News & Highlights

United Nations Secretary-General appoints Under Secretary-General for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

On 14 September 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed former Chilean President, Michelle Bachelet, to head the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). Ms. Bachelet was sworn in on 19 September 2010. During a press conference, Ms. Bachelet explained that the creation of UN Women provided an opportunity to accelerate the e orts of the United Nations system to drive progress in meeting the needs of women and girls worldwide,
including in areas such
as the eradication
of violence against
women. Asked how
she would aid in
e orts to end violence
against women, Ms
Bachelet referred to
the need for strong
legislation and the implementation of such legislation; as well as the need to educate individuals from an early age concerning

Addressing violence against women and HIV/AIDS e ectively

Inter-linkages between violence against women and HIV/AIDS, and lessons learned for prevention
The link between violence against women and HIV infection is undeniable 1

, complex and involves multiple pathways. Violence is
a driver of the HIV epidemic among women, as it increases women’s vulnerability to HIV infection. It can also be a consequence of being HIV positive. Rape, for example, can be a direct cause of infection with HIV for women. More importantly, violence places women at increased risk of infection by creating an environment in which they are unable to adequately protect themselves from HIV. Women in abusive relationships are often unable to negotiate safe sex. 2

Fear of violence, discrimination, abandonment and
loss of economic support are commonly cited fact nnoss that keep women from learning their HIV status, 3

and thereby accessing
treatment, care and support. 4

Interventions to address the interface between violence against women and HIV are being increasingly implemented and assessed. A number of broad principles and lessons can be drawn from the growing body of well-evaluated, promising programmes that should inform the work on violence against women and HIV prevention. 5

Feature Item

Other interventions, such as those to reduce the harmful use of alcohol and to increase the access of young people to information through comprehensive sexuality education, have yet to be evaluated, but also seem to be important to both HIV and violence against women prevention.

As of 30 September 2010, 101 Member States have provided their responses to the questionnaire on violence against women. The Secretariat has continued to receive useful updates from Member States.

Member States that have not yet submitted a response to the questionnaire are encouraged to do so at their earliest convenience so that more detailed information can be re ected in the database.

The Secretary-General’s database is available on line at: http://www.un.org/esa/vawdatabase/

Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: taking action and
generating evidence (WHO and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine),
2010

This document provides information for policy-makers and planners to develop data-driven and evidence-based programmes for preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women. It aims to strengthen the eld of intimate partner and sexual violence prevention so that prevention e orts can complement health, legal and service-delivery programmes that respond to the problem. The document is built around a life-course perspective that recognizes how infant and early childhood experiences in uence the likelihood of becoming a perpetrator or victim of intimate partner and sexual violence. The paper reviews the latest available scienti c ndings on e ective, promising and theoretically feasible prevention strategies. A public health model is used to highlight the steps needed to address the underlying determinants at the individual, family, community and societal level. http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/index.html

Other resources:

� Needs assessment toolkit on the criminal justice response to human tra cking (UNODC), 2010.

� Addressing violence against women and girls in sexual and reproductive health services: a
review of knowledge assets (UNFPA), 2010
This report reviews literature on the integration of activities to address gender-based violence
against women and girls into sexual and reproductive health services. It provides guidance to
health-sector programme designers and managers.
http://www.unfpa.org/public/cache/o once/home/publications/pid/6233;jsessionid=3DAE7BD47FD
AD28E73099254558580AA

� Video “The missing MDG target: violence against women”(UNIFEM/UNTV), 2010
UNIFEM, now part of UN Women, in collaboration with UNTV, has produced a series of ve videos highlighting select MDGs from a gender perspective. This video is introduced by internationally renowned TV journalist Daljit Dhaliwal and is available in English, French, Spanish and Russian. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRb1PPlblfQ&feature=PlayList&p=E0EFE0E969E5F41F&index=4 http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=1167

� Eurobarometer survey on domestic violence against women (European Commission), 2010
This survey, which was requested by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security, measure how domestic violence against women is perceived in European public opinion. The survey showed a greater awareness of domestic violence and desire for tougher action, compared to an earlier Eurobarometer survey conducted in 1999. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_en.htm#344

� UNRWA Gender Series, No. 1: Community of practice in building referral systems for women victims of violence
(UNRWA), 2010
This document is the outcome of a workshop organized by UNRWA on “Community of practice in building referral systems for women victims of violence”. It summarizes and re ects on the presentations and discussions to develop lessons learned based on shared experiences of a community of practitioners. http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=318&pubsearch=1&srchcat_id=46&srchkey=Keywords&srchfile_ year=Year&srch le_series=&srch le_id=

� 25 November 2010: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
The eleventh anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women will be celebrated at UNHQ and around the world.

� 25 November to 10 December 2010: 20th 16 Days of activism against gender violence campaign
This year’s theme is “Structures of violence: De ning the intersections of militarism and violence against women.” http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/2010-campaign/theme-announcement

� 24-25 November 2010: Expert workshop on measures for overcoming obstacles and challenges States may face in
preventing, investigating, prosecuting and punishing perpetrators of violence against women and girls
This workshop is being organized by the O ce of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with resolution 11/2 of the Human Rights Council of June 2009.

Words to Action is a newsletter produced by the Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of UN Women. It disseminates information on actions undertaken by Member States and UN entities to address violence against women. The Division for the Advancement of Women supports the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations on gender equality and the empowerment of women. For more information, see http://ww.un.org/womenwatch/daw or contact / wordstoaction@un.org.

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