2010, the Tunisia-based Center for Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR), in collaboration with UNIFEM (now UN Women), produced a directory of government and non-government institutions that support female survivors of violence in 19 Arab States and documented their objectives, activities and field of work.²⁵ The latter was divided into five main categories: shelter, listening, counselling, research and advocacy and training, and each organization reported on which of these fields of work it specialized in. A rapid analysis of the organizations’ profiles showed that out of the 434 organizations documented, around 10 per cent (n = 43) indicated that they provided shelter services.²⁶ The scarcity of shelters and their services limits women’s access across the region.

Along with limitations on accessibility to shelters because of their limited numbers and geographic distribution, the sociocultural dimensions of the region may contribute to women’s limited access to shelters. For example, the perception that accessing shelter services is not socially acceptable may be a reason for not using them. This could be explained by the social construct of extended families, laws governing marriage and guardianship and the negative social perception

of women living on their own. Other concerns might include the stigma associated with going to a shelter, as well as the perception that shelters may serve as another means of “containing” women. Furthermore, the various intersecting identities of women – such as their socioeconomic status, ethnicity or marital status – may lead to differing needs and accessibility; however, little information is available on how these variables may impact them. Such a context plays an important role in understanding how shelters are operating in the Arab region and to what extent they are effectively utilized.

The need for shelters in the Arab region, as in other States, was identified during the engagement of NGOs with survivors of violence through outreach programmes and sociolegal counselling and helplines. However, contrary to other regions, little is known about how these services in the Arab region align with international standards, such as the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (ESP).²⁷ This study fills this gap and provides a snapshot of the availability and accessibility of shelters in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen, for women and their children escaping violence.²⁸ While this initial assessment is an important first step, a comprehensive and longer-term evaluation of shelter services for women at the local level across the Arab region is also needed.

B. Methodology

The study is based on a mixed methods approach with the primary component being a desk review, complemented by two questionnaires. The qualitative component

provides a robust review of the situation of shelters in the Arab region and a comprehensive and contextualized evidence of shelters’ availability and accessibility. The desk review is guided by international standards that have been designed to guide the establishment of shelters and ensure that they facilitate the survivor’s recovery and reintegration into society. Such standards have identified provisions for accessibility, appropriateness, affordability and quality of the shelter services. In addition, the study capitalized on WAVE reports on shelters in the European Union to examine existing good practice and provide relevant policy recommendations.

To have an evidence-based understanding of how shelters operate and what works and what does not work, two questionnaires were administered (available in the annexes). Data from these questionnaires can be found in the annexes of this report. The first questionnaire was designed and sent to National Women’s Machineries in Arab States to solicit input on government-run shelters, particularly on the extent of their availability and the variety of services offered to survivors of violence accessing shelter. Data on six government-run shelters was obtained from National Women’s Machineries in Jordan (two shelters); the State of Palestine (two shelters); Oman (one shelter); and Syrian Arab Republic (one shelter) (table AI.7).²⁹

The second complementary questionnaire was designed and disseminated to civil society organizations that operate shelters in the Arab region. The questionnaire solicited general information about shelters, their management and organization of work and their accessibility for survivors. It also enquired on the support provided by the shelter to survivors, including security and safety measures, as well as documentation practices and referral systems.

This questionnaire was administrated electronically with follow-up phone calls, when possible. Organizations that participated in the questionnaire were selected after extensive consultation and review of their profiles. They were organizations registered in their respective States to provide support to survivors of violence. The questionnaire was sent to approximately 50 organizations, out of which 13 organizations running shelters in seven Arab States responded, including: Yemen (four shelters); Lebanon (three shelters); Tunisia (two shelters); the State of Palestine (one shelter); Algeria (one shelter); Bahrain (one shelter); and Jordan (one shelter) (table AI.1). Responses to the second questionnaire were also received on four government run shelters: one in Saudi Arabia and three in Iraq. This data has been included in the section on government-run shelters. Therefore, to facilitate the analysis and ensuing discussion, the data on shelters is divided into two sections: shelters run by NGOs and shelters run by the government, given that the questions for government-run and NGO-run shelters were slightly different and the response rate was low.

While the data provided in both questionnaires represents the most comprehensive data on shelter provision in the Arab region to date, it has significant limitations. Not all questions were answered and on several occasions the data provided was inconsistent or incomplete.³⁰ It was not possible, given the timeframe and restrictions of this study, to obtain detailed information on each shelter, nor was it possible to regularly contact the shelters to check discrepancies, or clarify or obtain supplementary information where data was missing, contradictory or unclear. Thus, the analysis resulting from these questionnaires is indicative of the status of shelters, including their availability and accessibility, in the Arab region and cannot be generalized. Nonetheless, this data provides a great opportunity for future research to build on as it can be strengthened by additional fieldwork.

To sharpen the study and enhance its quality, an Expert Group Meeting was held in February 2019 that was attended by 15 regional and international experts. The purpose of the Expert Group Meeting was to discuss the study in draft format and solicit substantive input from experts to the literature review to fill analytical gaps.

2. The Role of Shelters in a Comprehensive Approach towards Combating Violence against Women

2. The Role of Shelters in a Comprehensive Approach towards Combating Violence against Women

“The establishment of safe women’s shelters and efficient and immediate protection orders should be seen as human rights obligation that uphold a woman’s right to life free from violence”.

Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, A/HRC/35/30, para 100.

This chapter provides a background on the international human rights instruments and global standards, such as the ESP, that establish the importance of shelters as part of an integrated response to VAW. These instruments outline the States’ obligations to protect, prevent, prosecute, punish and provide redress (a State’s due diligence obligation) for VAW. A brief review of international and regional treaties will highlight the importance placed on shelter provision, as a crucial element of protection and prevention.

Shelters for survivors of violence are an essential part of a comprehensive and coordinated response to combat VAW. They work alongside other general social, justice and policing and health services to support survivors.³¹ This chapter will also look at protection orders showing how they have been used to protect survivors of domestic violence and their children. The impact of domestic violence on children will be covered,

highlighting the importance of integrating the safety of children with both the provision of shelters and the use of protection orders to prevent further abuse.

Details of the different types of support services provided by a specialist shelter for survivors of VAW and the role of such shelters in protection will also be included in this chapter with reference to recommended standards and the available data on the cost of shelter provision. The chapter will conclude with a discussion on the crucial role women’s shelters play in the protection of survivors, working alongside the police, health and other professionals, providing the specialist support needed to recover, rebuild and reintegrate into society.

A. The State’s obligations to address violence against women

The establishment of shelter provision is closely linked to State obligations under international human rights instruments to address VAW and protect survivors. States’ obligations under international law to protect women from violence were initially limited to the actions of State actors (national bodies or agents of the State). However, since the 1990s these obligations have broadened to include the actions of non-State actors (private individuals);

this obligation to respond to VAW in a timely and appropriate manner is known as due diligence. Under the due diligence obligation, States are held responsible for ensuring that women and children are safe from violence even when the violence occurs within the home.³² This includes prevention, protection, prosecution, penalization and the provision of redress for acts of VAW. The vast majority of Arab States have acceded to or participated in reporting and monitoring of these relevant conventions and frameworks.³³ Article 2(d) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) holds States responsible for any form of discrimination against women perpetrated by public authorities or institutions, while article 2(e) requires States: “To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise”.³⁴ This obligation was further elaborated in the CEDAW Committee’s General Recommendation no. 19, in 1992, which identified gender-based violence as “a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men”.³⁵

While CEDAW does not explicitly address VAW or the due diligence obligation, the CEDAW Committee’s General Recommendation no. 35, an update to General Recommendation no. 19, emphasizes that the obligation to exercise due diligence to eliminate discrimination underpins the whole of CEDAW. The General Recommendation highlights State parties’ responsibility to “prevent as well as to investigate, prosecute, punish and provide reparation for acts or omissions by non-State actors which result in gender-based violence against women..”.³⁶ Under the requirement to protect survivors of VAW, General Recommendation no. 35 notes the State’s

responsibility to provide specialist women’s support services, including adequate shelters.³⁷

While the importance of CEDAW cannot be underestimated, most legislation draws its definition of VAW from the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW), which also established the State obligation to provide remedies for survivors of violence along with their role to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrator of violence. More specifically, it obligates States to protect women through the provision of a set of social, legal and psychological services in the form of shelters, legal aid, rehabilitation and counselling services as well as to take measure to ensure the safety of women during rehabilitation.³⁸

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA), draws its definition of VAW from DEVAW, while article 125(a) includes recommendations for the provision of services in its strategic objectives and actions on addressing VAW, including well-funded shelters for women and girls.³⁹ Subsequent reviews of the BDPfA have reinforced and emphasized the importance of providing protective services, including shelters, as part of the State’s obligation to protect women from violence.

The Programme of Action of International Conference for Population and Development (ICPD PoA 1994) provides guidance for States to take a rights-based approach to development. Principle 4 of the Programme explicitly encourages national governments to act to prevent and respond to VAW.⁴⁰

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the progress in implementation of the BDPfA. At its 2013 meeting, which focused on

addressing VAW, the CSW adopted a range of actions to prevent and eliminate all forms of VAW in its agreed conclusions. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach to address such violence, the agreed conclusions called for measures to support survivors, in combination with prevention measures;⁴¹ this included the provision of State-supported and independent women's shelters.⁴² The CSW also highlighted that ending VAW was imperative to achieving international development goals, including the then-Millennium Development Goals.⁴³

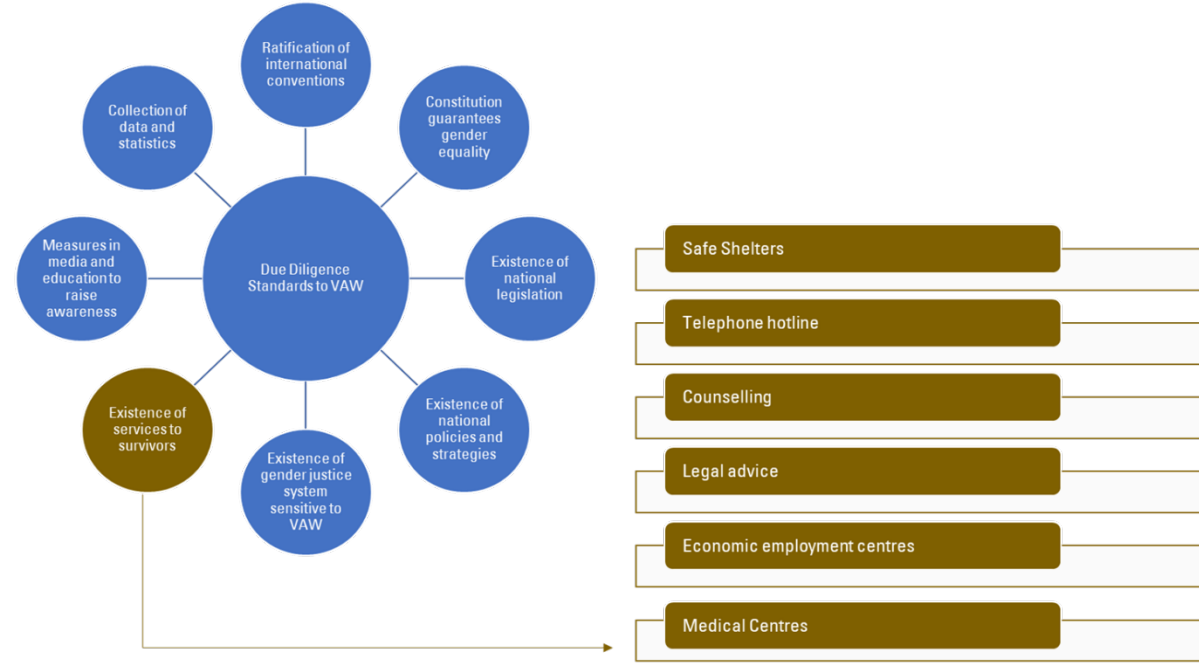
More recently, the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have singled out the need to achieve gender equality under SDG 5, specifically target 5.2 on the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. Furthermore, the SDGs are driven by the concept of "leaving no one behind" and inclusivity, which aligns with the provision of protection for all survivors of VAW.

The broader outline for a State's compliance with its obligations to combat VAW revolves around a set of questions developed by the SR-VAW emphasizing the responsibilities of the State. These questions are organized thematically around the following elements: (1) the ratification and adherence to CEDAW; (2) the constitutional guarantees of principles of equality for women or prohibiting VAW; (3) the existence of a national legislation of redress for victims of violence; (4) the existence of national policies or plans that deal

with VAW; (5) the existence of a gender justice system that is sensitive to issues of VAW; (6) the existence of services for survivors of violence, such as shelters, legal and psychological counselling and rehabilitation; (7) the existence of measures in the field of media and education to raise awareness of VAW; and (8) the collection of data and statistics in a manner that ensures that VAW is visible.⁴⁴ The figure below illustrates the centrality of VAW when addressing due diligence.

Services for survivors of VAW are part of a comprehensive approach that States are responsible to create and maintain. Comprehensive services are defined as the assistance provided to survivors of violence and their children to address their social, health, legal and economic needs as they work on societal reintegration. According to international standards, services for survivors of VAW must take into consideration the following principles: (a) Availability of the service: to what extent are all types of services available in a given country; (b) Accessibility of the service: how financially and geographically are all services accessible to survivors, including women with disabilities and linguistic differences; (c) Professionalism of service: particularly with regard to respecting the privacy of the survivor; and (d) Quality of service: with regard to ensuring high quality of all services provided and the provision of capacity development for staff working in this area.⁴⁵ These standards must be applied when considering healthcare services, justice and policing services; social services and the governance of coordination.⁴⁶

The due diligence standard to address violence against women



The respective figure has been collated from recommendations developed by international bodies including the United Nations and the Council of Europe, as well as regional and country networks such as WAVE, the Canadian Network of Women’s Shelters and Transition Houses, Imkaan and Women’s Aid.

The UN Handbook for Legislation on Violence against Women (2012) emphasizes that comprehensive and integrated services should be reflected in national legislation and implemented through a robust criminal justice system. The Handbook obliges States to secure funding for such services and ensure that they are provided to a high standard.⁴⁷ These often include core services that are essential to support survivors: health services that provide support, care for injuries, mental health and sexual assault exam and care; legal services that include receiving complaints, investigating, and the provision of support during legal proceedings; and social services that provide helplines, psychosocial counselling, legal counselling, children’s services and shelter.⁴⁸

The importance of the requirement for all State authorities and actors to exercise due diligence has been further elaborated by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) in its consideration of two cases of femicide in Austria – that of Şahide Goekce (deceased) v. Austria (2005)⁴⁹ and Fatma Yildirim (deceased) v. Austria (2005).⁵⁰ The failure of the Austrian authorities to consider the level of risk the women faced violated their right to life. Both women had been given protection orders; however, the prosecutor in each case had not sanctioned the arrest of the respective perpetrators despite the level of threat they posed, and the women had not been offered a place of safety. In both cases, the CEDAW

Committee noted that the State party had breached its due diligence obligation and recommended that the State party should: “ensure that in all action taken to protect women from violence, due consideration is given to the safety of women, emphasizing that the perpetrator’s rights cannot supersede women’s human rights to life and to physical and mental integrity”.⁵¹

More recently, the 2017 thematic report of the SR-VAW examined integrated services and protection measures with a focus on the importance of access to shelters and protection orders as part of a comprehensive approach to combating VAW. The report detailed the obligations of States enshrined in different international and regional treaties and instruments to combat discrimination and VAW and protect women by “ensuring their safety and human rights through access to shelters/refuges and access to protection orders”.⁵² Emphasizing the crucial role that these measures play in protecting women from harm, the report notes that femicide is “in many cases directly related to a widespread unavailability of shelters and lack of efficiency or enforceability of protection orders”.⁵³ The SR-VAW then provided detail on shelters and protection orders, how they intersect, challenges and good practices and made specific recommendations to States highlighting the importance of taking a comprehensive and integrated approach to prevent and address VAW. The SR-VAW calls for States to provide a sufficient number of safe, confidential shelters with adequate funding in rural and urban areas, with at least one accessible 24 hours a day.⁵⁴ The SR-VAW also calls upon States to consider developing indicators on shelters and protection orders as part of SDG 5 on gender equality.

Regional treaties also emphasize the importance of addressing VAW and protecting women from violence. These include the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). The Convention of Belém do Pará, which came into force in 1995, was the first binding international treaty to recognize VAW as a violation of human rights. It highlights the duty of States parties to the Convention to “provide appropriate specialized services for women who have been subjected to violence, through public and private sector agencies, including shelters”.⁵⁵ Article 3 of the 2003 Maputo Protocol requires States Parties to adopt and implement measures to protect women from all forms of violence.⁵⁶ The 2013 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN requires State Parties to resolve to eliminate VAW, including through enhancing protection and services for women and children.⁵⁷ Additionally, the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women developed to implement the Declaration notes the importance of protection and support services for survivors, including accommodation.⁵⁸

The Istanbul Convention includes several central principles and standards that have been identified as essential to effectively address VAW. It requires States to offer a holistic response to

VAW, through the 4Ps approach: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and adopting and implementing integrated Policies. Protection includes both general and specialized support services, including shelters. Under article 23 of the Istanbul Convention, State parties are required to “take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide for the setting-up of appropriate, easily accessible shelters in sufficient numbers to provide safe accommodation for and to reach out pro-actively to victims, especially women and their children”.⁵⁹ The Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention notes that, “The purpose of shelters is to ensure immediate, preferably around the-clock, access to safe accommodation for victims, especially women and children, when they are no longer safe at home. Temporary housing alone or general shelters such as those for the homeless are not sufficient and will not provide the necessary support or empowerment”.⁶⁰ The provision of such specialist services is not required by State parties, though they are expected to support organizations providing such services.⁶¹ Recognizing the very specialized support needed by survivors to recover and rebuild their lives, the Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention notes that this is best done by women’s organizations, with the support of the State.⁶²

In terms of global standards, the ESP developed by United Nations agencies is comprised of international good practice that guides basic services for women and girls, particularly for low- and middle-income countries. As well as aligning with other international instruments, it “aims to fill the gap between the agreements and obligations made at the international level for the provision of services for VAW, including the agreed conclusions of the 2013 Commission on the Status of Women, and country level activity by providing technical guidance on how to

develop quality essential services”.⁶³ Working with national governments, the ESP frameworks provide support and strategic guidance to suit various contexts and settings, and focuses on the coordination and governance of coordination of VAW services at both national and local levels, emphasizing cross-sectoral approaches built upon recognized best practices.⁶⁴

B. A coordinated and comprehensive response to violence against women

Providing a comprehensive coordinated response to VAW has been identified as good practice by the United Nations,⁶⁵ underscores the foundations of the ESP and is recommended by the SR-VAW.⁶⁶ Women who experience violence present a range of different needs that can change over time.⁶⁷ Likewise, witnessing and experiencing domestic violence has a range of behavioural, psychological and emotional impacts on children that affect their health, well-being and education. Preventing perpetrators from committing further acts of violence is crucial to keeping current and future survivors safe. These all require a range of measures from both specialized services such as women’s shelters provided by NGOs and general services such as legal, health and housing provided by State agencies.⁶⁸ While the extent and level of service provision varies considerably, State agencies and NGOs working together in coordination is central to a successful response.

The criminal justice system (courts, police, etc.) and other State agencies can and should refer women and children to shelters providing crisis accommodation when needed.⁶⁹ In turn, shelter staff can help women who self-referred gain the confidence to report to the police and can support them if they are witnesses in any subsequent prosecution. Shelter staff

can also help women access appropriate physical and mental health support needed to improve their well-being and assist health professionals to understand the complexities of domestic violence.

Legal protection measures are central to a coordinated response to VAW both in increasing the safety of survivors and their children and preventing further violence. Protection orders are an important legal measure that can provide significant protection to survivors, as highlighted in the 2017 report of the SR-VAW.⁷⁰ The ESP recognizes protection orders as one of the key protection measures that should be afforded to survivors.⁷¹ Not all women need or want to go to a shelter, and with shortages of shelter space in almost every State, the availability of protection orders to enable the removal of the perpetrator from the shared home and its vicinity can provide an alternative form of protection. Research shows that women often stay with their violent partner for many years and, when forced to leave for their own safety, will try several different strategies, including legal measures. However, some women will never be safe in their own home because of the level of threat they face from their current or former partner and their only recourse is to seek safety at a shelter. Some women must travel significant distances and even move between shelters to be safe.⁷² For example, research indicates there are over 18,000 such journeys undertaken each year in the United Kingdom alone.⁷³ Thus, it is essential that both shelters and protection orders are available, and their use is coordinated, ideally through a social worker or victim/survivor advocate.

Protection orders are short-term measures for women at imminent risk of violence. They enable access to support and provide time for a

longer-term protection measure to be put in place, which is essential to keep survivors safe. However, in some States, protection orders are not available or the law on protection orders is limited or not implemented effectively. The SR-VAW has noted several problems with the way protection orders are used that diminishes their protective features. These include: not issuing them immediately; not informing women that they can apply for a protection order; refusing to issue them when the legal requirements are met; and not enforcing them or criminalizing their breaches.⁷⁴ Holding the perpetrator to account by criminalizing any breach of a protection order is crucial, as a breach can significantly increase the risk faced by women and their children and can lead to murder.

In the Arab region, newly issued legislation against VAW contains provisions for protection orders. Much of this legislation complements criminal procedures while also providing for the option of civil protection orders. With their increasing availability, it is fair to assert that the provision of protection orders is an emerging norm within the region, though more work must be done to harmonize the documents with other services. Research conducted by ESCWA has found that protection order provisions in the region are generally aligned with international frameworks and good practice. However, no State has enacted comprehensive legislation that encompasses all the necessary protocols outlined by the **UN Handbook to respond to the specific protection needs of survivors, particularly regarding shelter.**⁷⁵

Notably, both shelters and protection orders can play an important role in safeguarding children that witness domestic violence. It is not only children who directly experience domestic violence that are impacted. Children who are

witnesses also experience trauma that can have a long-term impact on them affecting their health, education and well-being. Shelters can provide much needed expert support for children who have witnessed domestic abuse and can also provide information on and access to legal assistance including for child custody or visitation proceedings.⁷⁶ The importance of extending protection and support measures for the children of women survivors has been identified by the SR-VAW who calls upon States to ensure that the safety and needs of children are also included in provisions for protection orders and shelters.⁷⁷

The safety and best interest of children is particularly important regarding visitation. Some perpetrators have used contact with their children as a means of continuing the violence, which results in further harm and even the death of women and/or their children. Research by Women's Aid Federation England identified 19 children in England and Wales who were killed by their violent fathers between 2005 and 2015 "in circumstances relating to child contact".⁷⁸ The best interests of the child, including their right to safety, should be paramount when any contact or visitation is being considered. The SR-VAW recommends that visitation is carefully regulated and notes that an "integrated child safety approach needs to be taken into account in the provision of shelters and in enforcing protection orders".⁷⁹

Hotlines that provide advice and information on available support and how to access it are also an important protection measure in a coordinated approach and are often the first point of contact for survivors. National hotlines should be available free of charge 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to ensure that survivors can access support regardless of where they live. In some States, these are supplemented by

local or regional hotlines run by NGOs that may also run shelters. Hotlines provide advice about shelters, if available, and details on how to contact any shelters that accept self-referrals.

Taking a coordinated approach to address VAW requires a range of different agencies, both State and non-State, working together effectively. While the State is obligated to respond to VAW, non-State actors, such as women's organizations, are best suited to provide direct service to survivors. The proximity of civil society to women victims of violence, coupled with their flexibility and ability to respond promptly and effectively to the needs of victims, makes their role as service providers invaluable. To achieve this there need to be agreed upon goals and definitions and policies with clear protocols and procedures, including on information sharing and confidentiality, clear divisions of roles and responsibilities and adequate funding. Training of professionals is crucial and should include common definitions and understanding of VAW, domestic violence and intimate partner violence.⁸⁰

C. Definition and description of shelters, the support they provide and their standards, purpose and role in protection

"I slept like when I was with my parents".

– Survivor,

Rabat, Morocco

Source: GNWS, 2015, p.3.

There is a distinct difference between general services and specialized services concerning

shelter. General services are designed to support a range of different needs for both men and women and include shelters for the homeless, family shelters and housing for those with physical or mental health issues, as well as care homes for the elderly. Specialized services for women escaping domestic violence include gender-specific specialized women's shelters tailored for survivors of violence. Such shelters provide survivors with expert support to meet their specific immediate and longer-term needs and are run by staff with a detailed understanding of VAW, its impact, and the importance of protecting and empowering survivors. General shelters are not set up to provide **specialized gender-specific support** for women who have experienced the trauma of domestic violence and, while women escaping domestic violence may access **general shelters**, these services may not meet their particular needs and cannot be considered adequate or equivalent support to that provided by a specialized women's shelter.⁸¹

There is considerable research on what women and their children need to recover from the trauma of violence and to rebuild their lives; this is far more than the provision of a bed for the night.⁸² They require comprehensive holistic multidisciplinary specialized support that focuses on their safety and human rights. This is a specialized service that needs to be delivered in an empowering environment from expert staff. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines specialized services as "gender-specific services established to protect and empower women survivors of IPV [intimate partner violence] and their children and are tailored to their specific immediate and longer-term needs. These services are provided by specialised staff with in-depth knowledge of gender-based violence".⁸³

Many States in the Arab region do not follow the global standards issued by the ESP, including: providing safe and secure emergency accommodation; ensuring security measures are in place; providing basic accommodation needs free of charge; ensuring there is a protocol for unaccompanied children, including for longer-term alternative care where necessary and appropriate; and ensuring that accommodation is accessible for women and girls with disabilities.⁸⁴ In some States, service provision is based on a gender-neutral "whole family" approach with services, including shelters, provided for men and women together. Such shelters are not in secret locations.⁸⁵ However, such an approach, while it may acknowledge abuse against men, does not help women in that: a) they may be sheltered with whom they perceive as a perpetrator and b) the public location may endanger the safety of women seeking shelters from their abusive partners. A gender-neutral approach results in a failure to address the root causes of and motivations behind VAW and the discriminatory nature of domestic violence, which has been criticized by the CEDAW Committee.⁸⁶ While such accommodation may be used to temporarily fill gaps in the availability of places in a women's shelter, they are not a substitution for them and can result in women remaining as vulnerable when they leave the shelter as they were when they arrived. Other risks include providing opportunities for perpetrators to continue using coercion and control to abuse their partners and encouraging women to remain in dangerous relationships, escalating rather than reducing the safety of the woman and her children. While it is important to intervene directly with the perpetrator, this should be done through criminal sanctions and perpetrator programmes where they are held accountable directly for their actions.⁸⁷

Women's shelters can provide the protection and range of support needed if the necessary legislation is in place, together with the required leadership, principles, standards, gendered approach and resources. The staff and survivors in women's shelters can also play a key role in raising awareness about VAW and its impact in their communities and with police, judicial and health professionals, support policy development and challenging gender-based discrimination.

1. Legislation

States' due diligence obligation includes the implementation of domestic legislation for the provision of integrated comprehensive support services for survivors; this must include shelters, as well as criminal sanctions for perpetrators. This does not mean that States need to establish and run shelters themselves; in fact, NGOs may often be better equipped and skilled to provide specialized services given that they are more knowledgeable about the dynamics of domestic violence.⁸⁸ However, the obligation does require States to support their establishment and provide funding.

Legislation is an important step to protect women's rights, however it is of limited value if it is not fully implemented or monitored. Policies, procedures, guidance and training are all required to support the implementation of legislation, particularly regarding laws that address VAW because of prevailing attitudes and limited awareness or understanding of the phenomenon. Prioritizing the family over a woman's rights may result in domestic violence being ignored or minimized, and prevent women accessing the protection and support they need to remain safe.⁸⁹

As well as having the appropriate legislation and policies in place to enable shelter provision,

it is important that all women can access shelters and that there is no legislation, for example in family law, that would prevent them from doing so. While some States in the Arab region have been developing laws to increase the protection of women from violence, a number include statutory discrimination and uphold male control over women.

2. Principles

Women's shelters have been set up on the basis of a number of fundamental principles that speak to their purpose, the way they work with survivors and their local community and the values of this type of service provision.⁹⁰ UN Women recommends that, "Where possible, services should be run by independent and experienced women's non-governmental organizations providing gender-specific, empowering and comprehensive support to women survivors of violence, based on feminist principles".⁹¹ Key principles derived from international human rights instruments and global standards should include:

An approach based on an understanding of the gendered nature of VAW. CEDAW

defines VAW as a form of discrimination and the manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. It is important to acknowledge this and to take a gendered approach to understand the nature and scale of VAW and the particular experiences and barriers women face. Violence against women is both caused by and a consequence of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination. Women are much more likely to experience violence from their intimate partner, including rape and sexual violence, more likely to be repeat victims and much more likely to have their opportunities to report violence, let alone escape, restricted by economic, cultural

and religious factors. By using an approach that understands and recognizes the root cause of VAW, women's shelters provide safe women-only spaces and access to women-only staff who provide appropriate and timely services.

Advancing inclusivity and non-discrimination. Ensuring that all women can access women's shelters requires a broad definition of domestic violence that includes unmarried as well as married women, no restrictions on age, social status, migrant or refugee status, disability or ethnicity; no shelter place dependent on the ability of the woman to pay and allowing women to self-refer. In several States, access to women's shelters are restricted by law, for example, with admission only possible through a referral from the police, a prosecutor or social worker. Accessibility also requires shelters to have sufficient resources to be able to provide a 24-hour response. There is also a need for shelters that are accessible to women with disabilities and/or with children who have a disability.⁹² Respecting diversity and ensuring a non-discriminatory approach is an important part of this principle, recognizing the challenges that women from minority and other groups may have in accessing shelters and addressing any barriers to their safety and independence. This includes tailoring services to meet the needs of the different women they are supporting and providing language support.

Women's safety, security, privacy and confidentiality are paramount. Providing safe accommodation for women and their children is the central purpose of women's shelters. This requires ensuring the physical safety of the building, assessing and responding to any risks perpetrators might pose, keeping all records confidential and secure and providing a safe working

environment for shelter staff and volunteers. If the organization providing the woman's shelter is also providing services for men, these must be delivered in a separate location to ensure women's safety and well-being.

There are two elements regarding the safety of the building. Firstly, it is essential to ensure the shelter location is confidential and safe and that access is restricted to only essential staff and personnel. Secondly, shelters should be located within reach of health, police and other community services, shops and amenities to enable easy access for residents.

Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the women and their children is crucial and requires robust methods for dealing with their records, together with clear protocols and guidance. Any information sharing between collaborating agencies should be limited to protect the rights and interests of the survivor.⁹³ Ensuring the safety and well-being of staff and volunteers is also an important part of the principle of safety; appropriate policies, training, protocols and guidance need to be in place to support staff and volunteers to achieve this.

Support women's empowerment and self-determination. Creating the space for women to find their voice and empowering them to take control of their own lives is an essential part of their recovery. This approach involves women overcoming the shame and stigma of domestic violence and talking about their experiences, as well as being believed and respected to make their own decisions. This can lead to some women to seek justice and deciding on what type of support they want. Staff in shelters must be accountable to the women they support and collaborate with them on how they are set up and run. Women need

to be able to make their own decisions and not be subject to experts or professionals telling them what they need to do, analogous to the control utilized by the perpetrator. Empowerment can also contribute to raising awareness on domestic abuse and gender inequality and discrimination within society.⁹⁴ An important part of empowerment is ensuring survivors are able to participate in the development and evaluation of services and learn about any changes resulting from their engagement.

Promote women’s health – including sexual and reproductive health – and well-being. Women and children seeking access to shelter have a range of physical and mental health needs. Increasingly, specialists working with survivors are taking a trauma-informed approach, recognizing the harmful psychological as well as physical effects of domestic violence. Thus, women’s shelters need to be able to support women’s access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health services. To promote women’s health and well-being, specialist support tailored to the needs of survivors is required. Women need to be able to disclose any violence they have experienced and receive the specialist support they need. Counselling that builds on women’s resilience

and strengths and enables them to understand and name the violence they experience is an important form of therapy provided by women’s shelters.

In conclusion, meeting these principles are fundamental to establishing effective, high-quality shelter services. Across the world, an important reason why NGOs are best placed to run shelter services, with support from the State, is because they meet these principles with their focus on empowerment and long-term, holistic support, while mainstreamed State provision tends to be focussed on short-term crisis support.⁹⁵

3. Shelter services

Shelters provide a range of support services for women. A significant majority also provide non-residential outreach services to women in their local community and some also run a hotline. Shelters work closely with other providers and professionals to enable survivors to access other forms of specialist and general support, such as rape crisis centres or legal advice centres. Table 1 below lists the range of support women’s shelters provide. Such services need to be provided in line with the principles outlined above.

Table 1. Requirements of shelter service provision

Service	Provision	Indicator
Safe accessible accommodation	A shelter place is available and accessible to all women and their children in immediate danger. Free or low-cost transport to the shelter is available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women can self-refer; • At least one shelter is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; • Number of financial barriers preventing women from accessing the shelter.
24-hour hotline	At least one 24-hour hotline is available to provide advice, including on how to access a women's shelter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local hotlines provide information on how to access a shelter.
Safety planning	Initial confidential needs assessment is provided to all women to identify her needs and risks and a safety plan is put in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff has the expertise to do a thorough risk assessment, ask questions sensitively and understand and identify areas of immediate and longer-term risk.
Crisis and longer-term support	Intensive support - crisis and longer term - from a key worker to build up trust and reduce stress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are provided long-term support; • Support provided allows women to have choice over who provides counselling and who is her key worker during her stay in the shelter.
Counselling	Individual and group counselling is provided from specialist staff that understands the dynamics of domestic violence and its impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are supported to build resilience and rebuild their lives; • Women are listened to and respected.
Health and well-being	Shelter staff assists women to access general and specialist medical care, including sexual and reproductive health services and information. A range of well-being support is also provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are aware of the traumatizing effects of domestic violence; many women suffer from PTSD; • Specialist support is available and referral for a range of health needs including for substance abuse.
Advice, Counselling and advocacy	Advice for women on a range of issues to assist them with any financial or other needs; for example, if they experience financial abuse, or need to access to housing when they leave the shelter. Shelter staff advocate for the needs of individual women with other professionals.	<p>A range of advice and information is available on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social welfare regulations; • Housing; • Financial matters; • Support women need to be able to leave the shelter.

Service	Provision	Indicator
Services for women with specific needs	Shelter services are diverse and cater to the different women in the shelter.	A range of services are offered, including, but not limited to: psychosocial support; child specialists; legal aid; economic empowerment opportunities; housing guidance; and health services, among others.
Support for accompanying children and young people	Children’s workers are available in shelters. Support can include crisis intervention, pedagogic aid, psychosocial and therapeutic care and group work. Children’s workers engage with local schools to improve their understanding of domestic violence and how best to assist children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelters have at least one specialist staff to work with the children accompanying their mothers to the shelter; • Children are supported to stay in school and continue their education; • Families with accompanying male children too old to stay in the shelter are found alternative safe accommodation.
Parenting support	Parenting advice and support is provided to women to build their confidence in parenting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter staff supports women to understand domestic violence and the impact it has on their children.
Legal information and support	Shelter staff provide general legal information and refer women to specialist legal support – legal professionals, lawyers, with expertise in family law, criminal law and refugee law to support women in the shelter.	<p>Women have access to a range of information on legal matters including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws relating to immediate and longer-term protection from violence such as protection and restraining orders; • Criminal law, including any domestic violence laws or laws used in domestic violence cases; • Police procedures particularly regarding any criminal case against the perpetrator and the role and expectations of victims as witnesses; • Family laws relating to marriage and divorce and governing child custody and parental rights; • Laws relevant to migrant and undocumented women; • Any civil or criminal laws that provide for victims’ rights and compensation
Accompanying survivors	Support is provided on the court process and survivors are accompanied to any legal and court proceedings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter staff support women to attend court or refers them to a court accompaniment advocate; • Information is available on the process and what to expect.

Service	Provision	Indicator
Job training, employment and education	Support is provided to access work-related training and education and to identify employment opportunities to enable women to lead independent lives in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters either run job-related programmes or work with other agencies in the community to enable women to access such programs.
Case management and administrative data collection	Data on the women and their children in the shelter is collected confidentially to monitor progress and outcomes and the impact of the service. Data can also be used to support the development of policy. ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelter staff maintain case records of the women and children they support, their experience of domestic abuse, and details of the type of support received; Clear protocols are in place for data collection and any sharing of data with other agencies or organizations; Administrative data is collected on the numbers of women and children supported, their different needs and experiences, actions taken by the authorities and outcomes. Outcomes can include safety, improved physical and mental health, freedom from financial abuse, increased self-esteem and independence, and employment; Referrals are provided to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

^a WAVE collects data on shelter provision and the number of women using them across Europe. In Denmark, data is collected by the Ministry of Social Affairs in cooperation with the National Organization of Shelters (LOKK) (EIGE, 2016, p. 45). In the UK, Women's Aid England provides annual data on domestic abuse services and their use; in 2017 the report included further data from five different sources (Women's Aid Federation England, 2018).

4. Standards

Standards for service provision are important to ensure shelters have well-run management structures and governance that delivers quality service to survivors and their children. The Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention notes that, "it is crucial that all shelters apply a set of standards".⁹⁶ Standards assist shelters to establish, maintain and improve the quality of services they provide and enable them to establish benchmarks for funders and to

compare their services with other providers nationally. Standards have been developed in other types of support services, such as in health care settings, and have developed over time for the domestic violence service sector, including for women's shelters, building on promising practices and the growing understanding of the diverse needs of survivors and their children.

In 2007, the Council of Europe developed a set of minimum standards for support services,

including shelters, as part of its activities to address VAW and ensure the quality and availability of service provision.⁹⁷ The minimum standards include one quantitative standard of one shelter place per 10,000 inhabitants depending on actual need and a range of qualitative standards.⁹⁸ Specialist shelters for women are very different from other forms of shelters and require their own specific standards. Working with survivors and experts and learning from existing standards, some shelters or national networks of shelters have developed their own quality standards,⁹⁹ while some have collaborated with other services addressing VAW to develop common standards for service provision.¹⁰⁰ WAVE, a regional network of over 100 members from across Europe, has developed a handbook on standards for services to support the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.¹⁰¹ The ESP also offers global standards for quality

for shelters, including safe accommodation, material and financial aid and legal rights information and representation.¹⁰²

Quality standards relate to different aspects of the shelter's work including safety, approach and management. There are a range of management structures used by women's shelters, for example: collectively, with decision-making done jointly; or by management team, with individual managers responsible for specific areas; or hierarchically, guided by one senior leader who is primarily responsible for management and leadership.¹⁰³ Whatever structure taken, shelters need to be flexible and able to meet the (changing) needs of women and their children. This is often easier for independent women's NGOs to achieve than government-run shelters. The table below details quality standards for shelters. These are in line with the principles outlined below in table 2.

Table 2. Quality standards for shelters

Standard	Description	Indicator
24-hour safe accessible service	The shelter provides crisis and longer-term accommodation open to all women who are victims of domestic violence and their children, free of charge in a safe, confidential environment providing a holistic approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one shelter is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; Safety of the women and children is paramount; Staff trained to make and respond to appropriate referrals; No barriers to prevent access to a shelter place (such as cost or personal status); Risk assessments carried out and individual security plan drawn up.
Comprehensive tailored support	The shelter provides a holistic range of support tailored to meet the diverse needs of survivors and their children that is delivered using a survivor-centred approach where women are listened to and believed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation and disability services are available; Survivors offered a range of support options personalized to their needs that builds resilience and empower; Trauma-informed approach with information on trauma, coping and survival available; Staff trained to use this approach with appropriate communication and intervention techniques.

Standard	Description	Indicator
Empowering environment that promotes survivor engagement and participation	The shelter's approach is respectful to survivors facilitating their engagement and participation, recognizing their rights and empowering them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survivors have a choice over the type of support they receive and their key worker; • Survivors' rights are recognized including confidentiality, property and access to a phone; • Survivors engaged in the development and evaluation of the service; • Survivors encouraged to be involved in community awareness-raising.
Leadership and prevention	The shelter has effective leadership and management structures that promote efficiency, can responding flexibly to survivors' needs and engages proactively in the community to raise awareness, engage in preventative measures and improve strategy and policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteer recruitment, expertise, training and accountability supports the ongoing supervision of staff, reviews and evaluation; • Survivors' safety is paramount and appropriate policies and procedures are in place to protect women and children; • Safe women-only spaces are provided. If the organization also supports men, it is in a different place; • Protocols in place for signposting or working with other professionals and in multi-agency partnerships; • Administrative data are collected and outcomes measured and monitored for learning, improvement, and benchmarking and policy development.
Governance and accountability	The shelter takes a gendered understanding of VAW. Women lead the Shelter Board and hold senior management roles. Both are accountable to survivors and their children who use the shelter service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, volunteers, managers and trustees understand the root causes of VAW and the impact it has; • A clear statement of the shelter's values is publicly available; • Appropriate policies, guidelines and protocols are in place; • Managers and staff reflect the diversity of survivors using the shelter; • All the income for the shelter is spent on the shelter and the shelter's income and expenditure is managed effectively with appropriate checks and balances; • The shelter has a strategy led by the Shelter Board with an action plan and business plan delivered by the management. The implementation of these are monitored and evaluated by the Shelter Board; • The shelter meets all its legal requirements.

Table collated for the purpose of this study from recommendations developed by international bodies including the United Nations and the Council of Europe, as well as regional and country networks such as WAVE, the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses, Imkaan and Women's Aid.

5. Costs of shelter provision

International and national studies on the cost of VAW and its long-term effects on women, their families and their communities identify significant direct and indirect costs including, though not limited to, the cost of providing support services to survivors. Violence impacts on economic development, health care, legal and judicial systems and on human development. The annual cost of VAW to the justice system in Morocco was estimated by one study to cost \$6.7 million a year.¹⁰⁴ The BDPfA recognizes the significant costs of VAW linked to individuals and society, including health, social and economic costs.¹⁰⁵ A study in Vietnam estimated the potential opportunity cost, lost earnings and value of missed housework associated with domestic violence at 1.41 per cent of the country's GDP.¹⁰⁶ In the UK it was estimated to cost £16 billion in 2008.¹⁰⁷ Data from the UK was used to extrapolate the cost of VAW in the EU and found the cost to be 228 billion euro a year.¹⁰⁸ In Egypt, the total cost of VAW was estimated at 3,322,049 billion Egyptian pounds at the national level based on data from 2009.¹⁰⁹ Costs to the global economy have been estimated at US\$1.5 trillion – 2 per cent of global GDP.¹¹⁰

Support services, such as women's shelters, while part of the cost of violence, help to reduce the cost of violence in the long term. The value of providing services that save lives is justification enough for their provision, but an added incentive is that research shows that addressing VAW, including the provision of specialist services, is more economically sensible than doing nothing.¹¹¹ Moreover, the provision of these services upholds women's rights as well as States' commitments to international human rights instruments and standards.

Obtaining reliable data to assess the accurate costs of specialist support services is a challenge. Organizations providing services are reluctant to share data on their income and expenditure, particularly if funding is through a process of competitive tendering as in the United Kingdom and other parts of the European Union. In the United Kingdom it is estimated that shelters supporting women and their children make up less than 1 per cent of supported accommodation (3,639 bed spaces in England, 487 in Scotland and 309 in Wales) out of a total of approximately 651,500 bed spaces);¹¹² however, the cost of this specialist provision is higher than other forms of supported accommodation, such as for the elderly (71 per cent), due to increased levels of security and staffing and the intensive support required.¹¹³ A number of NGOs running shelter services in England have carried out studies on the social return on investment for their service to show their value for money and the benefit of investing in specialist services. One estimated the return on investment for shelter housing of £4.07 for every £1 invested.¹¹⁴

Women's shelters have a range of costs they need to cover; some are one-off costs, for example for capital expenditure to set up the service, and others are ongoing yearly costs to keep the services running. Costs vary across States though the types of common expenditures made include:

- **Set up costs:** Purchase of property, building costs, security installation, furniture, house and garden equipment, toys, games and teaching materials, kitchen, washing and office equipment;
- **Staffing and volunteer costs:** Recruitment, salaries, staff welfare, training, supervision and professional fees;

- **Yearly costs:** Ongoing building costs such as rent, maintenance and repairs, heating and lighting, insurance, telephones, television licences, stationery, postage, publications and resources, travel, provisions, cleaning, client refreshments, translation costs, bank charges, insurance; cost associated with specific programmes such as counselling, car/van costs including repairs, running costs and insurance; food and other household supplies;
- **Data gathering:** Electronic or paper-based case management system to collect data and report on outcomes and impact;
- **Finance and fundraising:** Bookkeeping, accountancy, auditing, public relations and awareness-raising. Obtaining sustainable funding to cover these costs is a major issue for many NGOs that run shelters. These services are funded from a mixture of government funding, charitable trusts and fundraising. However, government funding can vary yearly with some shelters experiencing substantial cuts to their funding in recent years. In States where the government does not provide any funding to women's shelters run by independent women's NGOs, funding must be sourced internationally, which is also increasingly difficult.¹¹⁵

3. National Laws Influencing the Legality of and Access to Shelter in the Arab Region

3. National Laws Influencing the Legality of and Access to Shelter in the Arab Region

In the Arab region, a diverse combination of legislation, policy, customary law and sociocultural norms, often employed at the same time and in contradictory ways, influences the legality of and access to shelters. Chief among them is the lack of consistency and harmonization amongst various national legislative frameworks, which commonly results in the prioritization of legislation, such as personal status laws, that discriminate against women. For example, article 22 of Lebanon's Law no. 293 on Protection of Women and Family Members from Domestic Violence (2014) states that all provisions considered contrary to the law would be annulled except in cases of the personal status laws and the law on the Protection of Juvenile Offenders at Risk (2002). Thus, the lack of harmonization amid legal pluralism directly impacts survivors' access to safety and justice. Yet, while legal harmonization continues to be a marked issue in the region, several States have taken some type of legal or policy action to address VAW, including reference to or the provision of shelter.

The legal frameworks that mandate or regulate shelter for survivors of domestic violence in the Arab region are diverse and are derived from specific pieces of legislation or a combination of legislation (for example, provisions in penal codes, stand-alone VAW laws, or shelter laws/decrees); national action plans; institutional mandates; policy frameworks; or

bilateral agreements. This pluralism highlights that there is no one means of legislating and regulating shelters in the region, which makes documentation challenging. Additionally, while States may suggest shelter as one of many service provisions in stand-alone domestic violence legislation, this does not necessarily mean that there is a clear means of providing such shelter. This section also considers peripheral legislation, customary law, and sociocultural norms that may influence debates on shelter provision and contribute to a conducive or hostile environment for shelter. Notably, several States continue to have neither legislation nor regulations to mandate or manage shelter for survivors.

Where legislative provisions to address domestic violence exist and include protection measures such as shelters, they commonly do not provide for the practical running of shelters through financial and other means of government support. Consequently, the number of shelters available in the region are insufficient and those that exist are primarily run by independent NGOs that rely heavily on international donors for support. There are also serious concerns regarding weak legal provisions to ensure the protection of women in shelters. For example, this may include limitations to the safety, security, and confidentiality of shelters based on the desire to initiate reconciliation or under the auspices of guardianship regulations in some contexts.

Regulations governing access to shelters in the Arab region

There is limited documentation on the procedures that survivors go through to access shelter in the Arab region but the legislation concerning shelters does have a role to play in terms of increasing or undermining accessibility. Given the diverse amount of legislation and the number of actors involved, it appears that a combination of factors make shelter difficult to access, including inadequate measures to protect women survivors of domestic violence; persistent patriarchal culture and attitudes; problems in the rules governing shelters; and/or a lack of awareness of the existence of shelters.

Engaging with criminal justice authorities may be intimidating, especially when patriarchal institutions such as the police are not adequately trained on VAW and sensitized to the needs of survivors. In some instances, the police may question a survivor's story or motivation for reporting violence and seeking shelter. On the other hand, the police may attempt to overstep their authority and attempt to reconcile the survivor with the perpetrator. Some States' domestic violence legislation has anticipated these scenarios, such as in article 8 of Lebanon's Law no. 293 which outlines penalties for judicial officers who attempt to interfere with a survivor reporting abuse.¹¹⁶

Some stand-alone VAW laws or penal code provisions may have a narrow definition of violence, such as omitting psychological or emotional abuse or not acknowledging marital rape as a crime, which results in defining who is considered a "legitimate" survivor. Or, service providers may place parameters on access to shelter based on the survivor's identity or social status, making access to shelter impossible. For

women and girls to be admitted into shelter in Egypt, they must meet several conditions, one of which is that only women who are Egyptian nationals, or married to an Egyptian under an official marriage contract, or a divorcée of an Egyptian, yet still within her post-divorce *idda* (or waiting) period, would have access to shelter.¹¹⁷ These particular regulations leave survivors even more vulnerable.

Referral mechanisms that link survivors to services such as shelter are key; however, when a survivor is unable to access the mechanism or must prove that she "legitimately" deserves shelter, then the mechanism has failed her. In the State of Palestine, a review of the national referral system for survivors of violence, Takamol, revealed that certain groups of women were locked out of the system – some due to access, such as women located in remote communities in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, while others were excluded for being sex workers or having an addiction.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, the assessment noted that the lack of clear legislation made it difficult for service providers to respond in a timely manner and for police officers to assist survivors seeking shelter.¹¹⁹ Legislation or policy needs to ensure that any nationwide referral mechanism in place lessens rather than increases the burden on survivors in seeking shelter while also ensuring that the survivor is at the centre of the referral mechanism. In Iraq, draft legislation would require survivors seeking shelter to petition a designated judge in a national family court to place them in a "Safety Centre". However, NGOs have noted that this mechanism "has previously been identified as an entry barrier", and that "Important gaps in services for survivors remain, especially in long-term mental health, economic livelihood support and the protection of children born of rape".¹²⁰ Other concerning procedures outlined in the draft legislation

would allow perpetrators to appeal a survivor's petition for a protection order and/or shelter.¹²¹

Lastly, given the relatively recent introduction of shelters in the Arab region, knowledge of their presence is limited, despite the work of governments and NGOs to raise awareness. A 2010 report on Palestinian women's perceptions of security revealed that few women knew of shelter services, questioned the existence of such services or questioned the value of shelter for women fleeing violence.¹²²

With these potential barriers in mind, this section addresses most legislative and policy frameworks in the Arab region that directly or indirectly impact the provision of and access to shelter, focusing on their contents and gaps (and good practice, when available). Each State has its own distinct legal system that has been informed by a combination of religious law and practice, colonialism, occupation, as well as nationally developed legislation. However, despite this mix of legislation and policy, there continues to be some commonalities in the region with regards to the sociolegal culture, which may limit women's access to shelter.

1. Constitutions

Only a select number of Arab States mention VAW/family violence in their constitutions and commit the State to addressing such violence. Article 11 of Egypt's constitution commits the State to protect women from all forms of violence but does not specify the provision of shelter as a protection mechanism. Likewise, article 46 of Tunisia's constitution commits the government to take all necessary measures to eradicate VAW but does not specify those measures. The Iraqi constitution prohibits all forms of violence and abuse in the family,

school, and society (article 29 (Fourth)) and guarantees "social and health security, the basic requirements for living a free and decent life and shall secure for them suitable income and appropriate housing" to the individual and the family (article 30 (First)).

Notwithstanding the above, and as noted earlier in this chapter, oftentimes clauses on VAW can be negated or challenged when the constitution commits the State to a religious framework and/or defers to personal status laws (such as article 46 of the Iraqi constitution) that often allow for some types of violence in the family or between spouses if it can be justified.

2. Stand-alone domestic violence laws

As of 2019, six States in the Arab region have stand-alone VAW laws. A review of these laws highlights that, while shelter is recommended for survivors in each law, there is little elaboration on how shelter might be managed or regulated; some States rely on separate decrees addressed below. Bahrain's Law on Protection from Family Violence (2015) notes that the State will provide and disseminate information on various services and how to access them, including shelters (article 7(2)) and, "Provide necessary shelters to accommodate victims of domestic violence" (article 7(3)). Article 12(2) then outlines that the police shall transfer the survivor "to one of the shelters maintained by the Ministry [of Social Development] in cases of domestic violence as soon as possible". However, there is no mechanism for providing or regulating shelters in Bahrain.

Jordan's Family Protection Law No. 6 (2008, amended in 2017) defines shelter in article 2, and calls for the provision of medical services

and shelter with the consent of the survivor and in coordination with the Ministry of Social Development (article 6(b)(4)). The Law on Protection from Abuse in Saudi Arabia was promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/52 of 15/11/1434 A.H. (21/09/2013). Article 2(2) calls for the provision of shelter, while article 8 calls for the survivor to be transported to shelter, as necessary. For both States, a separate set of decrees outlines the provision of shelter.

Article 11 of Law no. 293, Lebanon's Law on Protection of Women and Family Members against Family Violence, obliges the Public Prosecutor, acting through the judicial police, to take some protective measures prior to the issuance of a post-hearing restraining order. One measure includes transferring the victim to a safe space at the defendant's expense. As of yet, shelters are primarily provided by NGOs and charitable organizations in Lebanon, and there is no formal legislation guiding the provision of shelter. However, the Ministry of Social Affairs often cooperates with these entities to assist survivors.

Morocco's commitment towards shelter is made possible through article 8 of Law no. 103-13 on Combating Violence against Women, which notes that it is necessary to place survivors of violence in shelters or social welfare institutions, while also calling for the availability of shelters. However, there is no discussion on how this might happen. Likewise, Tunisia's Organic Law No. 2017-58 outlines the survivor's right to lodging (article 12) and obligates certain entities to resolve the survivor's housing situation (article 38), but little is mentioned of what the lodging/housing entails.

From this brief review, the provision of shelter is viewed by the State as integral to protecting survivors from violence. However, within these

laws there is no distinct clarification of how shelter will be regulated or provided. Thus, many States in the Arab region rely on government decrees to establish the provision of shelter for survivors of violence.

3. Penal codes

While most penal codes in the Arab region criminalize violence against an individual, it is rarely the case that violence in the home is specifically criminalized. This is an important distinction, because domestic violence is complicated by historic inequalities between men and women and is augmented by power dynamics specific to intimate partner and family relationships.

Algeria's Law No. 15-19 (2015), which penalizes domestic violence solely through amendments to the penal code, does not list any specific provision for shelter.

For women who are at risk of so-called honour-based crimes in Jordan, the Public and Safety Directorate has historically provided women "protective custody" in Amman's Juweida Prison under the Crime Prevention Law No. 7 (1954).¹²³ By July 2018, authorities had developed specific lodging for such women, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Development. In 2012, a system of shelters for survivors of human trafficking was created through article 7 of the Human Trafficking Prevention Act (2009) based on the directives of the Council of Ministers; these are available to men and women, as well as minors. Shelter for trafficked persons is organized through the Shelters for Vulnerable Persons System, No. 171 (2016). The Dar Karama shelter for trafficking victims opened in Amman in 2015 under the Ministry of Social Development.

In Morocco, no legislation specifically governs domestic violence shelters. However, prior to its amendment in 2013, article 496 of the penal code (1962) prohibited the “conscious concealment of a married woman who runs away from authority to which she is subject [her husband]”. While there is no evidence that the provision was ever used to prosecute a shelter worker, many in the country had lived in fear of the possibility.¹²⁴ In addition, criminal laws are often not sufficiently aligned with laws on VAW and with their obligations to provide survivors with shelters.¹²⁵ Furthermore, gaps in criminal laws have led women to not resort to shelters to avoid criminal sanctions. For example, article 496 of also stipulated that hiding a married woman “evading the authority to which she is legally subjected” was due a punishment of between one and five years’ imprisonment and a fine. Such provisions mean that shelters may face criminal charges. This provision was repealed in 2013 due to advocacy efforts of women’s groups in the country.¹²⁶

4. Government decrees

The following provides an overview of the various decrees, regulations and/or decisions that legalize and manage shelters for women fleeing violence in the Arab region. These regulations commonly place ministries in charge of the creation of shelters, their daily management and their referral systems.

In Algeria, shelter is regulated by Decree no. 04-182 (2004) on the “creation, organization and functioning of the national shelters for women and girl victims of violence” and Decree no. 10-96 (2010).¹²⁷ The decree states that shelters should provide for the temporary accommodation and medical-socio-psychological care of girls and women victims

of violence and in distress. Admission to these centres “depends on a decision from the governor or referral by security services”.¹²⁸ The Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Status of Women operates two national shelters. The Ministry is also responsible for reception centres for adolescent girls and centres for elderly women; they are organized and operated in accordance with the above decrees.¹²⁹

Egypt’s first shelters emerged in 2003 under two Ministerial Decrees issued in 2000; this resulted in the establishment of seven shelters under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Solidarity (formerly the Ministry of Social Affairs). According to the National Council for Women, there are eight shelters for survivors nationwide: seven are supervised by the Ministry of Social Solidarity and one was established by the NGO the Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women with assistance from the Ministry of Social Solidarity.¹³⁰ In general, it is very difficult for NGOs to establish a shelter.¹³¹ The National Council for Women and the Ombudsman Office cooperate with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to refer women to shelters.

Only the government is sanctioned to provide shelters in Iraq due to a narrow reading of the law. This is because the Law on Combating Human Trafficking (2012) states that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs should provide shelters. Thus, government officials have interpreted this policy to mean that shelters for victims of trafficking can only be run by the government. They have further interpreted this to mean that all shelters, including those for survivors of violence, must be run by the government. As a result, some shelters are run clandestinely by NGOs with

little assurance of safety for the staff or the survivors.¹³²

Jordan's Legislative Assembly adopted the Family Shelter Regulation (statutory instrument No. 48 of 2004), which address the system of shelters for survivors of domestic violence and places the Ministry of Social Development in charge of their regulation.¹³³ The Ministry of Social Development established Dar al Wifaq (Family Reconciliation House) in Amman in 2007 to provide shelter for domestic violence survivors. Dar al Wifaq also operates a shelter in the northern province of Irbid, and there is a plan to establish one in the southern region.¹³⁴ The Jordanian Women's Union runs the Women's Guest House for victims of trafficking through an agreement with the Public Security Directorate.¹³⁵ Law No.171 of 2016 outlines a system for women at risk in shelters, including temporarily shelter options, and executive instructions for women at shelters regarding their needs. This is a collaborative effort between the National Centre for Human Rights, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Interior, the Judicial Council, Public Security and NGOs.

After the 2011 uprising in Libya, Decree No. 119 of 2014 on Addressing the Circumstances of Victims of Sexual Violence aimed to provide female survivors of sexual violence during the uprising the right to receive compensation, health care, training, education and employment opportunities, as well as access to housing, particularly for women who escaped or were rejected by their families. These measures have yet to be implemented.¹³⁶

Act No. 14-05, the law on the conditions of opening and management of social protection institutions, was passed in Morocco in 2006. While the law specifically targets housing

abandoned children, there is some debate on whether it is applicable to domestic violence shelters.

In 2012, Oman established the Family Protection Unit, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Development; it is responsible for Dar al-Wifaq (House of Harmony). Dar al-Wifaq serves as a shelter for female survivors of violence and trafficking.¹³⁷ Access to the shelter is only possible through the office of the Prosecutor General or other law enforcement agency.¹³⁸

In the State of Palestine, shelters in the West Bank are governed by the Council of Ministers Decision No. 9 (2011) on protection centres, as is the National Referral System.¹³⁹ One shelter in the Gaza Strip (Beit Al Aman) is governed by the de facto authorities.¹⁴⁰ In the West Bank, the Ministry of Social Development oversees the Mehwar Centre; further cooperation exists with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling.¹⁴¹

Qatar has only one shelter, the Dar al-Aman shelter, which dates from 2007 and is governed by the Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Children and Women.¹⁴²

Saudi Arabia's domestic violence law is implemented through Decree No. 43047 of the Minister of Labour and Social Development, 8 Jumada 1435 A.H. (9 March 2014), which outlines the mechanisms of implementation, including shelter and the role of relevant institutions.¹⁴³ This is complemented by the National Family Safety Program that was developed by the government in 2005 and focuses on ensuring that domestic violence survivors, particularly children, have access to shelters and other protection mechanisms.¹⁴⁴ The implementation regulations

require that a woman be allowed to come and go from the shelter; however, if she does not return as planned, shelter staff is obligated to inform the police and possibly her family members. When she ultimately departs from the shelter, it is commonly in coordination with a guardian.¹⁴⁵ The General Directorate of Social Protection was established under the ministerial resolution No. 1/10771/u dated 1/3/1425 AH (21/04/2004) to address cases of domestic violence against women and children. Cabinet resolution No. 366 dated 12/3/1429 AH (20/03/2008) addresses several social protection procedures, including shelter.¹⁴⁶

There are five shelters in the United Arab Emirates that are mandated by the ruler or council of each Emirate; they are in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah.¹⁴⁷ The Dubai Foundation for Women and Children is the shelter for survivors of domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking. It was established in July 2007 through a decree issued by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai.¹⁴⁸ A shelter in Sharjah, called Qawarir, was also established by a decree of the Sharjah Executive Council.¹⁴⁹

5. National action plans and violence against women strategies

More and more States in the region are developing or updating national strategies on the advancement of women that tackle women's priorities, including the prevention and protection of violence, but which are not necessarily clear on providing a holistic approach. States have also developed thematic national action plans, including those on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 that usually have a component on the protection of

women from violence. Most importantly, there is a move by States to dedicate national strategies strictly to VAW. Such documents have the primary goal of promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women while also engaging with due diligence. A review of these documents finds that States are clearly aware of the provision of shelter and its necessity for women fleeing violence. However, upon closer inspection, it appears that there is little indication on how States intend to guarantee that shelter is not only available but operating within a larger coordinated response to VAW. In many instances, NGOs and women's civil society fill this void. This should not detract from the fact that the inclusion of shelters in national policies is a positive step towards institutionalizing protection.

National strategies on VAW are found in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, the State of Palestine, the Sudan and Tunisia. In 2007, Algeria launched a National Strategy on Combating Violence against Women, outlining the establishment of centres for survivors of violence, which Algeria confirmed in its submission to the CEDAW Committee in 2010.¹⁵⁰ However, civil society notes that these services continue to be limited and that NGOs primarily work to provide services without State support.¹⁵¹ Pillar 3 of Egypt's National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women (2015-2020) outlines the provision of shelter, noting that, "The Ministry [of Social Solidarity] shall also endeavour to increase the number of shelters and homes that host women victims of violence so as to cover all of Egypt. To fulfil this objective, it shall cooperate with civil society organizations".¹⁵² This includes increasing the number of shelters in Egypt by 50 per cent of the number prior to the Strategy.¹⁵³ The Moroccan Government's

plan to combat VAW asserts the strengthening of public policies to combat all forms of violence and the development of mechanisms, legal and financial measures, as well as centres des écoute, for female survivors of violence.¹⁵⁴ The State of Palestine's National Strategy to Combat Violence Against Women (2011-2019) calls for an increase in the number and quality of shelters, based on respecting women's rights and the human rights approach.¹⁵⁵ A draft domestic violence law is currently under review; the law defines shelter (article 1) and lists safe houses among the protection measures to be implemented by the Ministry of Social Development. The law also obligates moving the survivor (and her children) to shelter if she wishes (article 11(4)). The Ministry of Social Affairs in Tunisia is responsible for protection services; it works with the Ministry of Women, Family, Child and the Elderly to provide a variety of services, including shelter.¹⁵⁶ Tunisia's National Strategy on Violence against Women (2009) noted the need for immediate and accessible protection in the form of shelter for female survivors. In each case, there appears to be limited action in fulfilling the objective of more shelters, let alone ensuring cooperation with civil society and employing a human-rights based approach. Only Iraq's National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2014-2018) calls for providing safe houses for survivors to address violence against women.¹⁵⁷ However, this has yet to happen, even after the deployment of the Emergency National Action Plan in 2015 to address the rise of the so-called Islamic State in Mosul and elsewhere. The forthcoming Lebanese National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 includes plans to establish a comprehensive referral system that links all services providers together, including those offering shelter.

The National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women (2013-2022) outlines policy action areas for improving women's status, including access to shelters.¹⁵⁸ In Lebanon, the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon (2011-2021) and the National Action Plan (2017-2019) to implement the Strategy aim to increase the number of shelters and protection centres and ensure their adequate geographical distribution.¹⁵⁹ However, all shelters in Lebanon are actually run by NGOs. Additionally, the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs worked with a committee to establish standardized guidelines for service provision for survivors of VAW. Morocco's Plan Gouvernemental pour l'Égalité (2017-2021) (Governmental Plan for Equality) prioritizes protection from gender-based violence but does not make specific mention of shelters.¹⁶⁰ Similar to the strategies on VAW, the strategies on gender refer to shelter but are not clear concerning State action.

General national plans on women also provide an avenue to discuss the provision of shelter in the absence of a thematic strategy on VAW. The Syrian Arab Republic's 10th Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) outlined the need for shelters and touched upon a protection plan, stating that the Ministry of Social Affairs was working with the Society for Development of the Role of Women to establish the Oasis of Hope shelter,¹⁶¹ while another shelter fell under the jurisdiction of the charitable religious organization, the Good Shepherd Order.¹⁶² The Government acknowledges that shelters are run by NGOs in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and by the Good Shepherd Order, but there is no legislative guidance on the parameters of this partnership and the distribution of responsibilities. Additionally, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour runs shelters for victims of trafficking in Damascus and Aleppo, though their current work is on

hold due to conflict.¹⁶³ Yemen originally committed to developing five shelters for women in five governorates in the five-year action plan (2011-2015) of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour but, similar to the Syrian Arab Republic, this has since come to a halt due to the current conflict.¹⁶⁴

6. NGO laws on association

Regional NGO laws on association, which severely restrict the ability of civil society to exist, let alone operate in some States, coupled with the shrinking space of civil society, impact the important services provided by women's organizations. While not true for every State, NGO laws in some contexts have consistently placed curbs on how civil society operates, though many have been able to work under the radar or through legislative loopholes.¹⁶⁵

However, this has changed. In the wake of the 2010-2011 uprisings, civil society mushroomed, including organizations focused on women's rights issues. As a backlash, many governments began to reinforce and augment national NGOs laws already in place. This often entailed

increasing prohibitions on the work of civil society, making it difficult for organizations to function or collaborate with international agencies/donors or attend international gatherings. This has become particularly true for women's rights activists.

While the shrinking space of civil society in the Arab region impacts all those working on human rights concerns, the effect on women's civil society stands out as it is commonly acknowledged that feminist/women's movements are often the reason why governments take action against VAW, particularly domestic violence.¹⁶⁶ In several contexts, it was feminist/women's movements that first provided shelter to women fleeing violence (and who continue to do so); thus, the implications in the region are serious given the limited number of shelters in operation. Furthermore, as fewer women's civil society organizations are able to raise funds, engage in solidarity work, expand networks or travel internationally, women's ability to access a comprehensive survivor-centred shelter in the region is hampered.

4. Overview of Shelters in the Arab Region

4. Overview of Shelters in the Arab Region

A. Introduction

The availability of information on the numbers and types of shelters for women escaping domestic violence in the Arab region is limited, as is the data on how they are governed and run, who can access the shelter service and the type or quality of the support provided. It has therefore been difficult to establish how many shelters exist and to what extent these shelters meet minimum standards. As noted, specialized women's shelters provide safe spaces for women in empowering environments, where staff with a thorough knowledge of gender-based violence deliver holistic services to meet the specific needs of survivors and support them to recover and rebuild.

What is clear in the Arab region is that, despite recent welcome legislative reforms aimed at addressing VAW, legal protection for survivors remains limited, including provisions to ensure the funding and political support for shelters for women escaping domestic violence. Provisions for the implementation of new laws have frequently not been provided, nor has training for law enforcement and other professionals to understand domestic violence and how to appropriately respond. Loopholes and gaps in family laws may limit a woman's ability to leave an abusive situation.

Women experiencing domestic violence face a variety of barriers when seeking protection due to attitudes, cultural stereotypes and a lack of accountability and protection mechanisms.

Further barriers include a lack of shelters and restrictive and complex procedures for accessing such accommodation. The challenges these barriers create are further compounded by the failure of many governments in the region to provide the necessary political and financial support to the NGOs running them to ensure they have the resources to be able to provide sufficient, good quality services that meet established minimum standards for women's shelters. The location of shelters and their accessibility make them reachable only to women near them, consequently limiting women's choices and subjecting them to disempowering dynamics. Furthermore, a lack of information on government-run shelters does not allow a thorough analysis of their effectiveness and compliance with international best practice.

Accessing crisis accommodation is not enough to ensure long-term protection from domestic violence if the service does not or is not able to provide the holistic specialized support survivors need. Without the appropriate support women are often forced to return to abusive husbands and remain vulnerable to further violence.

Based on primary data, this chapter gives a snapshot of the provision of shelters for survivors and their children in the Arab region. The shelters have been divided into two groups: shelters run by independent women's NGOs and shelters run by government agencies. Where available, information is provided on

how they are funded, managed and organized, their accessibility and the services they provide.

B. Description and analysis of available data on shelters run by non-governmental organizations

1. Funding, accommodation and scope of service

Shelters run by NGOs exist across the region and vary greatly in terms of funding, accommodation and scope of service. Data are available on one or more shelters run by NGOs in at least seven countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon (3), the State of Palestine, Tunisia (2) and Yemen (4).

Shelter funding is central to their capacity and sustainability. The United Nations recommends that shelter services are run by NGOs and funded by the government.¹⁶⁷ The SR-VAW noted that government-run services “have usually proven to fall short in their delivery of services”,¹⁶⁸ and that “State’s obligation to protect women from violence has to be reflected also in the allocation of adequate financial resources for shelters and protection measures”.¹⁶⁹ Only the government of Bahrain funds the cost of running a NGO-run shelter. In most of the other contexts, the financial and logistical support for survivors in shelters is funded by donors and charities. This gap in government funding presents a significant challenge to the sustainability and operations of shelters in the region.

Shelters are therefore often left to rely on outside funding to maintain their operations, with many shelters relying solely on international donors for their funding, particularly in Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and

Yemen. Heavy reliance on international funding threatens their sustainability. First, in some States, legislation may limit or prohibit foreign funding under the guise of upholding national security.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, NGOs often are forced to “follow the money” to secure their survival and are thus subject to short-term grants and a lack of core funding to achieve their mandates.¹⁷¹

These funding challenges are reflected in their staffing of shelters as some NGO-run shelters in the region employ volunteer staff, with volunteers making up over three quarters of the shelter staff team in some cases (table AI.4a). A lack of dedicated, full-time staff – particularly specialists to address the complex needs of survivors – can limit the quality and coverage of service provision.

The scope of work of the NGOs providing emergency shelters is impressive (figure AI.1). These activities are often conducted by women’s NGOs with little or no funding. This includes not only the provision of shelter services, but also hotlines, counselling and legal aid. The organizations also raise awareness of VAW and advocate for legislative amendments. Awareness-raising and advocacy help to address discrimination and inequality, which are both a root cause and a consequence of VAW.

Challenging the attitudes and culture that foster and reinforce VAW is essential if it is to be stopped: “Raising awareness, or more accurately changing awareness, is an important precursor for behavioural and attitudinal change”.¹⁷² Women’s organizations’ awareness-raising activities help to draw attention to the devastation caused by VAW as well as potential solutions. A range of different methods may be used to raise awareness, including social media and videos. For example, ABAAD, a women’s

NGO in Lebanon, has produced a series of videos on Facebook raising awareness of VAW.¹⁷³ Reaching a broader audience beyond survivors to counter harmful attitudes and gender norms is a key preventative measure to address VAW.

In addition to providing support to women escaping domestic violence, several NGOs in Algeria and Lebanon also provide psychological counselling services for perpetrators. Perpetrator programmes have been developed to intervene in and stop the behaviour of violent men, to prevent them from committing further violence and to increase the safety of survivors. Some perpetrator programmes also raise awareness of domestic violence and challenge attitudes that lead to discrimination and inequality. However, concerns have been raised regarding the limited evidence of their success and that funding for perpetrator programmes is often taken from the already stretched funding for survivors. There are also concerns that not all programmes follow appropriate principles and standards, which include linking with organizations providing support for women survivors and giving priority to the safety of women.¹⁷⁴ Respect, a leading NGO working with perpetrators, has developed standards that provide a benchmark for services working with this population.¹⁷⁵

Shelter accommodation is typically either a shared house or self-contained units, either within a shared house or as separate flats, or a combination of both. Shared accommodation spaces enable women to engage with other residents and share experiences, while the provision of self-contained units can be particularly important when supporting a woman with mental health or other complex needs. Among the shelters run by NGOs, the shelters in

Bahrain, the State of Palestine and Yemen provide independent units, and the shelters in Algeria, Lebanon and Tunisia provide shared spaces while the shelter in Jordan provides both. They all provide at least one indoor common recreational space with several offering other spaces, and almost half¹⁷⁶ providing a communal outdoor space (table AI.2).

Limitations on space in which to move impact the well-being of women and children living in the shelter. This is particularly true if they are not able to leave the shelter during the day, as is the case in the shelters in the State of Palestine and Yemen, both of which have limited communal space. Ten shelters out of 13 identified a lack of space as one of the sustainability challenges they face in keeping the shelter running. This was not an issue for the shelters in Algeria and the State of Palestine and one of the shelters in Lebanon, possibly due to their occupancy rates (tables AI.6a and AI.6b).

2. Management, staffing and organization

Effective management and organization of the shelter is crucial to ensure that survivors and their children are supported appropriately; in this regard, resources available to the shelter and the staff team are key. The key elements of any management model used are that they are flexible, efficient and able to respond to situations that occur, and that they foster effective teamwork amongst the staff.¹⁷⁷

A major challenge faced by shelters run by NGOs is limited resources. This impacts staffing, capacity, sustainability and the level of support they can offer survivors and their children. It is not possible to assess the amount of resources available in each of the 13 shelters per shelter place or per woman and child

supported.¹⁷⁸ A comparison with the number of women accommodated in 2017 indicates that the shelters with the tightest budgets were those with higher accommodation rates, and at least one had a higher annual expenditure than operating budget. While more data are needed to determine the priorities of shelters in the region, they are clearly limited by a lack of government support.

A breakdown of the percentage of their operating budgets for 2017 was provided by 10 shelters regarding allocations on human resources (staffing), operating expenses and support to women survivors.¹⁷⁹ This data provides a little insight into the priorities of the shelters, though it is not possible to establish if the division of resources is dictated by external factors such as a requirement of their funders, or other factors such as having to pay rent for the building the shelter uses.¹⁸⁰

Unsurprisingly, the availability of resources impacts on how a shelter is organized. The shelters in Jordan and Yemen allocated most of their resources in 2017 to supporting survivors while the shelters in Bahrain and the State of Palestine allocated most of their budgets to human resources. With full government funding, the shelter in Bahrain employs the highest number of full-time staff and a range of professional and non-professional staff, allocating 80 per cent of their budget to staffing in 2017. This prioritization suggests that staffing may be the key concern for underfunded shelters in the region. In comparison, the shelters in Yemen, which allocated 30 per cent of their budget to staffing in 2017, employ 30 staff between them of which only four are full-time, while the other 26 are part-time (see annex, tables 4a and 4b). Resources also appear to have been used to strengthen the expertise of the staff. The shelter in the State of Palestine,

which allocated 75 per cent of its budget to staffing in 2017, only has two full-time staff and relies heavily on volunteers; however, the shelter has the highest number of university-educated staff and mainly employs professional counsellors or therapists.

Table AI.3 details national regulations and guidelines in the seven States in which the shelters run by NGOs are located. The requirements vary significantly. Inspections by government entities are only carried out in the shelters in Bahrain and the State of Palestine, while in Algeria, Lebanon and Yemen there is no national legislation nor regulatory requirements for shelters. In Yemen, a national guide has been produced on how to manage shelters on which internal regulations are based. In Lebanon and Tunisia, the senior managers of the NGO supervising the shelter organizes visits to ensure that the shelter is operating in line with its set standards. In other cases, such as Lebanon, donors may visit shelters to see if the organization that received the funds is delivering as it promised in its funding proposal. There appears to be no regulatory oversight of the shelter in Algeria.

In addition to meeting the requirements of national guidelines and regulations, shelters are often required to provide reports to donors. Three shelters are required to present reports to their respective governments, those in Bahrain, Jordan and the State of Palestine, but only one, Bahrain, is funded by the government. The information required in these reports includes the number of beneficiaries and cases closed, activities and statistics. The shelter in the State of Palestine, following a recent by-law, is required to report on each resident with details of her case presented to the Ministry of Social Development. It is not clear if this data is anonymized; specific details

of a survivor's case or their children should only be shared with their permission and always anonymously.

National regulatory frameworks and guidelines are commonly developed to regulate how shelters are run in addition to the principles and standards for women's shelters described earlier. These can include specific regulations on adult social care and/or childcare and may be required by legislation or guidance. Such regulation may help in developing protocols to outline the regulatory requirements for shelters¹⁸¹ and set out working relations among different shelters. Similar initiatives are slowly emerging in the region. In Jordan, the National Council for Family Affairs has taken the lead in developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for shelters. ABAAD in Lebanon is also seeking to develop a regional SOP on shelters that will enable the standardization of tools for establishing, managing and inspecting shelters.

Shelter staff play an important role in ensuring the quality of service provision. Assisting survivors to recover and rebuild their lives requires experienced specialist staff that are appropriately trained, paid and supported.¹⁸² A range of management and organizational models is used in women's shelters depending on their resources, situation and environment. Some shelters, for example, are run jointly with staff working together as a whole team without a designated manager or director, whereas some have a specific shelter manager, director or administrator who leads the work of the shelter, while others divide specific leadership roles between senior staff who work together as a team.

Any volunteers employed in a shelter also need to be well-trained and supported. Other crucial

factors for good service provision include ensuring that there is sufficient staff in relation to the number of women and children supported by the shelter, which increases if women with complex needs are supported, and that there is the appropriate range of expertise to meet the needs of survivors. Tables 4a and 4b in the annex detail the number of staff at the shelters.¹⁸³ Except for shelters in the State of Palestine and Yemen, most staff are full-time. Volunteers are only utilized in Algeria, the State of Palestine and one of the shelters in Tunisia.

A fundamental role of shelters for women escaping domestic violence is the provision of safe women-only spaces with support from female staff. Furthermore, women should always perform senior roles within management and on the shelter board, as noted in earlier. Any men employed should not encroach on these spaces. When employing men, care needs to be taken to ensure the work they do does not impact on the safety or empowerment of the survivors in the shelter. If men are required to visit the shelter it is important that they are always supervised by a female staff member and that the survivors in the shelter are informed in advance that a man will be coming into the shelter and the reason behind the visit. According to data gathered, men are employed in several shelters.¹⁸⁴ However, it is not possible from the data provided to identify the type of work that men do or if they are required to work in the shelter building.

The complex needs of survivors require committed staff with a wide range of diverse experience. Such specialists can play an important role in ensuring that shelter staff has a thorough understanding of VAW and its impact on survivors. There is an impressive

range of professionals supporting survivors in most shelters, including trainers, outreach officers, project managers and health care professionals. All the shelters have at least one professional counsellor or therapist and all but one shelter in Tunisia have a shelter manager. Tunisia did not specify this difference, but it is possible that the shelter in Tunisia has a collective management approach or it could be due to limited resources for staffing. The lack of or limited funding by governments of NGO-run shelters and the reliance on trust and grant funding, which is often not secure, can result in staff cuts or in staff doing several jobs at once. Under such circumstances it is not unusual to find shelter managers running the shelter, while also providing direct support to survivors and leading fundraising and grant applications.

The education level of the staff working in the shelters varies. For example, the shelter in Algeria relies heavily on volunteers; it is also the only shelter run by an NGO that employs staff with no education. Only four shelters noted their staff team includes at least one specialist on VAW; the shelter in Bahrain has by far the highest number of specialists.¹⁸⁵ However, the shelter in the State of Palestine, which only provides short-term emergency support, appears to have two different types of professionals on its staff team: a manager/administrator and professional counsellors or therapists. This is reflected in the limited number of support services provided by the shelter.

All the shelters provide regular training and capacity-building for their staff, including on communication and listening skills, elements of available laws and provisions and how to deal with women, children and young people who are survivors (figure AI.2). An essential element to ensure the safety of survivors and their

children is an assessment of the needs and risks they face, which should be conducted as soon as possible after they arrive at the shelter. Understanding the dangers women face is an essential skill to conduct an effective assessment, yet only seven shelters in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia provide specific training on danger assessments. Training on gender equality and women's empowerment is provided for staff in all the shelters except in the State of Palestine and Yemen. Training on understanding the impact of domestic violence is provided in all the shelters except in the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen. Staff in shelters in Yemen do not receive training on how to identify the different types and dimensions of VAW; however, they do receive specific training on a unified guide on how to run shelters. These gaps in capacity can diminish the effectiveness of service provision for survivors. Table AI.5 details the composition of the professional staff in shelters.

Children exposed to domestic violence are directly impacted by violence, which causes a range of harms including anxiety, developmental delays, problems with sleeping and communication that affect their health, well-being and education.¹⁸⁶ Children require support from expert children's workers who also support mothers to improve their parenting and work closely with schools to improve their understanding of violence and their support for children in school. The lack of child expert workers in shelters is not uncommon as it can be challenging to obtain funding for this important role.¹⁸⁷ There is dedicated childcare staff to support the children in the shelters except in the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen, all of which accept married women with children (see annex, tables 6a and 6b). In addition to staff supporting women and children while in the shelter, in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan

and Yemen the shelters also employ reintegration officers to support women after their stay. This support is an important element in the provision of comprehensive and holistic quality services offered by shelters.¹⁸⁸

Procedures and policies for safety, behaviour and communication also vary across shelters in the region. Codes of conduct for staff on how to interact and work with survivors are available in all the NGO-run shelters except in Algeria where most of the staff is volunteers. All the shelters provide codes of conduct for staff in relation to integrity, confidentiality and ethics as part of their approach to service provision and over half of them provide emotional/psychological support services for their staff and volunteers. This is not available to staff in the shelters in Algeria or Yemen. Learning from and adapting codes of conduct from similar regional contexts may strengthen the quality of service provision to survivors in the region.

All the shelters have a complaints procedure in place to manage any complaints within the shelter. A manager, with support from a counsellor or lawyer, usually handles complaints. Emphasis is placed on the importance of listening to and verifying complaints before taking any necessary action to address the complaint. Some shelters also have rules and policies for residents in relation to accessing external communication (such as email, phone, Internet), access to money, smoking and participating in the shelter's daily chores. It is not possible to establish if the rules or policies for external communications were particularly restrictive. Only the shelters in Jordan and the State of Palestine do not have rules or policies for external communication. Additional data on these rules would better clarify their enforcement and purpose.

Documentation is an important element of shelter management and service provision. All the NGO-run shelters conduct an initial assessment of survivors seeking shelter that includes a risk assessment and an assessment of their specific needs upon which their safety plan is based. It is also imperative to maintain individual case files with pictures, stories and information on counselling sessions and reflections from survivors as part of the support provided. However, such documentation needs to be managed in a way that ensures the safety of the woman and her children.

Documenting the support provided to survivors and their children and the success, or otherwise, of any interventions can assist shelters in evaluating progress, outcomes and impact. Survivors complete evaluation forms in all the shelters; however, the shelters in Algeria, Lebanon and Tunisia do not analyse these forms, which significantly limits their value. Learning from survivors is an important part of improving and developing shelter services. Shelters are not necessarily integrating the voices of their service users in improving their work. Developing a clear strategic plan, informed by international standards, that includes the outcomes and impacts they aim to achieve with benchmarks, assists shelters to measure their progress and performance and improve the quality of their services. Data should therefore be collected and analysed, including from survivors, to monitor outcomes and progress made and identify areas that need to be improved.¹⁸⁹

Sustainability is also a significant concern for all the shelters run by NGOs. For the majority this is related to funding, limited resources, lack of space and increasing demand, which are common concerns of independent women's shelters in other regions. All these concerns

directly impact on the level and quality of support services the shelters can provide and the extent to which they can support women requiring extra support, such as women with complex needs. Additional challenges the organizations face to keep the shelters running include the absence of national policies on VAW or related to shelters, as well as poor implementation of legislation related to VAW.

3. Service accessibility and provision

Access to the shelters is dependent on a range of factors including the type of violence women experience, the referral process, documentation requirements, restrictions such as their age, or the age or gender of their accompanying children, or their specific support or access needs, such as mental health, complex needs or disability.

Shelters discussed the forms of VAW that would be considered as a domestic violence, thus entitling women access to their respective shelters. It is clear from the responses received that the definitions used by the shelters are broad, extending beyond violence by a current or former partner. They all consider any woman who has experienced physical violence, with or without evident signs of abuse, psychological violence and or sexual violence from a family member as eligible for access under their definition of domestic violence. Shelters across the region generally include all forms of violence: only the shelter in Algeria does not include emotional violence.

All shelters extend their eligibility for access beyond partner violence and other forms of domestic or family violence to include women who have experienced sexual violence or rape from a stranger and, except for the shelters in Bahrain and the State of Palestine, all also

accept survivors of human trafficking. One shelter in Lebanon will accept women experiencing economic violence and deprivation of food. The shelter in Jordan will also accept any women subject to abuse or threats who does not have alternative accommodation and one of the shelters in Tunisia accepts women facing all situations as long as they present supporting reports.¹⁹⁰ Some NGO-run shelters accept women with disabilities, refugee and migrant women and elderly women; however, women with mental health problems, migrant workers and refugee women face the least amount of access (figure AI.5).

It was not possible to establish what percentage of the women have experienced other forms of VAW or are destitute. Shelters in Western Europe and North America tend to primarily support women experiencing current or former domestic violence - this is in recognition of the different needs women have, depending on the type of violence they have experienced, and different expertise required, where possible a range of specialist organizations supports these needs.¹⁹¹ Providing survivors with the appropriate support for their needs linked to the type of violence they have experienced has been possible, not only because different types of support needs are acknowledged, but also because specific resources for survivors of other forms of VAW or homelessness and destitution are available elsewhere. However, separate support is not always available. In shelters in Turkey, women are accepted for a range of reasons. One study in 2011 noted that only 10 per cent of women in shelters in Izmir were escaping domestic violence; this is because there were so few alternatives for women with other support needs.¹⁹² The impact of austerity measures on local authorities in England has seen an increase in the demands on women's shelters to also support women escaping

trafficking or forced marriage, though the overwhelming majority of women and their children they continue to support are survivors of domestic violence.

Restrictions on referral to shelters can be a significant barrier for women seeking safety, particularly if women are not able to self-refer. Women can self-refer in all the shelters run by NGOs except in Bahrain and the State of Palestine. Neither of these shelters will accept referrals from a support line despite both organizations running a hotline. These two shelters are run under specific legal regulations and are the only shelters that have government inspections. The shelter in the State of Palestine noted that while referrals can be from any individual or institution, including hospitals and medical centres, all referrals must go through the Ministry of Social Development which assesses the case and determines eligibility before a woman is accepted by the shelter. These restrictions may delay women's ability to access a variety of protection mechanisms. National legislation and policy regarding shelter should be streamlined as much as possible to avoid prolonging survivors' suffering. Survivors may be reluctant to seek referral through the police or other official agencies, often because they do not think they will be taken seriously. Research in Turkey indicates that only 4 per cent of women go to the police for help regarding domestic violence. The lack of confidence in the police reflects the poor response women often get when reporting domestic violence. In some contexts the police frequently fail to understand the issue and the level of risk women face and have sometimes sent women back to a violent perpetrator.¹⁹³ Women's Aid Annual Survey in 2016 noted that about a quarter of all referrals to shelters in England were self-referrals.¹⁹⁴ In some cases it is only once a woman has found

safety in a shelter, and with the support of shelter workers, that she feels able to report the domestic violence to the police. Legal and cultural contexts within the Arab region may deepen the risk and fear survivors feel in reporting VAW. Some shelters require documentary proof before they will accept a woman into the shelter. For example, the shelter in Bahrain requires hospital and police reports and the shelters in Lebanon and Yemen require proof of identity. For women who must leave a violent home in a hurry or whose documents are held by the perpetrator, proof of identity may be difficult to provide. The shelter in Jordan requests referring parties to complete a referral form for information purposes to ensure that the survivor has the adequate assistance needed; however, this is not a requirement for access to the shelter.

Other barriers to accessing shelters include limited opening hours, as some survivors may need access in the evenings and weekends. An additional barrier is whether there are any charges or fees required of the survivors while at the shelter. It is therefore welcome that almost all the shelters accept referrals 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except for one shelter in Tunisia. Notably, this shelter accommodated the fewest number of women in 2017. All the shelters are free of charge and funds for transportation were also available from the shelters in Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon and the State of Palestine.¹⁹⁵ Violence against women can occur at any time and may take many forms, including financial abuse; therefore, eliminating these barriers is paramount to upholding survivors' safety and security.

Capacity remains a significant barrier to accessing a place in a shelter run by an NGO. Recommended standards in Europe are one

bed-space per 10,000 head of population, which is specified in the Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention; however, this has yet to be met. In its 2018 Annual Report, WAVE mapped the number of shelter bed-spaces missing in Europe highlighting the significant shortage of available space in 2017.¹⁹⁶ Capacity also appears to be an issue for shelters run by NGOs in the Arab region. Only the shelter in Jordan, which accommodated the highest number of women in 2017, accepts all the women referred to them, even if there is no space. Where possible the shelters try to avoid turning women away and instead refer them to another women's shelter in the State, however this does not mean that the women were always able to find accommodation at another shelter.

The barriers survivors face in accessing shelter in the Arab region significantly impacts the number of women who seek to be accommodated, as does the extent to which survivors are aware of the availability of shelters. While relatively few women were turned away from the shelters run by NGOs in 2017 this does not necessarily mean that all the shelters had enough bed spaces available at any one time to accommodate all the women and their children who needed shelter. The shelter in Jordan was at full capacity in 2017 and over half of the other shelters were almost full (see annex, tables 6a and 6b). Increasing demand/referrals for the service is a sustainability issue for all the shelters, except for the shelter in the State of Palestine. The limitations on length of stay in the shelters also suggest that capacity is an issue; these limitations vary. This is particularly relevant given the limited available number of shelters in the region and that there is no clear-cut division between emergency or long-term shelters. All the shelters responding to this question allowed the option of longer-term durations of stay,

usually if the woman remains unsafe. For example, survivors can stay in the shelter in Jordan until safety and security is achieved and appropriate longer-term accommodation has been found.¹⁹⁷

Limiting the time women can stay in a shelter to a set period can have a detrimental impact on their recovery. Research indicates that the length of time women need for recovery and to begin rebuilding their lives will vary depending on their needs, circumstances and the risk the perpetrator poses, thus it can take several years.¹⁹⁸ Shelters provide immediate crisis accommodation and the stay in a shelter marks the beginning of a women's journey to recovery. Thus, it is essential that women can stay for sufficient time to enable them to get the support they need and are able to move on safely. Six months is considered the optimum time on average for a shelter stay. It is also essential that women can move on to safe, suitable accommodation. If the reason a woman is required to leave the shelter is because her allotted stay has ended, this does not reflect whether she is ready to leave or whether she will have access to safe accommodation or no choice but to return to her violent partner. It is positive that the option of longer-term durations of stay are allowed; however, limited resources mean this is clearly a challenge for some shelters.

The range of specialist support services provided to survivors by shelters, in addition to temporary accommodation, is considerable (figure A1.3). They all offer basic necessities, health services and legal support.¹⁹⁹ Other services provided by the majority of shelters include specific support for children, counselling and economic empowerment and job/skills training. For example, the shelter in the State of Palestine, which has the least number of

professionals on its staff team, provides only five services. The shelters in Bahrain and Jordan provide the most services, which reflects the fact these two shelters are among the four shelters that have the greatest number and diversity of professionals on their staff teams. This difference may be attributed to the disparity in resources.

While the number of specialist services provided is impressive, a comparison with the different professionals employed by the shelter staff teams indicates that some shelters deliver services without employing the relevant professional expertise to deliver that service; it is unclear if staff are at least trained to deliver such services. Health-care services are provided in shelters in the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen that do not employ health care staff and child-related services are provided in five shelters that do not employ childcare staff in Tunisia and Yemen. The limited resources available to NGOs directly impacts upon staffing levels and their ability to employ experts. While staff in independent shelters become experts in supporting women and children and many may have relevant practical experience, shelter teams should include relevant professionals to support the services they are delivering.

An area of concern regarding services is that over half the shelters include mediation and/or reconciliation. Algeria, Jordan, Tunisia and Yemen offer mediation services, while reconciliation services are offered in Algeria, Bahrain and Yemen. Mediation and reconciliation can be very dangerous for survivors as these approaches fail to recognize the imbalance of power between the survivor and the perpetrator and put women at significant risk. The United Nations Handbook for National Action Plans on Violence against

Women calls on all governments to prohibit mediation in all VAW cases “both before and during legal proceedings (deemed inappropriate for cases of violence against women as it based on the assumption of equal fault for violence and equal bargaining power between parties and has been shown to revictimize victims/survivors and reduce offender accountability)”.²⁰⁰

The SR-VAW has also raised concerns regarding the use of mediation, especially when it is mandated in domestic violence cases. She notes that “negotiation and mediation can have dangerous effects, especially in those cases where those hosting or supervising the negotiation are not familiar with the methods of psychological threat and control that perpetrators use alongside physical violence”, as well as if they do not follow a survivor-centred approach.²⁰¹ The report recommends that States avoid mandatory reconciliation in all VAW cases.²⁰² The minimum standards for support services developed by the Council of Europe also note that mediation, reconciliation or family counselling are not appropriate in domestic violence cases, recommending with regard to perpetrator programs that such “programmes should not engage in any relationship counselling or mediation, anger management or substance abuse treatment”.²⁰³ No shelter should offer mediation or reconciliation services. Continuing to do so does not meet internationally recognized standards of service provision and seriously compromises the safety of the women and their children.

Some general services are also provided by the shelters to survivors after their stay in the shelter (figure AI.4).²⁰⁴ These include employment and education support, continued counselling, transitional housing and support

with rent (usually limited to three months). Follow-up support is offered by the shelters in Algeria for up to two years. This kind of critical support may help successfully reintegrate survivors back into society.

Many women's shelters also provide outreach and community support services to women who are not resident in the shelters. Such services can support women who have found alternative safe accommodation or women who remain with their perpetrator, as the service can be offered in a confidential location away from their homes. Support often includes legal information, practical support, advice and counselling.²⁰⁵ Support services for survivors in the community are provided by staff from shelters in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan and Tunisia. Similar community support also appears to be provided by the other shelters, based on their scope of work; however, this may be delivered by other staff within the NGO-run shelter. Women often seek a range of information and support before leaving a violent partner and some may never seek or be able to obtain a shelter place. Hotlines, drop-in centres and other outreach or floating support play an important part in assisting women.

Coordination and partnership in service provision is an important part of an effective response to VAW, enabling the sharing of knowledge and expertise and the development of a shared understanding. Central to this is the development of partnerships, both with government and non-governmental agencies for referral, to support survivor pathways to recovery and to support and improve national policy and action. Partnerships have been identified as particularly helpful to support national action plans to address VAW, where "States have found it useful to establish ongoing formal structures and partnerships, beyond

initial consultation, comprising key sectors with roles in implementation and monitoring of plans".²⁰⁶ This requires organizations running shelters to develop relationships and partnerships with both government and non-governmental entities.

All the shelters run by NGOs have established partnerships with government agencies and, in some cases other non-governmental entities, for referral services and pathways. Partnerships with the police are the most common, followed by partnerships with hospitals and legal professionals, counselling and psychological support institutions. All the shelters have also built relationships with their respective National Women's Machinery, except for the shelters in Bahrain and Yemen, and except for the shelters in Yemen, all also have partnerships with women's organizations.²⁰⁷

Security and safety are essential services provided by shelters for survivors. Safety measures include maintaining the confidentiality of the services and the case files of survivors and restricting access to the shelter. Several shelters have alarms and/or video monitoring. Three shelters are under the protection of security forces, and shelters in the State of Palestine and Tunisia and Bahrain employ private security. The shelters in Yemen employ guards. Safety and security can also be reinforced by effective rules and procedures for staff, volunteers, and survivors.

Women are restricted from leaving the shelter during the day at five shelters, while other shelters place specific conditions on women wishing to leave during the day. Preventing or restricting women from leaving the shelter or requiring them to be accompanied by a member of staff impacts their self-esteem and ability to make their own decisions, which is not

empowering. Such measures should be avoided or kept to a minimum, to protect the confidentiality of the shelter and ensure the safety of the residents, wherever possible. Similar restrictions are placed on children leaving the shelter, including being accompanied by their mother or member of staff.

There are also restrictions on visitors to the shelters. Only ten shelters allow women to receive visitors if they do not pose a threat to other residents or the security and safety of the shelter. In Yemen, visitors are only allowed if the visit is related to their case. No visitors are allowed in the shelters in Lebanon, the State of Palestine and Tunisia. Where such restrictions regarding visitors are in place, survivors should be able to meet visitors outside the shelter. Otherwise, these barriers remain a threat to survivors' self-determination.

4. Service users

Shelter service users include women and children from different groups with a range of needs. All the shelters accept women over 18 years, married women, with or without children, and pregnant women. However, the shelters were less likely to accept women with mental health problems, women over 65 years, or women migrant workers (figure AI.5). Lack of capacity in the shelters is an issue, as noted above, and in 2017 the shelters in Algeria, Lebanon and Tunisia had to turn women away.²⁰⁸ The reasons included lack of resources – such as funds, employees and space - or that the survivors had not met the required criteria for the specific shelter or age restrictions for accompanying children. The shelters in Lebanon have the least number of restrictions on who can access their shelters while the shelters in Yemen have the most. The limited access to

shelter for women with specific support needs is a concern.

Failing to take an intersectional approach to survivors' access to shelters can have severe ramifications. Women experience violence from men at any age, and evidence suggests it is at the same level for older women as it is for younger women. It is likely that older women have experienced domestic violence over a prolonged period as survivors often do not report it for years or even decades.²⁰⁹ Restricting older women's access to the support that shelters provide could be life threatening. Data from the 2017 Femicide Census, which collects data on all women killed by men in the UK, indicates that 20 women over the age of 66 were killed by men, equalling 14 per cent of the 139 women killed in 2017. Three of these women were over 85 years old and several of them had also been victims of sexual assault.²¹⁰ Similar barriers to accessing shelters exist across Europe; accordingly, shelters need to consider expanding the support they provide to enable access for older women.

The number of women and children accommodated in a shelter during the year varies. Some women only need to be in the shelter for a short period of time, while others require support for much longer. This depends on a range of factors including their circumstances, resources and how violent their perpetrator is. Most of the shelters restrict the length of time women and their children can stay, with majority limiting it to three months.²¹¹ In Lebanon, for example, the organization running the shelters noted that there are usually no more than 20 to 25 women in each shelter at any one time. All the shelters allow for extensions of stay in special circumstances, usually if the women's safety

remains at risk or she has nowhere to go. Providing specialized support for women with serious mental health needs requires expertise and resources that inevitably place an increased burden on shelter resources. However, while this may in part explain why some shelters do not provide services to women with mental health support needs, it does not remove the urgent need for these services. The World Health Organization highlights a direct link between partner violence, psychological trauma and stress and mental health problems;²¹² it can often cause trauma and some women can experience PTSD. It is contradictory to prevent women from accessing support services they desperately need because of the mental health problems they have sustained as a direct result of experiencing domestic violence. This only penalizes survivors further. Shelters run by NGOs in the region need to have sufficient resources to enable them to provide the specialist support these women require.

Restrictions on access for children were primarily for boys with the general age limit between 11 and 12 years old. Only the shelters in Yemen placed restrictions on the age of girls under 18 years old accompanying their mothers, only allowing girls and boys under 8 years old. The data provided by the shelters on the limited number of children accommodated with their mothers highlights a significant difference compared with the number of children in shelters in Europe. The number of children in shelters in England is much closer to, or even greater than, the number of women accommodated.²¹³ Research by WAVE on the number of children in shelters in Europe shows that of the 23 States providing data on the number of children accommodated in women's shelters in 2015, almost all had numbers close to the number of women supported and in eight

States more children were accommodated than women.²¹⁴ The difference in the number of women with accompanying children in the shelters may reflect restrictions on women's rights and access to their children and child custody in the Arab region.

C. Description and analysis of available data on government-run shelters

1. Funding, accommodation and scope of service

There are government-run shelters in six countries in the Arab region: Iraq, Jordan, Oman, the State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Syria; the shelters in Iraq are run by local government. In Saudi Arabia, the government runs the shelter with support of a charity.²¹⁵ Few insights are available into these shelters as, in general, there is a lack of data.

Funding is fully provided by the government for seven shelters in Jordan, Oman, the State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. This core funding reduces pressure on staff to search for additional support for service provision. However, the Government of Iraq only partially funds the shelters with additional funding provided by international donors. One of the shelters in Iraq also obtains funding from the private sector, special activities and the sale of products.²¹⁶

The scope of work of the government-run shelters varies. In addition to providing shelter, counselling services are provided by all the shelters for which information was available.²¹⁷ One of the shelters in Iraq also provides psychological counselling services for abusive husbands/fathers. The shelters in Iraq and

Jordan run hotlines. The shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia provide legal aid for abused women and economic empowerment services. Activities to raise awareness and advocate for legislative amendments are also done by the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. This broad mix of activities acknowledges the many services needed by survivors; however, a more comprehensive approach is needed to address domestic violence effectively.

Data on the type of shelter accommodation were available for the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Women are accommodated in shared spaces in two of the shelters in Iraq and in independent units in the other one. The shelter in Saudi Arabia provides both types of accommodation. Shared indoor and outdoor spaces are available in the shelters in Iraq.²¹⁸ Data were provided by the National Women's Machineries on both the number of rooms and the number of beds in the government-run shelters in Jordan, Oman, the State of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic (table AI.8a). Data were provided on the number of single units and the number of beds in the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia (see annex, table 8b). Information on the occupancy rates of these shelters would be useful to determine their capacity. Unfortunately, occupancy rates are not available for all the government-run shelters, with information proved only on the number of women and children accommodated in some shelters (tables AI.10a and AI.10b). A lack of space was identified as a challenge by only one shelter in Iraq.²¹⁹

2. Management, staffing and organization

Limited information is available on the management and staffing of the government-run shelters and no data exists on the breakdown of

their operating budgets. Understanding their funding priorities and bottom lines may prove helpful to improving the overall sustainability of the shelter ecosystem.

Data on national regulations and guidelines for shelters were available for five of the six States where the government-run shelters are located (table AI.9).²²⁰ The shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia are required to provide reports to the government. In Saudi Arabia, the information required in the reports includes financial and technical information and the number of beneficiaries. No data was available on whether the other government-run shelters were also required to provide reports to the government.

Information on shelter staffing was only available for the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia (figure AI.6).²²¹ The shelter in Saudi Arabia only employs full-time staff. Most of the staff in one of the shelters in Iraq is full-time and in another the majority is part-time. Only the shelter in Iraq employs two volunteers.²²² The education level of the staff employed in the government-run shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia ranges from no education to a higher degree. Higher educational attainment is most noticeable among the shelter staff in Saudi Arabia, with over half the team having a university degree and an additional two members of staff with higher-level degrees. None of the shelters have specialists on VAW among their team. This lack of specialists may prevent effective service provision for the complex needs of survivors.

The number of professionals on the staff teams also varies. One of the local government-run shelters in Iraq only has a shelter manager/administrator and catering and cleaning staff, with apparently no other

professionals employed.²²³ The shelter in Saudi Arabia has only three different types of professionals on their staff team: a shelter manager, health-care workers and professional counsellors or therapists. Each of the other two shelters in Iraq employs four different types of professionals; both have shelter manager and reintegration professionals, one has health-care workers and childcare staff and the other has professional counsellors or therapists and outreach officers.

Information on codes of conduct, complaints procedures and staff training were only available for the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia; all four shelters provide codes on integrity, confidentiality and ethics. Only one shelter in Iraq provides a code of conduct on how to work with survivors, and it is also the only shelter to provide emotional and psychological support services for its staff and volunteers. All four government-run shelters have a complaints procedure that is usually managed by the shelter manager and a counsellor.

Training and capacity development are provided to staff on communication and listening skills in all four shelters. Except for one shelter in Iraq, they all provide staff training on how to deal with women and children who are survivors of VAW or on how to understand the impact of domestic abuse. Training on danger assessments is only provided to staff in two of the shelters in Iraq and only one of those shelters offered staff training on the different types and dimensions of VAW. In some shelters, there appears to be a mismatch in terms of capacity and service provision. Training on laws and provisions on VAW is not available in the shelter in Saudi Arabia, which also does not provide training in legal aid or gender equality and women's empowerment. However, this shelter does conduct advocacy surrounding relevant legislation.

Sustainability issues faced by the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia indicate that they are concerned about increased demand. Funding, staffing and the absence of national policies on VAW or shelters were also a concern for several shelters. Lack of space is only an issue for one shelter in Iraq, and funding is not an issue for the shelter in Saudi Arabia, which is fully funded by the government.

3. Service accessibility and provision

Information on access criteria for government-run shelters varies (figure AI.8). Women can self-refer to shelters in Jordan, Oman, the State of Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic and one of the shelters in Iraq. Except for the shelter in Oman, these shelters also accept referrals from women's groups and or other NGOs.²²⁴ Only one of the shelters in Iraq does not accept referrals from a hotline.

The restrictions on referrals or barriers to access linked to resources appear to be less of an issue for government-run shelters. Information provided indicates that they are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are free of charge.²²⁵ Data available on three shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, suggests capacity is less of an issue for government-run shelters as none of these shelters turn women away. In cases of no availability, women are referred to another shelter in Saudi Arabia, while one of the shelters in Iraq offers a place until alternative accommodation becomes available. All also provide transportation or cover the cost of transportation for women seeking access.

A shelter in Iraq does not accept self-referrals from women nor referrals from NGOs. The shelter will accept referrals from the police, but any other official referrals from governmental

organizations must be based on a judge's decision and an official letter from the referring authority is required. All the other government-run shelters accept referrals through official parties, such as the police or the courts. In Oman this includes referrals from the public prosecutor and in Saudi Arabia referrals from the Social Protection Unit. Again, legal and social contexts may further discriminate against survivors and therefore limit their access to services.

Government-run shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia offer an unlimited stay for survivors, while one shelter in Iraq has a limited stay from three to six months.²²⁶ Extensions are allowed if women do not have an alternative accommodation or if a court case is ongoing. For example, short-term stays in the two shelters in the State of Palestine can be extended to long term depending on the women's case. The ability for survivors to stay long term may be because government-run shelters have access to increased resources, or their funding is more secure than the funding available to shelters run by NGOs.

Services offered by government-run shelters are similar to those provided by NGO-run shelters. All the government-run shelters provide housing and basic necessities, counselling, legal support and health/medical services and almost all offer rehabilitation or community reintegration services (figures Al.7a and Al.7b). Reconciliation services are provided by many of the government-run shelters; only the shelters in Oman, Saudi Arabia and one of the shelters in the State of Palestine do not require women to engage in reconciliation with abusive partners. As noted above, reconciliation efforts can be very dangerous for survivors and should not be provided by shelters.

Information on general services available after the shelter stay was only available from two shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, which is limited to short-term rent support. Both these shelters also provide support to non-residents. However, despite not employing the relevant professional experts, both shelters in Iraq provide health services and counselling and the shelter in Saudi Arabia provides child-related services. The provision of services by non-specialist staff may not fully address the complex needs of survivors. To support referral pathways for survivors, partnerships have been established by shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. All three shelters have partnerships with the police, the National Women's Machinery, hospitals and legal professionals. The two shelters in Iraq also have partnerships with women's organizations.²²⁷

Safety and security measures are used by all shelters. However, the location of all the shelters is not identified, except the shelters in the State of Palestine. Other measures used include restrictions on access in Iraq, Oman and Saudi Arabia, and video monitoring and/or alarm systems in Iraq, the State of Palestine and Saudi Arabia. Public security forces and or police forces are used by the shelters as in Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine²²⁸ and Syria, whereas at the shelter in Oman private security forces are employed.

While almost all the shelters allow women to leave during the day, with the exception of one shelter in Iraq that also does not allow children to leave, conditions on leaving were required by five shelters in: Jordan, Oman, the State of Palestine and Saudi Arabia.²²⁹ Women in the shelter in Saudi Arabia are only allowed to leave to attend court, hospital visits, to pursue education or work-related activities, or to

receive a visitor in the family unit. Children can leave the shelter in Saudi Arabia and two of the shelters in Iraq for education purposes. All three shelters in Iraq allow women visitors. As discussed above, limitations on visitation and leave for survivors can stunt their empowerment and ability to reintegrate into their communities.

4. Service users

Service users welcomed in the shelters include single and married women, and married women with accompanying children.²³⁰ Age limits on accompanying children were provided by two of the shelters in Iraq (girls and boys 0-5 years old, and girls 0-12 and boys 0-7 years old respectively) and the shelters in the State of Palestine and Syrian Arab Republic (boys up to age 12 years). All, except the shelter in Oman, accept unaccompanied girls under the age of 18 years. The shelter in Saudi Arabia appears to have the most restrictions on women accessing the services of the shelter as it does not allow access to women over 65 years old, refugee women, migrant women, women with disabilities and women with mental health issues (figure AI.8).

It was not possible to establish if similar restrictions are in place in the shelters for which the National Women's Machineryes provided data, as questions on access for older women or child/underage brides, and on access for women with mental health support needs were not asked. However, data was provided on access for migrant women, refugee women, women with disabilities and displaced women. It is of concern that some of the most vulnerable groups of women seeking access to shelters are not welcome in some of the government-run shelters, particularly given that these shelters appear to have the capacity to accept more survivors.

D. Discussion of the findings and conclusions

The shelters run by NGOs and those run by governments offer a wide range of services and support and, in some States, accommodate many of the women in need and their children. It is welcomed that the shelters offer their services free of charge and that a significant number allow women to self-refer.

The available evidence suggests that there are differences between shelters run by NGOs and shelters run by governments. The most notable difference is funding sources. All the government-run shelters are fully funded by the government, except for the three shelters in Iraq that are partially funded by the government. Only the NGO-run shelter in Bahrain is funded by their government, which funds all the operational expenses for the shelter. The difference this makes, compared with other shelters run by NGOs, is significant. The shelter in Bahrain has the highest budget, the highest percentage of full-time staff, among the highest number of professionals on their staff team and provides the second highest number of services. The shelter is also able to accommodate a wide range of women, including women over 65 years old, women with disabilities and women with mental health problems. The only group of women not accepted by the shelter is migrant workers. Therefore, achieving core operational funding for both types of shelters is critical for their sustainability and overall effectiveness.

It is not possible to make a direct comparison between all the shelters run by governments and the shelters run by NGOs in all areas because of limitations in the available data. However, where comparison is possible with the four shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, there

appear to be some differences regarding staffing, education, training, support and codes of conduct, with most of the independent shelters providing more support to staff. Also, regarding the number of services provided, the NGO-run shelters offer significantly more services – such as expert support for survivors and their children – and offer support after the shelter stay, which is not provided by the four government-run shelters.²³¹

The data available suggest that several practices of the shelters do not meet the principles or standards for women's shelters identified early in the report. There is limited evidence that, except for the shelters in Iraq, the government-run shelters base their approach on an understanding of the gendered nature of VAW. Both the government-run shelters and some of the independent shelters provide a few services without employing the relevant professionals on their staff team. A lack of specialists in both shelters presents a key gap in service provision for survivors.

The total number of women and children accommodated in some of the government-run shelters in 2017 is higher than in the shelters run by NGOs; this is likely to be because they appear to have a higher capacity. Where data on 2017 occupancy rates are available, they are significantly higher for at least nine of the independent shelters in Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen, than for the government-run shelters (see annex, tables 6a and 6b and tables 10a and 10b). Clearly there is a demand for protection and shelter for survivors; however, the limited supply makes access for all women a significant barrier.

The principle of making shelter open and accessible to all women is particularly

challenging. While most shelters are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, almost all restrict access to some groups of women and have referral restrictions. Only the three independent shelters in Lebanon accept referrals from anywhere and have no restrictions on the groups of women able to access the shelters. Some of the referral restrictions may be imposed on shelters by law or government regulations, as for example in the State of Palestine where all the referrals to the shelter run by the NGO are required to go through the Ministry of Social Development. The shelter noted that some women had been turned away because relevant authorities had not referred them. These barriers to openness and accessibility limit the empowerment and self-determination of survivors.

The principles of women's safety, security and confidentiality are called into question by the provision of mediation and reconciliation services. These are provided by seven government-run shelters in Iraq, Jordan, the State of Palestine, and the Syrian Arab Republic and by eight shelters run by NGOs in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Tunisia and Yemen. These services limit the extent to which shelters can foster women's empowerment and self-determination, which is also impacted by restrictions on women's ability to leave the shelter during the day. These restrictions also impact on the shelter's ability to promote women's health and well-being. A further challenge to supporting women's health and well-being are the time limitations placed on their stay in the shelter and the availability of support following their stay.

The challenges identified by the shelters in the region are not just related to limited resources and increasing demand: they also include the

absence of national policies related to VAW or related to shelters, as well as the poor implementation of existing VAW legislation.

Many of the NGOs that shared details of the shelters they run are providing an essential service under challenging conditions with limited resources. International human rights

standards call on governments to support shelters run by NGOs, including with funding. This core funding will allow NGOs to focus on service provision rather than their own survival. There is a clear need for the governments in the Arab region to provide such essential funding support as part of their actions to address VAW.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has shed light on an under documented service in the Arab region: the provision of shelter and affiliated services for women survivors of domestic violence. Since the early 1990s, States in the Arab region have acknowledged the pandemic nature of VAW and its impact on the lives of women, their families, and the community at large – this has resulted in legislation, policies and services, including shelter. Nonetheless, State responsiveness to VAW has been slow, both in developing legislation and policies and in providing programmes that ensure the safety of women and protect them from violence.

Currently, most of States in the Arab region have shelters, including shelters that are government-run. However, the number and geographical distribution is rather limited. Based on the data received, it appears that the total number of shelters does not exceed 50 in Arab States. Except for Algeria, which has a network of shelter services available in subregions, most of the shelters are available only in major cities, which hinders women's access.

The establishment of shelters has been mostly initiated by civil society organizations, as is the case globally. The expansion of services for survivors was either developed in response to the needs of women and their children or by adapting models and international experiences to fit the local context. Data gleaned from this study show high occupancy rates indicating that women fleeing abusive homes are turning to available shelters. However, given the absence

of reliable prevalence surveys on VAW in the region, it is not possible to assess if existing capacities meet the needs of women seeking safe refuge. This field of study would greatly benefit from additional research, particularly on the impact of shelter and protection on the prevalence of domestic violence in the region.

Data gathered from the questionnaires indicate that shelters in the Arab region are facing numerous hurdles. Limited funding has circumscribed shelters' availability as well as the provision of adequate services, both for government-run and NGO-run shelters. Furthermore, the sustainability of shelters is under threat given that budget cuts have impacted an array of social protection institutions. In the case of NGO-run shelters that responded to ESCWA's questionnaire, most of them have international donors as the main source of funding, which clearly emphasizes the high vulnerability of shelters in the region.

Despite limited data, some general conclusions can be made about the status of shelters in the Arab region. Limitations of data arising from the limited number of respondents and some inconsistencies in responses have impacted reaching rigorous results and conclusions. Due to limitations posed by the small number of respondents to the questionnaires, it is hard to draw a conclusive picture of shelters in the region. Certainly, the lack of supportive legal frameworks and national policies on combating VAW pose a serious challenge for establishing

and running shelters. This is further complicated when coupled with other legal provisions, such as personal status laws or penal codes, that impede women from resorting to shelters for support. Furthermore, shelters are governed by a mix of regulations introduced by both governments and the organizations that established the shelters. These regulations define and operationalize the relationship between the shelter management and women using the service, as well as the relationship with government institutions, particularly in relation to oversight and the sharing of information. While such regulations may facilitate the work of shelters, there is also a possibility that such regulations may influence the agency of women, including their safety and security.

However, the results of the questionnaire have raised concerns about the ability of existing shelters to be open and accessible to all women. It also suggests that the protection element of shelters may be undermined by reconciliation services, based on the reported services offered in some shelters. Most importantly, analysis of the available responses suggests that most of the shelters provide services to varying degree, but do not to adopt well-structured empowerment approach towards survivors.

Available literature indicates that shelters are helpful in providing a safe haven for women survivors of violence and are an integral part of a comprehensive approach. The study has provided a snapshot of shelters in the Arab region, a discussion that was missing from much of the literature on shelters globally. Therefore, this study has been successful in filling a knowledge gap that is much needed as Arab States move towards acknowledging and designing programmes to address VAW.

Future in-depth studies would augment the findings of this study and would allow to better understand the impact of shelters on the lives of women. The recommendations set forth in this study are grouped in four areas: (a) Availability of the service; (b) Accessibility to the service (c) Professionalism of service; and (d) Quality of services.

Availability of the service: Availability of safe shelters for women and their children continues to be an important factor in providing protection for survivors. However, shelters need to be part of a comprehensive response based on a sound legal framework, which translates the political will to combat violence into tangible support and concrete steps. Hence, this research recommends that governments expand their establishment of shelter services and ensure a wider geographical coverage to ensure that shelters are also present in remote areas as well as in main urban areas. In addition, shelters must be available for short, medium and long-term periods of time; this would respond to survivors' changing circumstances and, at the same time, ensure that no woman is turned away when seeking refuge.

In the Arab region, it is critical that shelters are run by women's organizations and/or NGOs specialized in VAW services with a gendered understanding of VAW or in collaboration with government and other relevant State institutions, while concurrently supported by such institutions. This is because women's organizations are better situated to provide empowering, survivor-centred services, while the government is better able to provide core funding and coordination of activities. Therefore, governments should dedicate or increase funding to NGOs and women's organizations running shelters.

Accessibility to the service: Restrictions on women's access to shelter may force women to remain in abusive relations and limit their ability to leave a violent situation. Accessibility refers to two separate, but intersecting issues – legal accessibility and practical accessibility.

First, legal accessibility defines who may access shelter. Hence, laws and regulations governing access to shelter, including limitations on self-referral as well as the demographic of survivor (such as age, marital status, ethnic background, type of violence experienced, among others), should be revised to ensure that all women, regardless of their status, are welcomed. Most importantly, limitations of age or gender should not be placed on children's access to shelter (when accompanied with their mother). However, when necessary, shelters must offer alternative accommodation in individual units for women with older male children. These barriers may discourage women from seeking support. Furthermore, other laws in Arab States that influence access, such as guardianship and custody over children, should be re-examined as these also serve as a barrier to access for survivors and their children.

Second, practical access must be ensured so that survivors with complex needs, disabilities, mental health issues or linguistic differences, among others, are never turned away. Shelters must be available to all women, without discrimination and must be able to assist women with intersectional needs. A lack of accessibility to shelter creates even greater vulnerabilities for survivors who may already be socially and economically marginalized. Arab Governments should work closely with relevant United Nations agencies to develop plans adhering to the global standards set out by the ESP, with an emphasis on intersectionality and inclusion.

Professionalism of service: Shelter workers, whether formally employed (full-time or part-time) or volunteers, must be specialized in their work and utilize an empowering, survivor-centred approach when engaging survivors. To ensure this, shelters must develop model protocols based on good practice for service providers and the services they render. It is imperative that shelters always have specialists on staff who can provide comprehensive, empowering and survivor-centred services. To increase knowledge and skills, shelter workers and volunteers must abide by professional ethics and undergo regular standardized trainings to be familiarized with international good practice. These professionals must also develop partnerships or SOPs with government providers, the police and the judicial system, among others, to ensure availability and access, as well as a coordinated response to shelter.

Shelters must also collect data and measure and monitor the outcomes of survivors and their children to learn, improve and benchmark their practice and to inform policymaking. Therefore, confidential database management systems should be installed across shelters to collect and store such information. Learning from survivors is an important part of improving and developing shelter services.

Quality of services: Shelters play an empowering role in survivors' lives well beyond the provision of a roof and bed for the night. Women and their children need empowering, survivor-centred services during and after their shelter stay. Thus, shelters' services (and referrals) should be multifunctional and include rehabilitation and reintegration services that put the survivor at the centre of decision-making process. These services will vary, but ultimately must include

the basics of psychosocial support, economic empowerment, educational empowerment, legal aid and health-care services.

Furthermore, shelters need to ensure that women are empowered to make and take

decisions freely when accessing services. Thus, survivors must be provided with support workers that can assist them in the short term and long term as they review their options and decide on their next steps, all the while increasing their agency.

Annex I

Table AI.1 Location and date the NGO-run shelter was established

Country	Location	Established
Algeria (1)	Data not available	1992
Bahrain (1)	Outside the capital	2006
Jordan (1)	Capital	1999
Lebanon (3)	Outside the capital	2011, 2013 and 2014
State of Palestine (1)	Outside the capital	2006
Tunisia (2)	Outside	2017 (1)
Yemen (4)	Data not available	2008

Table AI.2 NGO-run shelter accommodation capacity²³²

Capacity	Algeria	Bahrain	Jordan	Lebanon			State of Palestine	Tunisia	
Number of single units (one women and her children)	35	6	8	4 to 5 rooms	5 to 6 per unit	4	2	2	8
Number of beds	9	35	24	32	20	18	8	16	11
Number of indoor common recreational spaces	4	1	3	4	2	2	1	3	1
Number of outdoor common recreational spaces	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	1

Table AI.3 National legislation and regulations governing NGO-run shelters

Country	National Legislation	Regulations issued by the government	Internal Regulations	National guidelines or standard operating procedures for shelters	Government inspections
Algeria	No	No	Yes	No	No
Bahrain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, based on international guidelines	Yes, two times a year by the Evaluation Committee from Ministry of Labour and Development
Jordan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, based on international guidelines	No
Lebanon	No	No	Yes	No	No
State of Palestine	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, six to eight times a year by the Ministry of Social Development
Tunisia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, based on international guidelines	No
Yemen	No	No	Yes	No	No

Table AI.4a Shelter staffing in NGO-run shelters

Staff	Algeria	Bahrain	Jordan	State of Palestine
Total number of staff	37	15	13	13
Full-time staff	3	13	10	2
Part-time staff	4	2	3	6
Volunteers	30	0	0	5

Table AI.4b Combined responses on shelter staffing in NGO-run shelters²³³

Staff	Lebanon (3 shelters)	Yemen (4 shelters)	Tunisia (2 shelters)
Total number of staff	15 (an average of 5 per shelter)	30 (an average of 7 per shelter)	31 (an average of 15.5 per shelter)
Full-time staff	13 (an average of 4 per shelter)	4 (1 per shelter)	20 (an average of 10 per shelter)
Part-time staff	2 (less than 1 per shelter)	26 (an average of 6 per shelter)	8 (an average of 4 per shelter)
Volunteers	Data not available	0	2 (an average of 1 per shelter)

Table AI. 5 Professionals on NGO-run shelters' staff team

Description	Number employed by shelters (out of 13 shelters run by NGOs)
Childcare staff	7
Health-care staff	7
Outreach officers	9
Professional counsellors or therapists	13
Project managers/officers	10
Reintegration officers	7
Shelter managers/administrators	12
Staff catering to nutrition and meal preparation	5
Staff catering to sanitation and cleanliness of shelter	5
Trainers	11

Table AI.6a Shelter occupancy rate in NGO-run shelters in 2017

	Algeria	Bahrain	Jordan	State of Palestine
Rate of occupancy	80%	90%	100%	50%
Number of women accommodated	Data not available	84	241	25
Number of children accommodated	8	83	17	1
Number of women turned away	15	Data not available	0	Data not available

Table AI.6b Combined responses on shelter occupancy rate in NGO-run shelters in 2017²³⁴

	Lebanon (3 shelters)	Yemen (4 shelters)	Tunisia (2 shelters)
Rate of occupancy	95%	98%	32%
Number of women accommodated	400 (an average of 133 per shelter)	562 (an average of 140 per shelter)	20 (an average of 10 per shelter)
Number of children accommodated	68 (an average of 23 per shelter)	50 (an average of 12 per shelter)	17 (an average of 8.5 per shelter)
Number of women turned away	Data not available	0	19

Table AI.7 Location and date of establishment of government-run shelter

Country	Location	Established
Iraq (3)	Outside capital	1999, 2003 and 2009
Jordan (2)	Capital (1) and outside capital (1)	Data not available
Oman	Capital	Data not available
State of Palestine (2)	Capital (1) and outside capital (1)	Data not available
Saudi Arabia	Data not available	2005
Syrian Arab Republic	Capital	Data not available

Table AI.8a Government-run shelter accommodation

Capacity	Jordan (2 shelters)		Oman	State of Palestine (2 shelters)		Syrian Arab Republic
Number of rooms	23	33	25	18	7	9
Number of beds	81	51	24	36	50	21

Table AI.8b Shelter accommodation in Iraq (3) and Saudi Arabia government-run shelters

Capacity	Iraq (3 Shelters)			Saudi Arabia
Number of single units (one woman and her children)	4	10	60	Data not available
Number of beds	4	10	10	53

Table AI.9 National legislation and regulations governing government-run shelters

Country	National legislation	Regulations issued by the government	Internal regulations	National guidelines or standard operating procedures/operational instructions for shelters	Government inspections
Jordan	No	Data not available	Yes	Yes	Data not available
Oman	Yes	Data not available	No	Yes	Data not available
State of Palestine	No	No	No	Yes, Protection centres scheme no. 9/2011 (Council of Ministers)	
Saudi Arabia	No	No	Yes	No	Yes, three to four times a year by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development
Syrian Arab Republic	Yes	Data not available	No	Yes	Data not available

Figure AI.1 Scope of work of non-governmental organizations running shelters

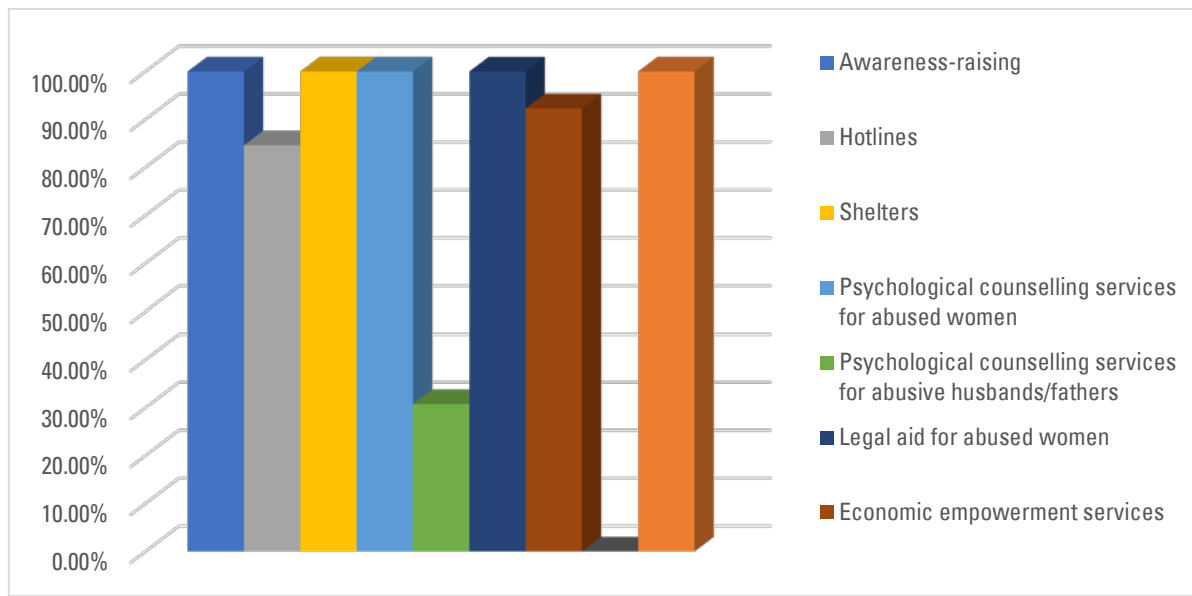


Figure AI.2 Staff training offered by NGO-run shelters

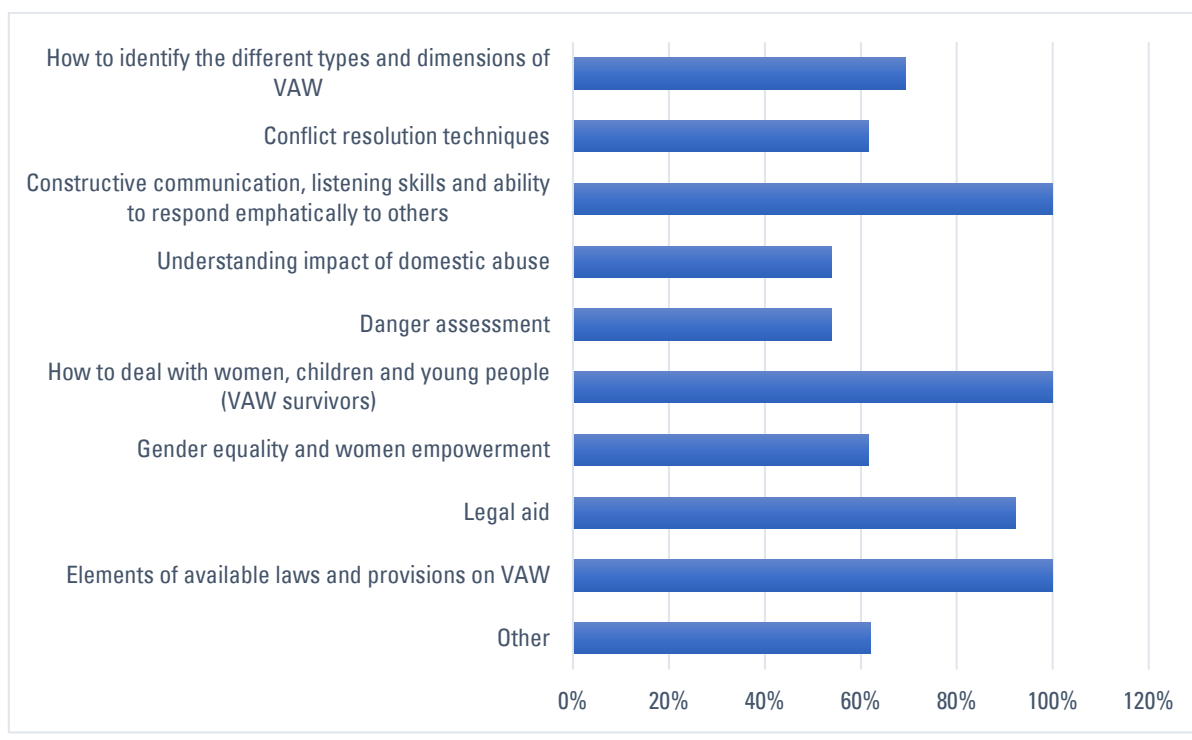


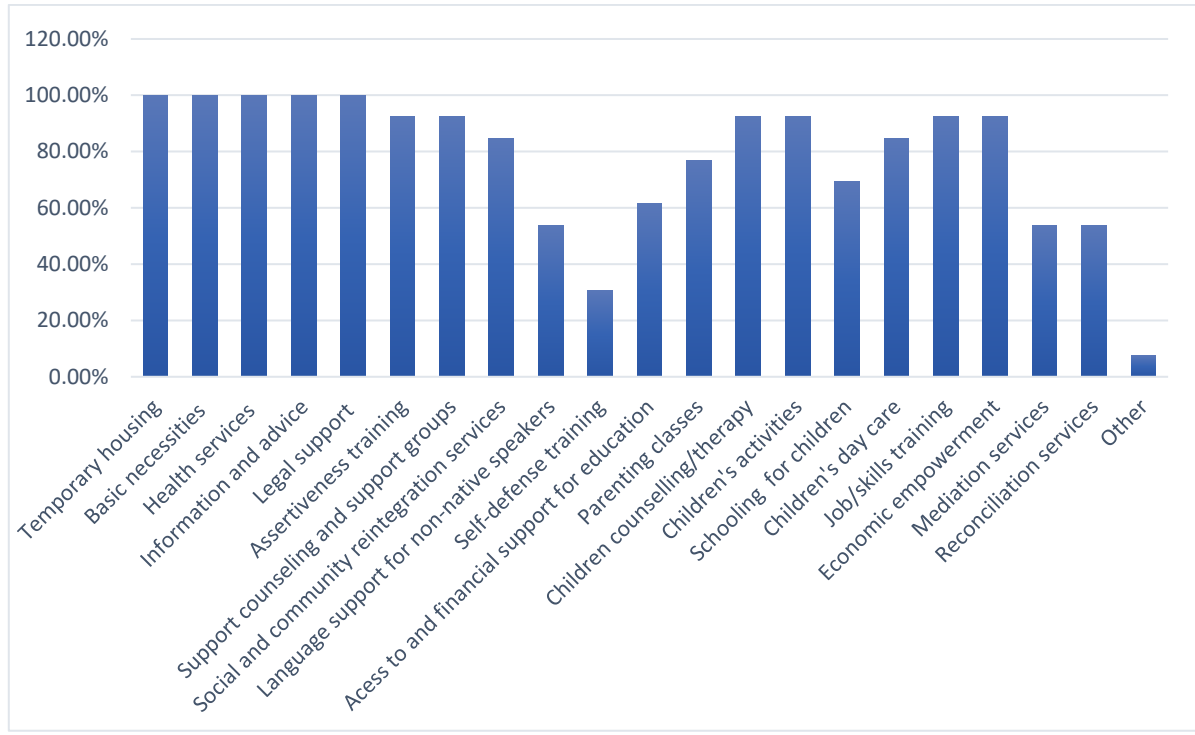
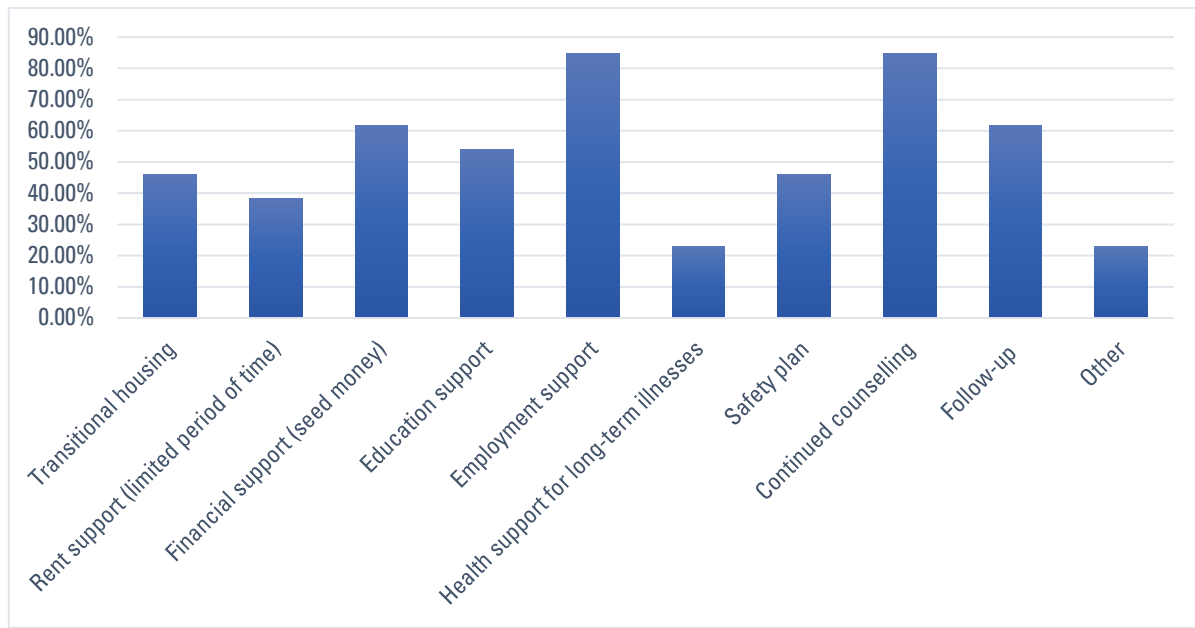
Figure AI.3 In-house services offered by NGO-run shelters**Figure AI.4** General services offered by NGO-run shelters

Figure AI.5 Access to NGO-run shelters

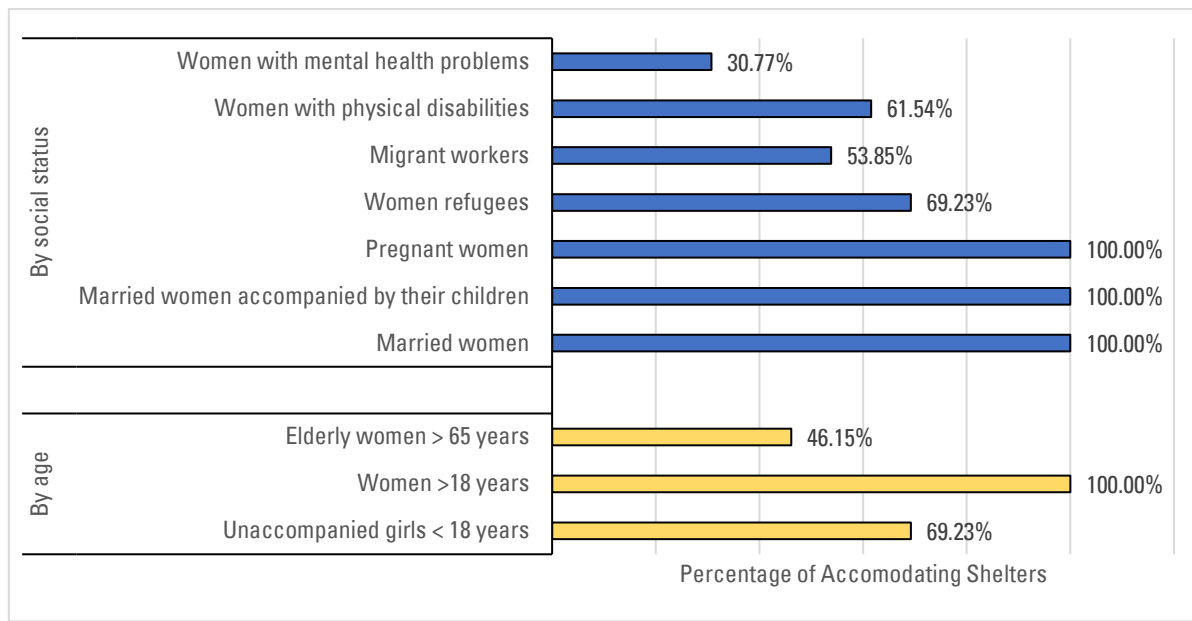


Figure AI.6 Staff training offered by government-run shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia

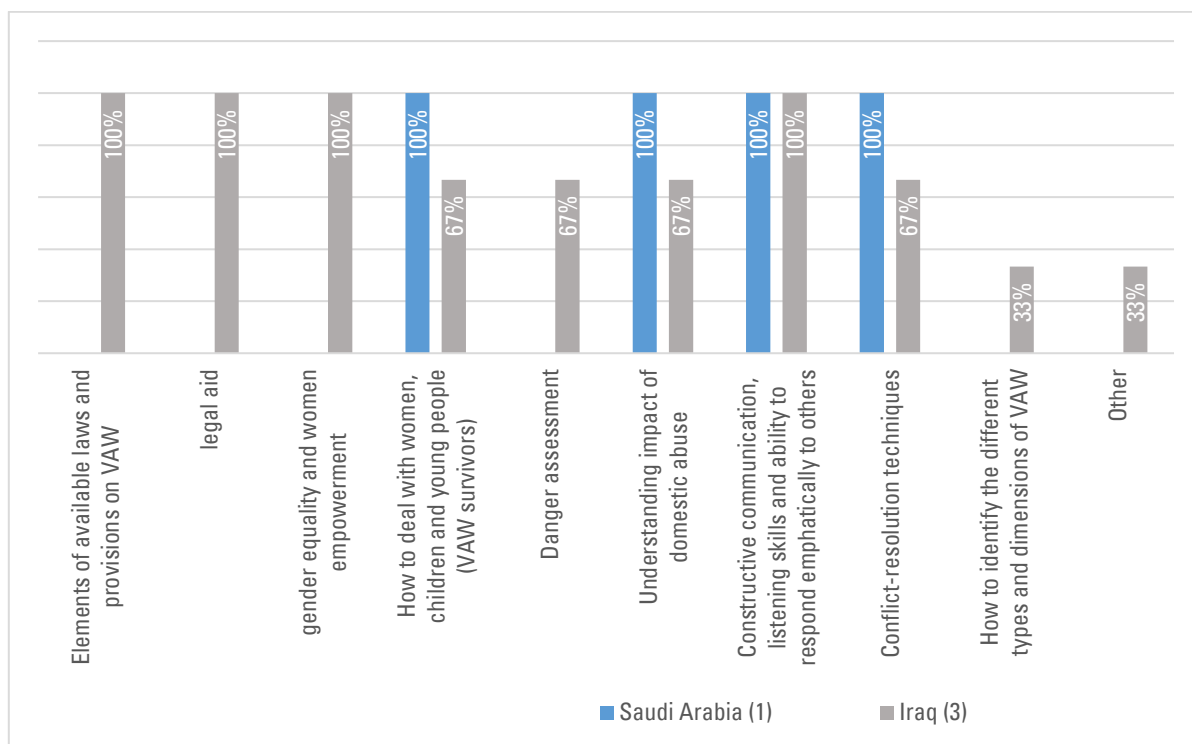
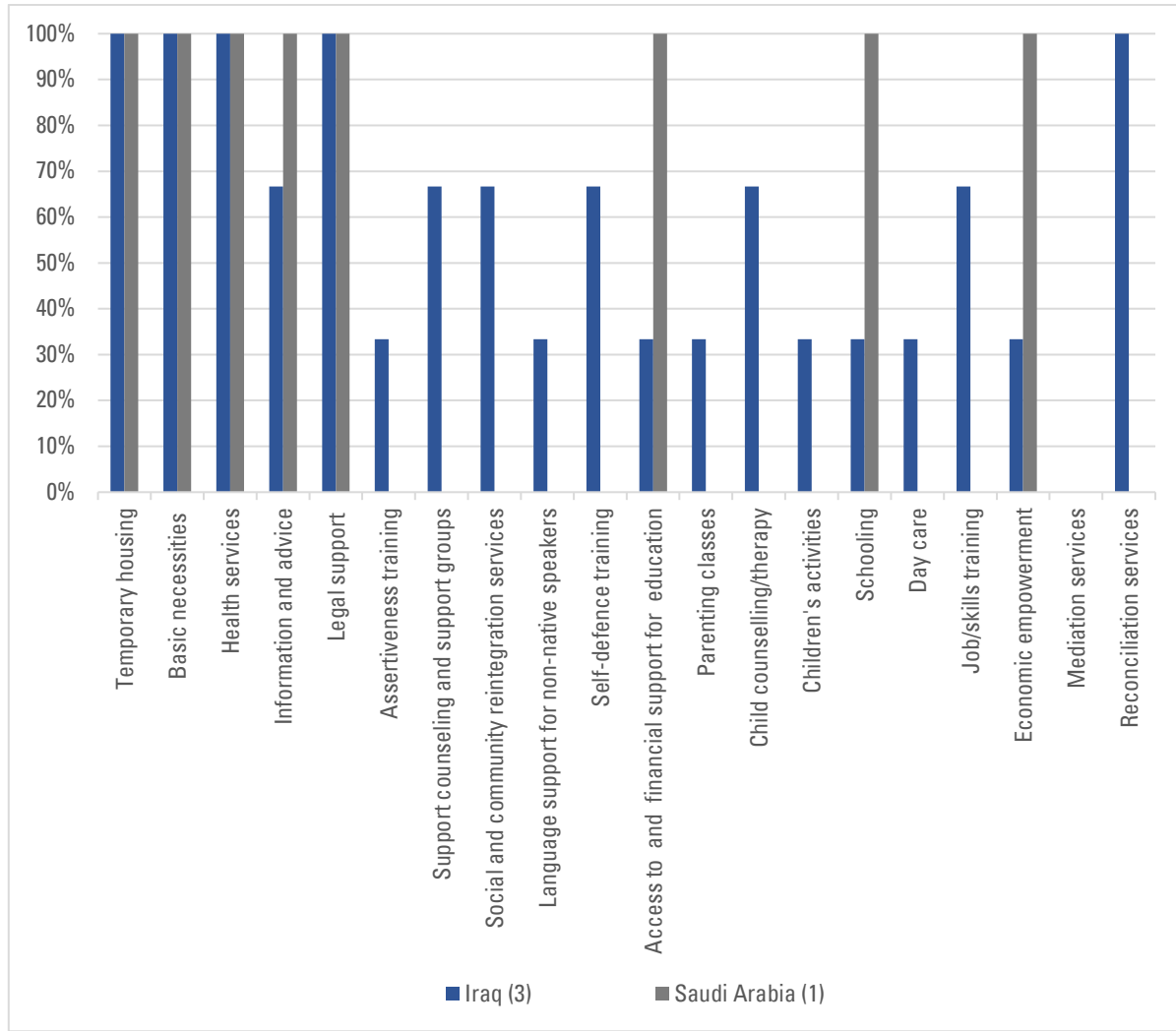


Figure AI.7a In-house services provided by government-run shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia



Annex II

Questionnaire disseminated to civil society organizations with women's shelter services

OPERATING/MANAGING ORGANIZATION (Section to be filled for shelters operated by an NGO)
Name of organisation: Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of organization: <input type="checkbox"/> faith-based organization <input type="checkbox"/> local/national government <input type="checkbox"/> non-governmental organization <input type="checkbox"/> charity organization <input type="checkbox"/> private organization <input type="checkbox"/> foundation <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)
Telephone Number:
Hotline (if available):
E-mail address:

Name of senior contact person:

Scope of work: (please tick all that is relevant)

- awareness-raising
- advocacy for legislation amendments
- hotlines/helplines
- shelters (please specify number of shelters run: Click or tap here to enter text.)
- psychological counselling services for abused women
- services for perpetrators
- legal aid for abused women
- economic empowerment services
- others (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Shelter: Click or tap here to enter text.

Type of Shelter:

- emergency shelter (short-term)
- long-term shelter

Registration Number (if any): Click or tap here to enter text.

<p>Year of Establishment: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Country/City: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Type of provision:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> self-contained</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> shared rooms and facilities</p>
<p>Capacity:</p> <p>Number of family accommodation units (for one woman and her children): Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Number of beds: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Number of common recreational spaces: - indoor: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>outdoor: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Rate of Occupancy in 2017 (%): Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Number of women accommodated in 2017: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>Number of accompanying children accommodated in 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• boys: Click or tap here to enter text.• girls: Click or tap here to enter text.

Number of women who were turned away in 2017:

due to lack of resources (money, staff, space...): Click or tap here to enter text.

for other reasons: Click or tap here to enter text. (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)

Sources of funding: (check all that apply)

international donor funding (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

private sector funding (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

government funding (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

fundraising through special events (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

sale of products (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

fees for services (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

income-generating projects (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

others (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text. (% of total income: Click or tap here to enter text.)

Annual Operating Budget in 2017: Click or tap here to enter text.

Total annual expenses in 2017: Click or tap here to enter text.

Breakdown of annual expenses in 2017 (% of total annual expenses):

Human resources: Click or tap here to enter text.

Operational costs: Click or tap here to enter text.

Support to women survivors of violence

Support to perpetrators: Click or tap here to enter text.

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. How is the work of the shelter organized? (please attach a copy of what is applicable)

- Based on a national legislation
- Regulations issued by the government
- Internal Regulations
- Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Are there any national guidelines or SOPs for shelters in your country?

YES

NO

If yes, are they based on agreed international guidelines on shelters?

YES

NO

Please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Are any shelter inspections conducted?

YES

NO

If yes: - by whom? Click or tap here to enter text.
- how often? Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Does the shelter provide annual reports?

YES

NO

If yes: - to which entities?

- government donor general public
- other, specify

- what kind of data is presented (financial/technical/number of women residents)? Click or tap here to enter text.												
5. Please fill in the following table:												
Total number of employees	Employment Type: Please insert number of employees under each category			Educational level Please insert number of employees under each category					Specialized Training on VAW	Sex Please insert number of employees under each category		
	Full-time	Part-time	Volunteers	No education	High school	Technical/Vocational	University degree	Higher education		Male	Female	
6. The shelter's team of staff includes professional: (please check all that apply)												
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter manager/administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Health care staff <input type="checkbox"/> Counselors or therapists <input type="checkbox"/> Project manager/officer <input type="checkbox"/> Child-care staff <input type="checkbox"/> Trainers <input type="checkbox"/> reintegration officers (to follow-up on ex-residents and visit them to make sure they are well-reintegrated) <input type="checkbox"/> outreach officers (to provide awareness-raising and support services outside the shelter) <input type="checkbox"/> Staff catering to accommodation, nutrition and sanitation												

<input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.		
<p>7. Does the shelter provide codes of conduct for staff on how to interact and work with survivors (integrity, confidentiality and ethics as part of the approach in service provision)?</p> <p>If yes, please attach a copy of relevant document.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>8. Does the shelter provide emotional/psychological support to shelter staff and volunteers?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>9. Does the shelter provide special orientation to new residents on their rights and responsibilities along with information on available services in the shelter?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>10. The shelter has in place rules and policies for residents regarding: (please check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> access to electronic mail (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> access to phone (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> access to the internet (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> access to money (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> smoking (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> contribution to daily chores of the shelter (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p>		
<p>11. Is there a complaint procedure put in a place to manage complaints within the shelter against staff?</p> <p>If yes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - who manages the complaints? Click or tap here to enter text. - how are complaints managed? Click or tap here to enter text. 	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

12. Is regular and relevant training and capacity development provided to shelter staff?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>If yes, what kind of training is provided: (please check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Training on elements of available laws and provisions on VAW <input type="checkbox"/> Training on legal aid <input type="checkbox"/> Training on gender equality and women empowerment <input type="checkbox"/> Training on how to deal with women, children and young people (VAW survivors) <input type="checkbox"/> Training on danger assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Training on understanding impact of domestic abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Training on constructive communication, listening skills and ability to respond empathically to others <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution techniques <input type="checkbox"/> training on identifying the different forms and dimensions of violence against women <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text. 		
AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY		
<p>13. Which of the below would your shelter consider as violence against women situations, entitling women access to shelter? (check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> physical violence (with evident signs of physical abuse) <input type="checkbox"/> physical violence (not necessarily with apparent signs of beating or physical harm) <input type="checkbox"/> sexual violence from a family member (marital rape, incest) <input type="checkbox"/> sexual violence from a stranger (rape) <input type="checkbox"/> emotional violence (constant criticism, name-calling, undermining self-esteem...) <input type="checkbox"/> psychological violence (intimidation, threats, destruction of property, forced isolation and restriction of freedom...) <input type="checkbox"/> trafficking <input type="checkbox"/> others (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.) 		

<p>14. How do women access shelter services? (please check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Women could approach the shelter without referral (drop-in)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through police referral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through official state institutions such as social centres, health centres, public education institutions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through support line referral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through women's groups</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.</p>		
<p>15. When are women allowed to access the shelter?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 24/7</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Certain hours (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.</p>		
<p>16. Is transport or funding for transport provided for women seeking shelter?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>17. What happens in case there is no space available at the shelter?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> women are turned down</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> women are referred to another shelter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.</p>		
<p>18. Are women seeking shelter requested to provide any specific documents before being admitted?</p> <p>If yes, please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>19. What is the maximum limit for stay in the shelter? Click or tap here to enter text.</p>		
<p>20. Are extensions of stay allowed?</p> <p>If yes, under what circumstances? Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>

1. Who can access the services of the shelter? (check all that apply)		
BY AGE	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied girls age less than 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Women age 18 and above <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly women (age 65 and above)	
BY SOCIAL STATUS	<input type="checkbox"/> Married women <input type="checkbox"/> Married women and her children <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Age of children allowed with their mother Males: Click or tap here to enter text. Females: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant women <input type="checkbox"/> Women refugees <input type="checkbox"/> Women migrant workers <input type="checkbox"/> Women with physical disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Women with mental health issues <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.	
21. Is living at the shelter free of charge for all women regardless of their employment status? If not, please explain. Click or tap here to enter text.	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

SERVICES PROVIDED

22. What type of in-house support does your shelter provide to women victims of violence? (check all that apply)

- Temporary housing
- Basic necessities (food and beverage, clothing, sanitary items...)
- Health services (physical, mental, disability, substance abuse...)
- Information and advice
- Legal support (protection orders, court advocacy, reporting abuse, family law, immigration, court accompaniment...)
- Assertiveness training
- Support counselling and support groups
- Social and community reintegration services
- Language support for non-native speakers
- Self-defence training
- Education (facilitating access to and providing non-financial support for women to pursue their education)
- Parenting classes
- Child-related services
 - children's counselling/therapy
 - children's activities
 - schooling
 - daycare
- Job/skills training
- Economic empowerment
- Mediation services
- Reconciliation services
- Others (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

23. What other general services does your shelter offer women survivors of violence post-shelter stay? (check all that apply)

- Transitional housing

<input type="checkbox"/> Rent support for a limited period of time (If yes, for how long? Click or tap here to enter text.) <input type="checkbox"/> Financial support (seed money to establish a self-sufficient livelihood) <input type="checkbox"/> Education support <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Support <input type="checkbox"/> Health support for long-term illnesses <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plan <input type="checkbox"/> Continued counselling <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up (ex-residents' groups, reintegration officers' visits...) (If yes, for how long? Click or tap here to enter text.)		
Does your shelter offer non-residential support (outreach programmes) to women in the community?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
SECURITY AND SAFETY		
24. How is the safety of residents ensured? (check all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Anonymity <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality on women survivors within the shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Alarm system <input type="checkbox"/> Access restrictions <input type="checkbox"/> Video monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Under the protection of official security forces (please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.) <input type="checkbox"/> Private security <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text. 		

<p>25. Are women residents allowed to leave the shelter during the day?</p> <p>If yes, please indicate applied restrictions if any? Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>26. Are children of women residents allowed to leave the shelters during the day?</p> <p>If yes, please indicate applied restrictions if any? Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>27. Are women residents allowed to receive visitors?</p> <p>If yes, please indicate applied restrictions if any? Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>28. Is the surrounding community aware of the present/role of the shelter?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>29. Does the surrounding community support the functions of the shelter?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>30. Have you ever received any complaints from the neighboring community regarding the presence/role of the shelter?</p> <p>If yes, please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

SUSTAINABILITY

31. What are the challenges faced by your shelter? (check all that apply)
- funding (cuts in funding, difficulty to secure funds, uncertainty...)
 - increasing demand (increased referrals)
 - staffing (staff cuts, lack of qualified staff, shortage, instability...)
 - supporting women with complex needs

<input type="checkbox"/> supporting women with no access to public funds <input type="checkbox"/> lack of space <input type="checkbox"/> no national VAW policy <input type="checkbox"/> no national women's shelter policy <input type="checkbox"/> good legislation on VAW but poor implementation <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.		
DOCUMENTATION PRACTICES		
<p>32. Is your shelter obligated to report to the government or police on women survivors of violence who are admitted to the shelter?</p> <p>If yes, what kind of information does your shelter need to report? Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>33. Does your shelter conduct an initial assessment (including risk assessment) of the situation and specific needs of the women who seek shelter?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>34. Are individual cases properly maintained and filed with pictures, stories, information on counseling sessions and reflections from survivors?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>35. Does your shelter conduct and record an end-of-stay assessment for residents?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>36. If yes, are those assessments analysed?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>(please share relevant reports if available)</i>	

REFERRAL SERVICES AND PATHWAYS		
<p>37. Does your shelter have established partnerships with other governmental/non-governmental entities?</p> <p>If yes, check all that apply:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> police</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ministry of women's affairs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> hospitals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> counselling and psychological support institutions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> legal professions/professionals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> women's organizations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
VISIBILITY		
<p>38. Where can one find information about your shelter? (check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> shelter website (please provide link: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> women's organizations/networks website (please provide link: Click or tap here to enter text.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> leaflets in public places</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> health services e.g. doctors' surgeries, hospitals...</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> awareness-raising campaigns</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.</p>		

<p>39. Is information provided in languages other than the official national language?</p> <p>If yes, please specify: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>40. How is your shelter publicized? (check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> radio</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> TV programmes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pamphlets</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> newspapers/magazines</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> billboards</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.</p>		

Annex III

Questionnaire disseminated to National Women's Machineries on shelters for women survivors of violence

I. Availability and services provided

1. Are shelters for women survivors of violence available in your country?

Yes

No

If yes, kindly fill the table below for each available shelter.

Name of shelter: Click or tap here to enter text.
Year of establishment: Click or tap here to enter text.
City: Click or tap here to enter text.
Capacity: Number of rooms: Click or tap here to enter text. Number of beds: Click or tap here to enter text.
Occupancy rate: - in 2016: Click or tap here to enter text. - in 2017:

<p>Shelter management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Government<input type="checkbox"/> Civil society
<p>Sources of income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Government funding<input type="checkbox"/> Civil society
<p>Services provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Hotline<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological counselling<input type="checkbox"/> Legal counselling<input type="checkbox"/> Medical services<input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation services<input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation<input type="checkbox"/> Meals<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation
<p>Length of Stay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Short-term<input type="checkbox"/> Long-term

2. Please provide detailed information regarding rehabilitation services provided by the shelters:

--

3. How is the work of shelters organized? (please tick all that is applicable)

- Law
- Operational instructions
- Internal regulations for NGOs
- Other (please specify)

4. Total annual cost for running a shelter for women survivors of violence? _____

5. Total daily cost for sheltering a woman survivor of violence? _____

II. Accessibility

6. Women can access shelter services through: (check all that apply)

- Hotline referral
- Referral by civil society organizations
- Self-referral
- Referral by official parties
 - Courts
 - Police
 - Other official parties
- Other (please specify): _____

7. Please fill the table below for each available shelter:

Name of shelter: _____
<p>Women that are welcome at the shelter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Girls less than 18 years of age <input type="checkbox"/> Married women <input type="checkbox"/> Single women <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant workers <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee women

<input type="checkbox"/> Women with disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Displaced women <input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation
Hours of reception: <input type="checkbox"/> 24/7 <input type="checkbox"/> Specific hours (please specify) _____
Accompanying children (please specify ages): <input type="checkbox"/> Boys _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Girls _____
Can women leave the shelter during their stay? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, but with conditions (please specify)
Does the shelter offer counselling services for non-residents? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do women pay for their stay at the shelter? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please specify the amount _____) <input type="checkbox"/> No

III. Safety and protection

8. Shelter location is:

- disclosed
- anonymous

9. Safety of residents is ensured through (please tick all applicable answers)

- confidential shelter location
- private security
- public forces security (police)
- other (please specify) _____

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Endnotes

1. World Health Organization (WHO), and others, 2013.
2. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2015.
3. For example, women and girls comprise over 78 per cent of Syrian refugees. Ibid.
4. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), 2018.
5. NB: The report includes Israel, Turkey and Iran in the Middle East/North Africa region.
6. World Economic Forum (WEF), 2019.
7. E/ESCWA/ECW/2015/3, p. 43.
8. Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2019.
9. E/ESCWA/ECW/2017/2.
10. Ibid.
11. Women experiencing violence are often referred to as victims, survivors, cases or service users. This study will employ the term “survivor” to acknowledge that women experiencing violence are not always passive and that they are able to break the silence surrounding violence.
12. Haaken and Yragui, 2003.
13. “Refuge” is a term used primarily in the United Kingdom. The Global Women’s Shelter Network (GWSN) uses the term shelters to cover a range of services provided by shelters, refuges, safe homes and anti-violence centres. See <https://www.gnws.org/>.
14. Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE), 2016. See also WAVE and Austrian Women’s Shelter Network, 2004, p. 4.
15. In Great Britain the national network began in 1974 with nearly 40 independent shelter (refuge) services.
16. The term “refuge” is more widely used in European contexts and “shelter” is more common in North America and Australia, while some States also use “safe house” or other terms. In the present report, “shelter” is used inclusively to accommodate the various terms. On the history of women’s shelters, see Canadian Network of Women’s Shelters and Transition Houses and UN Women (2013).
17. A/HRC/35/30, para 55 and WAVE and Austrian Women’s Shelter Network, 2004. The WAVE Country Report 2017 provides a detailed definition of women’s shelters: “A women’s shelter is a specialist service for women survivors of violence and their children, if any, providing safe accommodation and empowering support, based on a gendered understanding of violence and focusing on the human rights and safety of victims. Women’s shelters offer immediate and un-bureaucratic services and safety precautions. They also offer long-term support in order to provide women and their children, if any, with the opportunity and resources necessary to resume their lives free from violence,” p. 115.
18. A/HRC/35/30, para 55.
19. CEDAW/C/GC/30, para 57 and para 81(k).
20. Diemer, Humphreys and Crinall, 2017; Australia, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs 2013.
21. Haaken and Yragui, 2003, p. 50.
22. Diemer, Humphreys and Crinall, 2017.
23. Tutty, 2015, p. 108.
24. Ibid, p. 109.
25. Information from Comoros, Djibouti and Oman was not available.
26. Number calculated by ESCWA based on Center for Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR) 2010 data.
27. UN Women, and others, 2015.
28. These are the only States that responded to questionnaires.

29. See Annex for the list of questions on women's shelters sent to National Women's Machineryes. A few responses to the questionnaire did not include information on specific numbers, such as occupancy rates, access for children accompanying their mothers.
30. Two of the shelters in Iraq did not provide data on a significant number of questions.
31. UN Women and others, 2015, module 1.
32. A/HRC/35/30, para 48. See also Hagemann, 2016, p. 42.
33. Only Sudan and Somalia have not acceded to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
34. CEDAW, Article 2(e).
35. General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women, 11th session, para. 1.
36. CEDAW/C/GC/35, para 24.b.
37. Ibid, para 31 (a) iii.
38. A/RES/48/104, Article. 4 (d) and (g).
39. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA).
40. United Nations, 2014.
41. E/2013/27, E/CN.6/2013/11, para. 3.
42. Ibid, para. 34. C. (ddd).
43. Ibid, para. 35. p. 14.
44. E/CN.4/1999/68, para. 25.
45. See Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment no. 14.
46. UN Women and others, 2015.
47. UN Women, 2012b, p. 15.
48. For further information on essential services, please refer to UN Women, and others, 2015.
49. Goekce (deceased) v. Austria (2005). See CEDAW/C/39/D/5/2005.
50. Yildirim (deceased) v. Austria (2005). See CEDAW/C/39/D/6/2005.
51. CEDAW/C/39/D/5/2005, p. 23; CEDAW/C/39/D/6/2005, p. 19.
52. A/HRC/35/30, para 19; see also section C. pp. 9-10.
53. Ibid., para 29.
54. Ibid., para 108. The benchmark proposed for the number of shelter places available is one for every 10,000 inhabitants.
55. Organization of American States (OAS), Article 8 d.
56. African Union, 2003, para. 4.
57. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), 2013, para. 1.
58. ASEAN, 2016, Action 2, para 15.
59. Council of Europe, Article 23.
60. Council of Europe, 2011b, Article 23, para 133.
61. Council of Europe, Article 9.
62. Council of Europe, 2011b, Article 23, paras. 133 and 135.
63. UN Women and others, 2015, module 1.
64. Ibid.
65. UN Women, 2012a, pp. 60-62.
66. A/HRC/35/30, para. 101.
67. The 2017 Annual Survey of Women's Aid Federation England collected data on the different needs identified by women using domestic abuse services in England, see Women's Aid Federation England, 2018, section 2, pp. 15-31, and Appendix 4, p. 74.
68. See for example the subindicators for support defined by the European Union (EIGE, 2015, p. 15) and the British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, 2013.
69. UN Women, and others, 2015, module 3, p. 13.

70. A/HRC/35/30, para. 63.
71. UN Women and others, 2015.
72. Bowstead, 2015.
73. Ibid.
74. A/HRC/35/30, paras. 82-99.
75. E/ESCWA/ECW/2019/1, p. 45.
76. Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses and UN Women, 2013, p. 11.
77. A/HRC/35/30, para 108, 109 and 112.
78. WAVE, 2016a, p. 7. Two women were also killed and two additional children were seriously harmed.
79. A/HRC/35/30, para 104.
80. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), 2012, pp. 55-56. See also 2.3.10, pp. 50-52.
81. Ibid.
82. Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses and UN Women, 2013, pp. 11-12.
83. EIGE, 2012, p. 7.
84. UN Women and others, 2015.
85. Oranje Huis, n.d.
86. CEDAW/C/NLD/CO/4, para 19.
87. The primary aim of domestic violence perpetrator prevention programmes is to keep women and their children safe. They need to take a gendered approach and be run in conjunction with support for survivors, not in the same place or same time. See Respect Phoneline, n.d.
88. UN Women, 2012b, p. 30; Article 9 of the Istanbul Convention specifically calls on states to support non-governmental organizations, including with funding. The Explanatory Report reference to Article 9 notes that NGOs have a long tradition of providing shelters and other services for victims and that States parties to the Convention are required to enable "them to carry out their work in the best possible way". para. 68.
89. Diner and Toktaş, 2013, pp. 343-344.
90. See for example United Nations, 2006. See also Kelly and Dubois, 2008, p. 36; WAVE, 2004, pp. 18-23; Canadian Network of Women's Shelters & Transition Houses, 2013, pp. 23-24.
91. UN Women, 2012b, p. 31.
92. In *A.T. v. Hungary* (Communication No. 2/2003, Annex III, para 9.4), the CEDAW Committee found that the State party had violated the rights of A.T. under articles 5(a) and 16 of CEDAW as she was unable to access safety in a shelter because no shelters were available with facilities to also support one of her accompanying children who had a disability.
93. Permission from a survivor to share information about her or her children should be with her consent, unless it relates to a safeguarding issue of a vulnerable adult or child.
94. Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses and UN Women, 2013, p. 23.
95. Brankovic, 2016, p. 69.
96. Council of Europe, 2011b, para. 134.
97. Kelly and Dubois, 2008, p. 7.
98. Council of Europe, 2011b, para. 133.
99. McDermott, 2018; Help and Shelter, 2018. These standards were developed for a shelter for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking in Guyana.
100. Women's Aid Federation of England, 2016. These standards were developed on behalf of Imkaan, Rape Crisis England & Wales, Respect, Safe Lives and Women's Aid and have been used by the Home Office in their support for the local services to address violence against women and girls in England.
101. WAVE, 2017.
102. UN Women and others, 2015.
103. WAVE, 2008, p. 53.
104. International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2009, p. 11.

105. BDPfA, para. 117.
106. UN Women Viet Nam, 2013.
107. Walby, 2009, p. 9.
108. EIGE, 2014, p. 19.
109. Karama, 2013.
110. CARE, 2018, p. 14.
111. E/ESCWA/ECW/2019/TP.3.
112. United Kingdom, 2016, p. 3, 38.
113. Ibid., p. 85.
114. NEF Consulting, 2016, p. 11.
115. WAVE, 2018, p. 6.
116. Article 8 reads: "Judicial officers who attempt to force or exert pressure on a battered person with the aim of making the latter retract their complaint shall be subject to the penalty provided under Article 376 of the Penal Code. A judicial officer's negligence of complaints and reports of domestic violence offences shall be deemed to be a significant error under Article 130, paragraph 2, of Law No. 17 of 06/09/1990 on the Regulation of the Internal Security Forces. Offenders shall be transferred before the Disciplinary Council."
117. Nazra for Feminist Studies, 2016, p. 9.
118. Women's Centre for Legal Aid & Counselling and Juzoor for Health and Social Development, 2016.
119. Ibid.
120. S/2018/475, p. 3.
121. Draft Anti-Domestic Violence Law (Iraq).
122. Chaban, Stettler and Daraghmeh, 2010, pp. 44-45.
123. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and others, 2018c, p. 9.
124. O'Donnell, 2017, p. 54.
125. A/HRC/35/30, para 68.
126. The Advocates for Human Rights and Mobilising for Rights Associates, 2015; Amnesty International, 2013.
127. Human Rights Watch (HRW), 2017.
128. Ibid, 2017.
129. UNDP, and others, 2018a, p. 11.
130. National Council for Women (NCW), 2012, pp. 26-27.
131. EuroMed, 2018.
132. UNDP, and others, 2018b, p. 12.
133. CEDAW/C/JOR/3-4, p. 8.
134. UNDP, and others, 2018c, p. 13.
135. CEDAW/C/JOR/5, p. 14.
136. Gebriil, 2016.
137. CEDAW/C/OMN/2-3, p. 15.
138. UNDP, and others, 2018e, p. 11.
139. UNDP, and others, 2018f, p. 14.
140. UN Women, 2017.
141. CEDAW/C/PSE/Q/1/Add.1, pp. 13-14.
142. CEDAW/C/QAT/1, p. 30.
143. CRC/C/SAU/Q/3-4/Add.1, p. 17.
144. HRW, 2016.
145. UNDP, and others, 2018d, p. 11.
146. Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Labour and Social Development, 2017.

147. CEDAW/C/ARE/2-3, pp. 13-14.
148. Spender, 2009.
149. Kakande, 2012.
150. CEDAW/C/DZA/3-4, p. 28.
151. HRW, 2017.
152. NCW, 2015, p. 25.
153. Ibid, p. 34.
154. Morocco, Ministère de la Solidarité, du Développement Social, de l'Égalité et de la Famille, 2016a.
155. Ministry of Women's Affairs National Committee to Combat Violence against Women [State of Palestine], 2011.
156. UNDP, and others, 2018h, p. 11.
157. Federal Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government, 2014.
158. Supreme Council for Women, 2013.
159. National Council for Lebanese Women and UNFPA, 2017.
160. Morocco, Ministère de la Solidarité, du Développement Social, de l'Égalité et de la Famille, 2016b.
161. CEDAW/C/SYR/2, p. 61.
162. Ibid, p. 32.
163. UNDP, and others, 2018g, p. 19.
164. UNDP, and others, 2018i, p. 12.
165. Elbayar, 2005.
166. Htun and Weldon, 2012.
167. See Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and UN Women, 2012b.
168. A/HRC/35/30 para 56.
169. Ibid, para 72.
170. Duke Law International Human Rights Clinic and Women Peacemakers Program, 2017.
171. VanDyck, 2017.
172. Fisher, 2005, p. 5.
173. See <https://www.facebook.com/abaadmena/videos/vl.174438719787868/1783219238402780/?type=1>.
174. WAVE, 2012.
175. Respect, 2017. See also: <http://respect.uk.net/>. Respect works with both perpetrators of domestic violence and male survivors of domestic violence and runs a helpline for perpetrators and a helpline for male survivors; they also facilitate trainings for professionals. They are also on the Board of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence.
176. No data was provided on the number of single units or the number of beds in the four shelters in Yemen. They did, however, note that there is one shared indoor communal space; it is not clear if this is provided in all four shelters.
177. WAVE, 2004, p. 49.
178. No data was provided by the shelter in Algeria on budget or expenditure. Data was provided on the annual operating budget and expenditure of some shelters for 2017, details of these have not been included for confidentiality reasons.
179. Data from the two shelters in Tunisia on the breakdown of their budget has not been included due to inaccuracies.
180. While several of the organizations noted they provide counselling support for abusive men funding for this did not appear to come from the shelter's budgets in 2017.
181. Ofsted, 2016.
182. WAVE, 2017, p. 39.
183. Data was not available on the number of part-time hours worked or if shelter staff was also required to provide support to other work done by the organization running the shelter, such as supporting the helpline/hotline or outreach or community work.
184. Algeria did not respond to this question.
185. The shelter in Algeria and one of the shelters in Tunisia did not respond to this question.

186. WAVE, 2018, p. 19.
187. In England in 2017, only 66.3 per cent of the refugees responding to Women's Aid's survey noted that they have children's workers and all of them accept accompanying children. Women's Aid, 2018b, p. 22.
188. WAVE, 2004, p. 42.
189. WAVE has developed, with survivors and service providers and other experts, an electronic integrated case management and outcomes monitoring database, OASIS-On Track. The database enables domestic violence services to capture outcomes data, report on progress and benchmark their service locally and nationally. See Women's Aid Federation's website: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/ontrack/>. All data is collected with the permission of the survivor and any data shared outside the shelter is anonymized.
190. The shelter in the State of Palestine also accepts women for other reasons, however these were not enumerated.
191. Rape Crisis England and Wales, for example, provides specialist expert services for women and girls who have experienced any form of sexual violence. See Rape Crisis England and Wales website: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/>. If a woman has been raped or sexually abused by her husband, the shelter supporting the woman may be able to seek specialized support for her from a local rape crisis centre.
192. Shively, 2011, p. 71. Women in the shelters in Izmir include those who are destitute or who have been displaced due to armed conflict.
193. Toktaş and Diner, 2015, p. 622.
194. WAVE, 2017, p. 8; see also p. 48.
195. No response was received to this question from the organization running four shelters in Yemen.
196. WAVE, 2018, p. 9.
197. No response was received for this question from the organization running four shelters in Yemen. However, they did state that they allow extensions of stay for exceptional circumstances such as death threats, or when a woman requires psychological treatment.
198. Kelly, and others, 2014.
199. Legal support can include support with protection orders, court advocacy, reporting abuse, family law, immigration and court accompaniment.
200. UN Women, 2012a, p. 55.
201. A/HRC/35/30 para 97.
202. Ibid, para 114.
203. Kelly and Dubois, 2008, p. 58; Council of Europe, 2011b, p. 58, see also p. 19.
204. The shelter in the State of Palestine answered no to all the questions on general services.
205. EIGE, 2012, p. 36.
206. UN Women, 2012a, p. 20.
207. The shelter in Jordan that also supports women victims of human trafficking has developed partnerships with the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of Labour, the Human Trafficking Unit and the Family Protection Unit.
208. No data was provided by the shelters in Bahrain or the State of Palestine on the number of women not accepted by the shelter. However, the shelter in Bahrain noted that women were not received due to lack of beds and the shelter in the State of Palestine noted that women were not received because they had not been referred by the relevant authorities.
209. WAVE, 2018.
210. Femicide Census, 2017, p. 28.
211. No data was provided by the organization running four shelters in Yemen on the maximum limit for stay in the shelter.
212. WHO, and others, 2013, p.8; see also Section 3, p. 21.
213. Women's Aid noted in its day to count in 2017 that there were more children in refugees than women, with over half (62 per cent) of survivors bringing children. They reported that 3,557 women with 3,919 children and young people were estimated to be in a refuge in England in 2016/2017.
214. WAVE, 2016, p. 92.
215. Independent NGOs are not allowed in Saudi Arabia.
216. One of the shelters in Iraq did not answer the question on sources of funding.

217. One of the shelters in Iraq did not answer the question on scope of work.
218. No data was available on shared spaces in the shelter in Saudi Arabia.
219. Questions on challenges facing shelter sustainability were only available for the shelters in Iraq and Saudi Arabia.
220. Data on Iraq has not been included as the answers provided by the three shelters conflicted with each other.
221. One of the shelters in Iraq did not provide information on type of employment or education level of their team of staff.
222. One of the shelters in Iraq only provided data on the total number of staff employed.
223. This shelter did not provide any information on the education level of their team of staff.
224. One of the shelters in Iraq did not respond to the question on how women access shelter services.
225. One of the shelters in Iraq did not answer the questions on access hours, costs or any limitations or extensions of stay in the shelter.
226. One shelter in Iraq did not provide answer the questions on length of stay.
227. One of the shelters in Iraq did not answer the question on established partnerships and this question was not asked in the questionnaire to National Women's Machineries.
228. The security officers are from the Ministry of Social Development in the State of Palestine.
229. One of the shelters in Iraq did not respond to the question on whether women are allowed to leave the shelter during the day but did respond to the question on whether the children of women residents were allowed to leave the shelter.
230. One of the shelters in Iraq did not answer the question on who can access the shelter.
231. The number of services provided by the independent shelters are: Algeria 19, Bahrain 20, Jordan 21, Lebanon (3 shelters) 15, State of Palestine, 5, Tunisia (2 shelters) 16 and 18 respectively and Yemen (4 shelters) 20. Services provided by the government-run shelters are: Iraq (3 shelters), 11, 12 and 14 respectively and Saudi Arabia 9.
232. It was not possible to establish if all the answers provided to the question on the number of beds were in addition to or included the number of single units, thus it has not been possible to establish the total number of shelter places (bed spaces) per shelter or provide a definitive figure for the capacity of each shelter.
233. Both the organization running three shelters in Lebanon and the organization running four shelters in Yemen provided a combined response to these questions.
234. Both the organization running three shelters in Lebanon and the organization running four shelters in Yemen provided a combined response to these questions.



The “Shelters for Women Survivors of Violence: Availability and Accessibility in the Arab Region” was completed in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Arab States Regional Office (ASRO), ABAAD Resource Centre for Gender Equality, and Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE).

The study aims to provide a snapshot on the provision of shelter services for women victims of violence in the Arab region. It is based on a desk review and responses from countries in the region on a questionnaire designed for collected data and information on the availability, accessibility and services offered within shelter services in the Arab region.

