

Research paper - 11 May 2016 - <http://nazra.org/en/node/495>

## One year after its launch, the National Strategy for Combating Violence Against Women still lacking Monitoring Mechanism

### Introduction

Today marks one year since the launch of the National Strategy For Combating Violence Against Women (NSVAW) by the National Council for Women (NCW) on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2015. NSVAW was developed in response to decade-long advocacy and struggle on part of feminist groups, for the State to bear its responsibility in combating gender-based violence through “a comprehensive long-term scheme”<sup>1</sup>. NSVAW addresses violence against women under four headings: prevention, protection, interventions and prosecution. Each heading comprises a number of sub-goals pertaining to the area of work of 12 different ministries and authorities. NSVAW is to be implemented over the five years 2015-2020<sup>2</sup>. Despite the problems associated with NSVAW and its contents<sup>3</sup>, the very existence of a strategy for combating violence against women connecting all concerned agencies and institutions on the national level is a positive step. As Feminists, it is our concern and interest to have NSVAW implemented and developed. Consequently, we believe that monitoring NSVAW is of paramount importance. A key guarantee of implementation is to have in a place appropriate mechanisms for follow up and monitoring, whether by State agencies, the relevant national machineries, or civil society organizations.

### What is meant by Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)?

Monitoring is a periodic, regular, and continuous process carried out throughout the period of NSVAW, with the aim of collecting and analyzing information and data in relation to the implementation of the various headings and sub-goals of NSVAW. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure the implementation of NSVAW and help concerned parties take appropriate decisions facing problems or obstacles. Monitoring also aims at documentation, with a view to keeping track of steps which have already been taken and what is yet to be completed. Evaluation, on the other hand, refers to the assessment of how successful the strategy has been in terms of achieving established goals, taking into account success indicators set out in the strategy itself. Consequently, the absence of continuous monitoring would hamper the progressive and final evaluation of the Strategy. The objective of monitoring can be summarized in the question "Are we doing things right?"<sup>4</sup>, whereas evaluation asks

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<sup>1</sup> Nazra for Feminist Studies. *The Relationship between Feminism and State Policies for the Elimination of Violence against Women: The National Strategy for the Elimination of Violence against Women as an Example*. December 10, 2015. <http://nazra.org/en/node/441>

<sup>2</sup> The National Council for Women. *The National Strategy for Combating Violence Against Women 2015-2020*. First Edition, 2015. [www.ncwegypt.com](http://www.ncwegypt.com).

<sup>3</sup> Supra footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> USAID. *Monitoring and Evaluation Concepts and Terms*. October 2010 - September 2013.

<http://www.ngoconnect.net/documents/592341/749044/%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%B4%D8%A9+%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84+%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8>

“Are we doing the right things?”. Consequently, NSVAW monitoring and evaluation has two aspects: First, have the goals set for combating violence against women been met? and second, have the developed goals and plan actually been successful and effective in reducing violence against women?

The main objective of this paper is to monitor the extent to which NSVAW has been implemented one year after its launch, and to evaluate the extent to which the goals of the strategy have been successful and effective in combating violence against women. However, NSVAW evaluation turned out to be a difficult undertaking which cannot be achieved, generally due to the absence of clear M&E mechanisms and criteria, and particularly due to the fact that civil society has not been involved in this process. While each of the four headings includes sub-goals, and NSVAW has adopted success and evaluation indicators and monitoring mechanisms, the data and information with regard to the achievement of such goals is either too generic or unavailable. Naturally, where the prerequisites for monitoring are not met, evaluation becomes impossible. Therefore, it has proven difficult to monitor the implementation of NSVAW as a whole, especially in the absence of clear monitoring mechanisms which involve civil society. However, it is our firm belief that that monitoring and evaluation are of paramount importance for the implementation and development of NSVAW in the coming years. Against this backdrop, Nazra for Feminist Studies introduces this paper with a view to, first, taking stock of some of the accomplishments and obstacles we were able to detect during the implementation of NSVAW in the past year, despite the lack of systematic monitoring mechanisms.

Second, the paper aims primarily to develop NSVAW monitoring mechanisms. The paper starts with placing NSVAW in the context of violence against women in the past year, moving on to identify some positive aspects and drawbacks of implementation. Afterwards, the paper addresses monitoring mechanisms by reviewing some NSVAW objectives and activities which were supposed to be achieved in 2015-2016, and identifying problems related to monitoring these objectives and activities. Finally, the paper proposes some practical monitoring mechanisms.

## **One after NSVAW: One year of violence against women: Sexual Assault of Female Teachers as an Example**

NSVAW is one-year-old, and violence against women has not come to an end. On the contrary, it remains very much present in all forms in both public and private spheres, as well as in the workplace. Phenomena such as domestic violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and sexual harassment in streets, public transport and workplaces have not stopped. Naturally, it was not expected that violence against women would cease to exist once the National Strategy was launched. However, viewing NSVAW against the backdrop of incidents of violence against women in both public and private spheres during the past year serves as an important reminder of the significance of having NSVAW in place. Violence against women is not “normal”. It is the result of patriarchal oppression and unequal power relations which govern the various aspects of life and discriminate against women. The prevalence of violence against women is not normal either. It is the result of the lack of national policies and political will to combat this vicious phenomenon. This is why it is important that a national strategy

is developed and put into effect in order to counter the patriarchal culture and create policies which could put an end to all forms of violence against women. Many forms of violence against women, as well as the resulting psychological and physical ramifications, can be mitigated if there are effective policies (laws, awareness-raising activities, penalties, services for survivors, etc.) carried out by relevant State agencies. For example, we can examine incidents of sexual assault and rape committed against female teachers, which have significantly increased during the past year.

During the first year of the existence of NSVAW, several regretful incidents of violence against female teachers were reported. For example, in May 2015, students in Talaat Harb School in Omraniyya attempted to rape a female teacher who would not allow them to cheat during an exam. The hideousness of the incident, which later gained much notoriety, did not stop at attempted rape. It was also manifested in its aftermath, particularly how the school administration and State agencies dealt with the perpetrators. Police refused to even come to the school, under the pretext that there is a church in the school, which they "cannot enter!" The Head of the District Education Department found it sufficient to slap one perpetrator without taking any further action<sup>5</sup>. Early in the school year 2015-2016, a female teacher originally from Kafr El-Sheikh was raped in Aamriyya in the Governorate of Alexandria on her way home after her evening shift at school<sup>6</sup>. In another horrible incident, a female English teacher was murdered in Sadat City after the offender failed to rape her<sup>7</sup>. The purpose of listing such incidents is not only to point to the continuation of violence against women over the past year despite NSVAW, or to show that NSVAW failed to reduce such crimes. Rather, it is primarily to demonstrate the continuing need for NSVAW. Violence against female teachers is associated with the fact that appropriate policies are either inexistent or ineffective. For example, the State does not provide basic means of protection for female teachers, such as safe accommodation and transport for female teachers who work evening shifts, despite the law requiring employers to provide guarantees for the protection, care, transportation and safety for women working evening shifts (Decree no. 183/2003, Article 3).<sup>8</sup> This particularly applies to female teachers who work away from home, as they live in places where they are strangers away from their families and relatives. For example, the survivor of the Aamriyya incident, who was originally from the Governorate of Kafr El-Sheikh, was one of the successfully selected candidates in a national competition by the Ministry of Education to hire 30,000 teachers, and therefore she moved to Alexandria. It is unfortunate that the State would announce job openings that female teachers strive to take, only to abandon them without any regard for their protection or consideration of potential violations they may face at their workplace and elsewhere. The persistence of incidents of violence against women on a large scale, incidents against female teachers being only one example, may demonstrate that NSVAW has so far been unsuccessful in significantly reducing violence against women. More importantly, however, it demonstrates that NSVAW needs to be implemented more seriously.

## Positive Aspects and Problems in NSVAW Implementation during 2015-2016

<sup>5</sup>Nazra for Feminist Studies and The New Woman Foundation. *The Relationship between Lack of Policies and Violence Against Female Teachers* (In Arabic), December 28, 2015. <http://nazra.org/node/442>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.youm7.com/story/2016/3/7/المعلمت-اغتصاب-ظاهرة-بشأن-عاجل-بيان-يتقدم-بركات-فايز/2618340#>

<sup>7</sup> Supra footnote 5.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

As a matter of fact, there are some positive steps which NSVAW had promised and that have actually began to materialize. These include the development of a medical protocol or guide for dealing with violence survivors and training a number of male and female doctors to use it. The guide was developed in collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This was carried out in line with the activities defined under NSVAW Interventions heading, in the first sub-goal pertaining to providing medical and psychological support and counseling services for violence survivors<sup>9</sup>.

Several ministries were involved in the development of the guide, and a number of doctors were trained to collect evidence in cases of rape and sexual assault instead of forensic doctors, due to the limited numbers of the latter<sup>10</sup>, and to prepare reports to be submitted to the department of forensics. The guide elaborates in detail how doctors can ensure the preservation of evidence, psychologically and physically deal with violence survivors and document their conditions, and guarantee confidentiality and privacy. So far, 172 public hospitals have been covered. The next target is to train doctors in 400 hospitals and then turn to private and educational hospitals. Moreover, there has been significant progress in the performance of the Forensic Medicine Department. A forensic unit for violence against women and children has been set up, and works 24/7 to cover Cairo, Giza and Shubra El-Kheima. The new unit is located next to the Zeinhom Morgue. Police stations have been notified to refer relevant cases to this unit. According to Dr. Hesham Abdel Hamid, Head of the Forensic Medicine Department, it is envisaged that the Unit will also include a psychiatrist and a social worker. Moreover, the role of forensic doctors will also be developed to include treating Sexually Transmitted Diseases or providing contraceptive pills. However, there are two key problems in the relationship between these significant accomplishments and the implementation of NSVAW. First, while these steps are extremely important and fully compatible with the objectives of combating violence against women, they are not necessarily taken in the context of the implementation of NSVAW. For instance, while the idea of a medical guide for dealing with violence survivors is indeed part of NSVAW, the implementing parties in reality were different from those envisaged under NSVAW. While this is not problematic per se, the problem lies in the lack of a systematic mechanism for monitoring NSVAW, so as to follow up with the steps taken by the government agencies and other stakeholders and include them as part of NSVAW implementation.

Furthermore, we were able to identify some obstacles to effective NSVAW implementation in the past year. Most prominently, the Ministry of Interior, a key partner in NSVAW implementation, has itself been involved in committing crimes and violations against women. Failure on part of some relevant institutions to put some aspects of NSVAW into effect is one thing, and violation of women's rights and bodies by an NSVAW implementing institution is something completely different, which seriously undermines the credibility and viability.

First, female protesters and human rights defenders face myriad violations perpetrated or condoned by the Police, including arbitrary arrest, battery, and even sexual assault and torture in some cases. Several female protesters were arrested in the aftermath of the demonstrations of April 15 and

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<sup>9</sup> NSVAW, however, assigns this task to parties other than the ones who carried it out in reality.

<sup>10</sup> There are 103 forensic doctors nationwide.

25, in direct violations of their right to be present in the public sphere and freely express their opinions. Female relatives of detainees were beaten by thugs who provoked clashed with the families, enabled by the police who failed to intervene to save the women and girls in two different instances, first in front of the Zeinhom Court, on Tuesday April 19, and again in front of Abdeen Court on April 30. Moreover, average female citizens face several types of physical and sexual violations inside police stations and detention centers. For example, towards the end of last year, a brutal incident took place in Shubra El-Kheima, as the police tortured, sexually harassed, and physically and verbally abused a 17-year-old girl. The perpetrators were not punished by the Ministry of Interior<sup>11</sup>. NSVAW completely fails to address combating violence by State actors, which further encourages the Ministry of Interior to continue committing such crimes and violating women's bodies. NSVAW provides for annual amendment and revision of its contents.

Holding accountable State actors who perpetrate violence against women, and the very recognition of the existence of State violence, should be a priority amendment to be incorporated in NSVAW; and it was indeed demanded by some feminist organization upon the launching of NSVAW.

Another important problem pertains to the targeting of civil society organizations - especially human rights organizations - by the State. Civil society is supposed to be a key partner in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NSVAW. This should be the case particularly with respect to organizations which have been working for decades on the issue of violence against women. However, these organizations - including feminist organizations - have recently been targeted and prosecuted by the State. This is a substantial challenge to the implementation of NSVAW. First, this security crackdown on human rights organizations and feminist organizations hampers the work of groups that are already active in combating violence against women and responding to the needs of violence survivors. These are hardly tasks that the State can handle on its own. Second, this crackdown prevents civil society from becoming a real partner in the M&E process of NSVAW, leaving this task in the hands of unaided and uncontrolled State agencies.

In a broader context, one of the main barriers to NSVAW implementation is its non-binding nature, since NCW is only an advisory council. Therefore, it is important to emphasize the need to expand the mandate of NCW so that it also has executive powers which would allow for more effective implementation and monitoring of NSVAW. At the same time, pressure could be exerted to ensure that the contents of NSVAW are binding for all ministries and agencies through a ministerial decree.

## Problems with NSVAW Monitoring Mechanisms

It is of course impossible to monitor the implementation of NSVAW in its entirety, especially with regard to long-term goals which cannot be measured in the course of one year. However, NSVAW had set out specific goals to be accomplished in 2015-2016. This paper reviews the activities scheduled for

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<sup>11</sup> Tahrir News. *Girl Tortured in Shubra El-Kheima Second Police Station*. 2 December 2015.

<http://www.tahrirnews.com/posts/346621/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B0%D9%8A%D8%A8+%D9%81%D9%8A+%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85+%D9%82%D8%B3%D9%85+%D8%AB%D8%A7%D9%86+%D8%B4%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7+%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A9+%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A9+%D8%B4%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7+%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A9+%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%AA+%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B6%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B7>

implementation during 2015-2016 under the two headings of Protection and Interventions<sup>12</sup>, to illustrate the problems facing monitoring mechanisms.

Protection and Interventions were selected because they comprise activities which are clear, tangible, and relevant to the work of Nazra for Feminist Studies in the area of violence against women<sup>13</sup>.

First, NSVAW lists 4 sub-goals under the Protection heading, and proposes a number of activities for each sub-goal. NSVAW further outlines the expected outputs, implementing/supporting party and monitoring mechanism for each activity.

**The first goal is leveraging and enhancing legislation and laws on combating violence against women in light of the constitution; and enacting a comprehensive law which covers all forms of violence against women and girls with a view to ensuring elimination of such violence. Activities under this goal are as follows:**

- Reviewing the draft comprehensive law on combating all forms of violence against women; and keeping track of the required procedures by the Ministry of Justice in order to have the draft presented to parliament. The output is a draft comprehensive law on combating violence against women. This is to be carried out through establishing a committee for reviewing the draft. The monitoring mechanism specified by NSVAW consists in the reports of this committee.
- Holding coordination meetings with NGOs to mobilize support for passing the law. The output is social support for the passing of a law. The implementing parties are the Ministry of Justice and NGOs. The monitoring mechanism consists in meeting reports and media participation.
- Following up with the enactment process of a draft comprehensive law on combating violence against women. The output is a draft comprehensive law on combating violence against women. The implementing parties are the Ministry of Justice and the 2015 Parliament. The monitoring mechanism is parliament sessions.
- Reviewing legislation on crimes of violence with a view to enacting legal provisions which establish stricter penalties and protect the privacy of female victims of violence. The output is legislative provisions with stricter penalties, and a legislative provision which ensures the confidentiality of the data of female victims of violence. The Implementing party is the Ministry of Justice, and the monitoring mechanism is public opinion surveys.
- Calling upon the new parliament to speed up the process of enacting a legislative package in keeping with the 2014 Constitution and international human rights standards, including the draft law on combating violence against women prepared by NCW; the draft law on non-discrimination among citizens and equal opportunities prepared by the National Council for Human Rights (NCHR); and amendment of the laws on the Exercise of Political Rights and on the Elections of the House of Representatives, in order to enhance and ensure the integrity of the electoral process. The output is enacting legislation which is in line with international

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<sup>12</sup> With the exception of the goals related to economic empowerment and rehabilitation of violence perpetrators, which are outside the scope of Nazra's work and could not be evaluated.

<sup>13</sup> All goals, activities and monitoring mechanisms mentioned below are taken verbatim from the text of NSVAW.



instruments and the new Constitution with the aim of promoting and protecting human rights. The implementing parties are the Ministry of Justice and Parliament. The monitoring mechanism is parliament sessions and enacted laws.

- Organizing workshops with law enforcement agencies, representatives from the Ministries and civil society, and members of the Egyptian households who are demanding legislative amendments, with a view to formulating draft amendments. The output consists in draft legislative amendments necessary for enhancing the protection and observance of child rights, and opening a societal dialogue to reach an optimal formulation. The implementing parties are representatives of Ministries, Public Prosecution offices and civic associations. The monitoring mechanism consists in keeping track of recommendations submitted to relevant authorities and the enactment of new laws.
- Reviewing penal provisions, particularly in relation to clemency and to the crime of adultery. The output consists in amended provisions and enactment of a new provision which ensures that men and women face the same penalty in adultery cases. The implementing parties are NCW and the Ministry of Justice. The monitoring mechanism consists in the output of each meeting and the drafting of a preliminary provision.

**The second sub-goal is reinforcing law enforcement by developing coordination mechanisms and referral systems. The activities under this sub-goal are as follows:**

- Supplying and arming the forces responsible for combating violence against women with modern and sophisticated equipment. The output consists in law enforcement forces which are well-prepared for rapid intervention in incidents of violence against women. The monitoring mechanism consists in statistical monitoring of incidents of violence in streets collected by relevant agencies and departments of the Ministry.
- Providing legal support for girls victimized by violence through NCW and taking action to protect them throughout the investigation until they are admitted in competent institutions. The output is protecting girls victimized by violence and reintegrating them in society. The implementing parties are the Public Prosecution, International Organization for Migration and civic associations. The monitoring mechanism consists in reports on the victims assisted and their progress.

**The third sub-goal is raising awareness of applicable laws, streamlining procedures, facilitating access to legal services, and expediting processes. The activities under this sub-goals are as follows:**

- Establishing hotlines at the Human Rights Sector in the Ministry of Interior and at each local Security Directorate to receive reports of violence against women. The output is a number of hotlines. The implementing party is the Ministry of Communications. The monitoring mechanism consists in keeping track of the number of reports.
- A guide including relevant laws and procedures in simplified form. The implementing parties are NCW, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior. The monitoring mechanism is regular followup with health facilities.

- Training service providers to use the guide on cases of violence against women. The output is staff equipped with knowledge of the laws and procedures related to cases of violence against women. The implementing parties are NCW, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior. The monitoring mechanism is measuring how well-acquainted service providers are with the laws and procedures related to cases of violence against women.
- Frequently hosting university professors, particularly professors of law and jurisprudence. The output is raising legal and religious awareness. The implementing parties are the Television Sector, specialized T.V. channels and universities. The monitoring mechanism consists in opinion surveys.
- Holding awareness-raising meetings on violence against women and the laws which criminalize such violence and the penalties specified therein. The output is 1500 beneficiaries whose awareness is raised. The implementing party is NCW. The monitoring mechanism is monthly and half-annual reports.

**The fourth sub-goal is creating a favorable environment for victims to report incidents of violence and benefit from services and protection and assistance programs. The activities under this sub-goal are as follows:**

- Developing and more widely advertising the NCW complaint hotline service. The output is a developed complaint hotline service. The implementing party is the United Nations Development Programme UNDP. The monitoring mechanism consists in monthly, quarterly and annual reports.
- Providing legal counsel in the areas of Imbaba, El-Hagana and Mansheyet Nasser, as part of the Safe Cities Initiative. The output is raising awareness among women about legal rights. The monitoring mechanism consists in the periodic project reports.
- Expanding the system of mobile patrols equipped with light vehicles to reach places where violence is reported and to be constantly present in areas known for such crimes. The output consists in having mobile patrols supporting women. The monitoring mechanism is monthly reports.
- Coordinating between the Child Help Line, protection committees and civic associations to provide emergency help. The output is fast referral of reports and providing help. The implementing parties are governorates and civic associations. The Monitoring mechanism is periodic reports on each of the cases.
- Activating the role of Protection Committees in Governorates. The output is detecting promptly responding to cases of children at risk. The monitoring mechanism consists in keeping track of reports submitted by Subcommittees to General Committees then to NCW.

Under the Interventions heading, the **the first sub-goal is: Providing health and psychological support and counseling services for victims of violence. The activities under this sub-goal are as follows:**



- Developing a guide for enhancing the skills of providers of therapeutic and psychological services to victims of violence. The output is a guide illustrating the basic skills required for providing victims of violence with therapeutic and psychological health services. The monitoring mechanism consists in keeping track of the extent to which the guide is available health facilities by the supervising team.
- Training service providers to use the guide on providing therapeutic and psychological services to victims of violence. The output is the preparation of qualified service providers who are capable of providing victims of violence with proper therapeutic and psychological assistance. The implementing party is NCW. The monitoring mechanism is supervision vision overseeing service providers.
- Promoting the establishment of new healthcare centers or dedication of existing ones to providing treatment and care to female victims of violence, in coordination with government and non-government stakeholders. The output is specialized services for victims of violence against women. The implementing parties are the Ministry of Health and NCW. The monitoring mechanism consists in following up with the relevant bodies of the Ministry.
- Creating hotlines to provide counseling nationwide. The output is hotlines for communication with those in need of counseling. The implementing party is the Ministry of Communications. The monitoring mechanism consists in following up with the relevant bodies of the Ministry.
- Training social workers on psychological health, relevant problems and how they could be solved and/or treated, and dealing with delinquent pupils/students who commit violence against their male or female peers or teachers. The output is a social worker who is well aware of his/her role and is able to carry it out. The monitoring mechanism consists in monitoring randomly selected schools where social workers and students are surveyed through a form or questionnaire.

**The fourth sub-goal under this heading is: Establishing and expanding the coverage of healthcare and legal assistance services, advice and guidance centers, medical and psychological counseling, hotlines and shelters for victims of violence. The activities under this sub-goal include:**

- Providing suitable, equipped and separate places inside police stations to receive victims of violence, and assigning trained personnel, preferably females, to receive and file reports and collect evidence. The output is suitable places to receive victims. The implementing party is the Ministry of Health. The monitoring mechanism consists in quarterly, half-annual and annual reports based on records of received cases.
- Supporting referrals of victims of violence through coordinating with shelters to provide psychological and social support for victims of violence. The output is a cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Social Solidarity. The implementing parties are the Ministry of Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Health and Population. The monitoring mechanism consists in reports and follow-up with the cases.

It can easily be determined that many of the aforementioned activities have not been accomplished, as is the case with activities pertaining to the enactment of new legislation. However, the extent of progress or accomplishment in the majority of activities and goals cannot be determined, as is the case for example with training social workers, or even forming committees to work on draft laws, regardless of whether parliament adopts such drafts or not. This is precisely due to the lack of any transparent monitoring mechanism which can render a decisive answer to these questions.

Some of the problems pertaining to monitoring NSVAW goals and activities are outlined below.

#### I: Difficulty to implement certain monitoring mechanisms

- Some monitoring mechanisms are not explained in detail or impractical. For instance, for the activity of training service providers to use the guide on dealing with female violence survivors, the monitoring mechanism is “measuring how well-acquainted service providers are with the guide”. The method of measuring this acquaintance, however, is not clear. It can be done in several ways, for example through the supervision of the Ministry of Health or NCW, or through testing service providers. How often such monitoring process is carried out could also vary widely. There is no explanation or elaboration of the specifics of such mechanisms, which impedes the monitoring process and consequently the achievement of the goal itself. Similarly, for some goals the monitoring mechanism consists simply in “surveys” without specifying the target population to be surveyed. Are they meant for service beneficiaries or service providers? When and how will such surveys be conducted and how will the results be used to improve the service? These are only a few examples which illustrate the problems associated with ambiguous and generic monitoring mechanisms which will inevitably hamper implementation by relevant bodies.
- Some monitoring mechanisms have become impractical for external reasons related to the broader political situation. For instance, with regard to all activities and goals related to the enactment of legislation or laws to combat violence against women, the monitoring mechanism specified by NSVAW was following up with parliament sessions. However, sessions of the House of Representatives are no longer public. It is also difficult to monitor laws and legislation on women’s issues in the absence of a Committee for Women in parliament. Consequently, other innovative methods of monitoring legislation should be put place, for example by meeting directly or organizing periodic meetings with with female MPs. This could be particularly feasible considering the large number of women MPs in the House of Representatives.

#### II: Problems with Data Collection Methods

- The majority of monitoring methods depend on monthly or half-annual “reports” on the activity. Adopting this method as the sole means of monitoring NSVAW is problematic. First, this method depends on the very agencies and ministries which are supposed to be monitored. Indeed, internal audit and self-monitoring by these agencies is important. However, this is naturally insufficient, and more actors should be involved, including NCW and civil society organizations.
- Second and most importantly, survivors themselves are not involved in the monitoring process. There are no clear mechanisms which - while safeguarding confidentiality and privacy - take

into account the experiences of survivors, especially with respect to the goals which are closely related to services provided to them, such as health services and prosecution of offenders. This is certainly a manifestation of the absence of a feminist perspective in NSVAW itself, which fails to consider the “empowerment” of women as an essential part of its function, because it fails to see violence against women primarily as a result of patriarchal structures and unjust power relations between men and women.

### III: Lack of transparency

- The majority of monitoring mechanisms depend on writing or submitting reports. It is not clear, however, whether such reports - regardless of the fact that they are issued solely by the very State actors responsible for the implementation of NSVAW in the first place - will be made available to non-State actors for them to keep up with NSVAW implementation. Therefore, NSVAW monitoring mechanisms are severely lacking in implementation, regardless of whether or not they will be put into effect. This deprives various social actors from monitoring the implementation of NSVAW, and reflects a narrow and exclusionary vision which considers NSVAW and national machineries in general as a State monopoly. It is necessary that all social actors be involved and engaged in the process of NSVAW monitoring and evaluation.
- The only mechanism to guarantee transparency is for NCW to publish periodic reports, as provided for under NSVAW. However, NCW is yet to publish any such report.

### IV: Lack of coordination among NSVAW implementing parties with regard to monitoring mechanisms

- The main objective of NSVAW is creating synergies among the various agencies and institutions to put forth a national plan for combating violence against women. Indeed, NSVAW distributes efforts on a number of bodies and ministries. However, when it comes to monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, there seems to be no plan for coordinating among the entities involved in NSVAW implementation, as if each entity is only concerned with monitoring and evaluating its own plan. Even under NCW monitoring of all involved entities, communication among these entities to follow up on NSVAW implementation is a necessity.

### **Suggestions to improve monitoring mechanisms:**

Aside from practical suggestions, there are several important principles and concepts that should be met in a given monitoring mechanism:

- Involving civil society in the monitoring and evaluation process, especially organizations which are active in combating of violence against women. It is therefore imperative for the State to cease its crackdown on such organizations.
- Involving violence survivors in the monitoring and evaluation process, based on the belief that empowerment is an essential pillar of NSVAW.
- Emphasizing transparency in monitoring and evaluation reports and ensuring that such reports are available on NCW website, based on the notion that monitoring NSVAW implementation is an issue which concerns all women and society as a whole.

- Underlining networking and synergies among State institutions involved in the implementation of NSVAW, as well as between these institutions and civil society organizations.
- Recognizing all forms of violence against women which are committed by various perpetrators, including those perpetrated by State or Society actors.

#### Practical suggestions

- Forming a Committee on Monitoring, to comprise one or two representatives from each Ministry or Entity involved in NSVAW implementation, one or more representative from NCHR, and representatives from feminist organizations combatting violence against women; to be facilitated by NCW.
- Publication of quarterly and annual reports by each Ministry involved in NSVAW implementation, covering the implementation of their respective goals and activities scheduled for the reporting period. It is also possible to designate a section for NSVAW on the website of each of the involved Ministries and entities, to list the activities scheduled for the year and make available reports on their implementation.
- Allowing civil society organizations and feminist organizations, especially those which will serve in the Committee on Monitoring, to coordinate with NCW and issue quarterly and annual reports which take into account the opinions of the violence survivors with whom they work. Different NSVAW heading could be assigned to different organizations for monitoring.
- Making evaluation forms, which guarantee privacy and confidentiality, available to victims of violence at all times and all locations where relevant services are provided, including shelters, hospitals, forensic facilities, police stations, etc.
- Using evaluation forms and personal interviews with survivors in reporting, both by State institutions and civil society organizations, while ensuring the privacy of the survivor and that her psychological condition allows for such interview.
- Providing an open-access section for complaints and suggestions on NCW website as well as the websites of all Ministries involved in NSVAW implementation under the relevant section.
- Encouraging violence survivors to refer to the NCW complaints office to report any violations in the institutions which provide services for violence survivors.
- Publication by the Committee on Monitoring of half-annual and annual reports on NSVAW implementation, based on: 1) reports submitted by the Ministries and agencies 2) reports submitted by civil society organizations 3) complaints and suggestion submitted through websites.
- Amendment of NSVAW contents on annual basis pursuant to the findings of report of the Committee on Monitoring and proposals submitted (for example adding a section on State violence, as has already been pointed out by some organizations).
- Organizing at least two meetings annually by NCW for the members of the coordination committee in conjunction with half-annual and annual reports.

- Organizing one annual open conference by NCW in collaboration with other partners at the end of every year on NSVAW monitoring.
- Reaffirming the importance of expanding the mandate of NCW so that it has executive powers.