

## Concept Note

### Technical support in the field of combating violence against women in the Sultanate of Oman: Ensuring a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing violence against women through legal/policy frameworks and service provision

22-23 June 2021

#### 1. BACKGROUND

Efforts are underway in the Sultanate of Oman to combat violence against women. At the legislative level, Penal Code No. 7 of 2018 addresses some issues related to violence against women, however, there is no stand-alone law. The penal code criminalizes rape and, while there is no law on sexual harassment, indecent acts are criminalized.

Service providers are also making efforts in the field of women's protection through the Department of Family Protection, the Department of Family Guidance and Counselling, and the Department of Family Development located in the governorates, by intensifying awareness programs and campaigns directed at women, girls and members of society, in addition to providing care, legal, health and living services for women and girls residing at the shelter, Dar Al-Wefaq.

As these protection mechanisms increase, the Ministry of Social Development seeks to familiarize local actors with international best practices and examples from the Arab region that engage in integrated protection mechanisms for women survivors of violence within the social services, health and policing and justice sectors. This approach is more relevant than ever, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic when such services were not initially labelled as 'essential services,' creating greater vulnerabilities amongst survivors.

Therefore, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) propose holding a two-day workshop dedicated to service providers, whether governmental or non-governmental, in the Sultanate of Oman on the topic of ensuring a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing violence against women through legal/policy frameworks and service provision. The workshop will contribute to developing a common understanding about the integrated frameworks for responding to violence against women, including legal, health and social services within the frameworks of a survivor-centred approach.

In order to facilitate knowledge sharing and support the Sultanate of Oman in their efforts to enhance their services, ESCWA will facilitate a workshop to share the findings from existing studies and present key findings and good practice in service provision for survivors of violence.

#### 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOP

This workshop will gather governmental or non-governmental service providers from the Sultanate of Oman who are working to combat violence against women. Presentations and discussions will be based on international standards and good practice along with outcomes of existing examples from



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the Arab region. The aim of the workshop is to enhance the capacity of service providers to employ a coordinated, holistic and survivor-centred approach to service provision. The training team will share some reading materials in Arabic prior to the workshop to familiarize participants with key concepts that will be addressed during the workshop.

### 3. AUDIENCE

The Directorate of Women at the Ministry of Social Development will invite 30 representations from relevant organisations who are currently involved in delivering services to women survivors of violence. These will include governmental or non-governmental service providers in the Sultanate of Oman and with the aim of ensuring a good representation from across the governorates.

### 4. TIME AND VENUE

The workshop will be implemented on-line over Zoom and will run over a period of two days, three hours each day, according to the agenda. The workshop will take place in Arabic and will be facilitated by ESCWA, in consultation with the General Directorate of Family Development, Ministry of Social Development.

### 5. DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1: Tuesday, 22 June 2021	
10:00 – 10:10	<i>Opening remarks and review of the agenda and aims</i>
10:10 – 10:40	<i>Overview of the Omani context through a review of international frameworks</i> This session will examine the Sultanate of Oman’s response to violence against women through an examination of its national submissions to international mechanisms such as Beijing +25 and the CEDAW Committee.
10:40 – 11:40	<i>Legal and policy frameworks to address violence against women: Links between international human rights frameworks and implementation in the Arab region</i> This session will examine the most relevant international frameworks and mechanisms for responding to violence against women while also linking such responses to good practice (including legal frameworks and service provision) employed in the Arab region. Examples from Arab States will be discussed.
11:40 – 11:50	Brief break
11:50 - 12:50	<i>Referral systems to address violence against women: Ensuring a survivor-centred approach</i> This session will examine the survivor-centred approach and the referral systems needed to ensure available, accessible, and affordable services of high quality. A discussion of coordination and governance mechanisms will also take place.



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	This session will also introduce the UN's <i>Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence</i> , which addresses services that should be provided by the health, social services, police and justice sectors. There will be a brief overview of necessary services, such as shelter and civil protection orders.
12:50 – 13:00	<i>Wrap up</i>
<b>Day 2: Wednesday, 23 June 2021</b>	
10:00 – 10:10	<i>Review of previous day</i>
10:10 – 11:10	<i>Policing and Justice Services</i> This session will examine some of the necessary policing and justice services that complement a comprehensive and coordinated response to violence against women, with a strong emphasis on survivor-centred access to justice and justice sector coordination.
11:10 – 11:55	<i>Social Services</i> This session will examine some of the necessary social services that complement a comprehensive and coordinated response to violence against women, with a strong emphasis on access to support mechanisms, helplines, the provision of shelter and civil legal options for protection, including civil protection orders.
11:55 – 12:05	Brief break
12:05 - 12:50	<i>Health Services</i> This session will examine some of the necessary health services that complement a comprehensive and coordinated response to violence against women, with a strong emphasis on identification of survivors, mandated reporting concerns and access to treatment for physical and sexual and mental health.
12:50 – 13:00	<i>Wrap up and closing remarks</i>

