



RECOMMENDATION BOOKLET (1)

PROTECTION POLICIES



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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#ProtectionPolicies



Protection Policy Against VAW “Protection From the Beginning” Campaign

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INTRODUCTION

In the light of 2021 16 Days of Activism Against VAW, the New Woman Foundation dedicated its annual campaign to VAW protection policies. The campaign addressed many topics through discussion, starting with legislative and judicial protection, to a discussion on VAW elimination services, with a focus on the challenges related to VAW survivors' referral systems to hostiles and safe houses. Furthermore, the efficiency of case reception as well as the adequacy and sustainability of the service, were addressed in the campaign¹.

Work at the national level was not the only distinct feature of the "Protection from The Beginning" campaign on protection policies against, but NWF also discussed opportunities to motivate MENA region countries to ratify ILO's Convention 190C pertaining to eliminating harassment in the world of work, in an attempt by NWF to expand the scope of addressing protection policies against VAW at the national, regional and international levels².

We thank all participating parties who have enriched the campaign events with ideas and discussions both live and through social media.

¹ The opening statement of "Protection from The Beginning" campaign.

² The international 16 Days of Activism campaign – Roger University, Protecting women from domestic violence.





In this context, we document the discussion summaries and conclude with a number of recommendations that we consider to be of utmost priority in working on protection policies against VAW. The points discussed can be summed up in the following:

First: At the Legislative and Legal Level

1. Working to pass a uniform law against VAW³ with definitions that include different forms of VAW, a law that adopts facilitation of litigation mechanisms. The Law should stipulate binding legal interventions to compensate VAW survivors, as well as adopt soft protection and prevention policies against VAW in the private and the public sectors that targets culture, media, education, and other state bodies.
2. Reforming relevant Egyptian legislations, especially the penal code to allow or promulgating a uniform law against VAW and include a full chapter on VAW penal law⁴.

Second: At the Judiciary and Provision Examination Level.

1. The necessity to consider redirecting the burden of proof, facilitating the reporting mechanism, to encourage survivors to report violence in the private and public spheres, and the Public Prosecution to look into reports of violence as subjects of investigation and evidence collection, and expanding the database for witnesses and whistleblowers.
2. Maintaining the privacy of survivors' data during reporting, investigation and trial progress, as well as during the hearings of multiple count cases⁵.

³ Uniform law against VAW bill written by the Feminist NGO task force. Noting that the state is obligated to issuing a uniform law against VAW per the national strategy for VAW elimination and 2030 Women's Empowerment Strategy, as well as the latest Human Development report issues in 2021.

⁴ Counselor Ahmad Samir's proposal in the roundtable.

⁵ Fairmont Case, as one of the lessons learned from multifaceted litigation.





3. Disseminating the experience of courts specialized⁶ in examining cases of VAW, and shifting the litigation cycles from misdemeanors courts to criminal courts, especially since we have already taken steps towards establishing decentralized courts to hear cases of “misdemeanors” of violence against women.

Third: Justice and Police, and Mechanism for Receipt of Reports

1. The necessity for the Institute of Judicial Studies to design specialized trainings on Eliminating VAW, in order to raise the justice facility's sensitivity in general towards cases of VAW, or to become familiar with and activate the recent legislative amendments related to eliminating VAW.

2. Attention to raising employees' capacity to receive reports in police stations, whether from anti-VAW units located in major centers and directorates or police stations' reception centers, on the necessity of documenting reports and emphasizing the keenness of the justice facility and the police to reduce impunity in cases of VAW.

3. Dropping any costs, emphasizing the free receipt of reports and record documentation in police stations, in addition to investigation procedures in the prosecution free of charge, in order to support the survivor during her demands for justice, and to reduce any economic burdens during the course of the investigation and trial.⁷



⁶ The lawsuits won by NWF in misdemeanor courts, and roundtable recommendations for shifting litigation to criminal courts.

⁷ Nesma's Video on SANAD initiative input during “Protection from the beginning” campaign roundtable.



Fourth: Ministerial and administrative decisions

1. Consider renewing the strategy eliminating VAW, and issuing a new strategy in light of the steps taken towards eliminating VAW⁸ during the previous years, and also in light of the steps that are still faltering.⁹
2. The necessity of announcing the nature of the role and practice of the central administration to receive the complaints of survivors of VAW, which was announced recently during this year in the Prime Ministry.⁹
3. The report periodically and regularly on all the equal opportunities units, which were previously established in all ministries over a decade ago, in addition to the periodical report on the role and effectiveness of gender equality interventions and units in the Ministry of Manpower, which was announced two years ago.

Fifth: Safe referral and hosting services for survivors.

1. The need for more hostels to accommodate the growing phenomenon of violence against women, and to work on distributing them in a decentralized manner across the country.¹⁰
2. Raising the sensitivity of hosting service providers in safe homes, building a general bias towards supporting survivors of violence, and abolishing the stereotypes around incidents of VAW.¹¹

⁸ Amal Abdel Hady's input during the roundtable.

⁹ Prime ministry's announcement on establishing a central unit for elimination VAW, 2021.

¹⁰ Lamyaa Loutfy's input during the roundtable.

¹¹ Televised testimony of Rania Rashwan, VAW survivor in Fayoum.





3. Enabling referral service providers to direct survivors to specialized headquarters to provide psychiatric support when needed, and to avoid dismissing critical cases in need of psychiatric interventions in stages that go beyond the limits of psychological support only.¹²

4. The importance of including bylaws for operating safe houses per “Survivors’ safe exit from temporary hostels” strategy which guarantees them independence and safe reintegration into society.¹³

Sixth: The priorities of the development plan and the follow-up to the recommendations of the follow-up committee of the recent CEDAW agreement.

1. Developing a national strategy focused on the rights of girls and young women, or adding a chapter dedicated to the rights of young girls to protection from violence to the new national strategy to eliminate VAW.

2. Pass an urgent amendment raising the age of marriage for girls over 18, either by amending the Child Law or by promulgating binding articles in the Penal Code. In addition to issuing a new national strategy to eliminate child marriage, as the previous strategy has ended in 2020.

3. Giving attention to interventions related to providing financial and in-kind economic support, rehabilitation and soft integration of child survivors of child marriage, and providing safe homes for them and their children in cases of divorce or abandonment.

¹² Nermine Mansour's input during the roundtable in “Protection from the beginning” campaign on protection policies.

¹³ Nevine Ebeid's input during the roundtable in the campaign events.





4. Adopting messages and media campaigns concerned with changing the power dynamics between men and women within the family to uphold new societal convictions to curb harmful practices against girls and young adolescents, such as the practice of FGM or child marriage.

5. Paying due attention to public schools, and one-class schools, especially in villages, and making them available and decentralized, as well as benefiting from young people's willingness to volunteer or residency years mandated on graduates to provide teachers, in the framework of continuous and non-formal education, to once more attract and reintegrate survivors of child marriage, VAW, and sexual abuse of girls into education classes and enhance their skills in the labor market.

Seventh: Protection from violence at work

1. The necessity for mobilizing efforts and collective action for the ratification of Convention 190 C and Recommendation 206 attached thereto, issued by the ILO in June 2019, and emphasizing the right of women to decent work.

2. Monitoring and enforcing national laws and regulations concerned with violence and harassment in the world of work; and make amendments to the legislation that are needed to implement the Convention and to include clear articles in labor laws criminalizing violence, namely sexual violence, taking into account the specificity of sexual violations in workplaces in terms of procedures.





3. Ensuring that labor inspectors and other relevant bodies, as appropriate, have the authority to address violence and harassment in the world of work, including issuing orders requiring measures that can be immediately enforced, and orders to stop work in cases of imminent danger to life, health or safety.

4. Ensure easy access to adequate and effective remedies and to safe, fair and effective mechanisms and procedures for reporting and conflict resolution in cases of violence and harassment in the world of work, and recognizing and mitigating the implications of domestic violence in the world of work.¹⁴

5. Activating social protection networks, strengthening the role of unions in receiving and investigating complaints and reports of violence.

6. Developing measures and procedures for protection from violence within industrial facilities in particular, and emphasizing the importance of job codes of conduct and adhering to them.

7. Establishing a national observatory to monitor forms of violence in the workplace, activating national strategies for protection from violence and achieving women's economic empowerment, emphasizing the importance of protection from violence in improving women's conditions in the labor market and enhancing their economic contribution.

¹⁴ Convention 190, ILO, 2019.





8. Promoting the concepts of corporate social responsibility from a gender perspective and the necessity for growing the developmental role of the private sector and supporting national and international incentives for addressing violence.

