

Report by SI Advocacy Advisor, Linda Witong, Following the 14th Session of the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Kyoto, March 2021.

Evidence based crime convention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices.

How Statistics Regarding the Impact on Women and the Economy Can Raise Awareness and a Sense of Urgency for All Leaders to Take the Necessary Actions.

“Women’s rights is meaningless unless they feel empowered to claim them” Hillary Clinton

According to the speakers during the Kyoto conference as well as the recently released WHO report regarding gender-based violence (GBV), up to 852 million women aged 15 and older were estimated to have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence, or both. As such, violence against women is clearly considered to be an enormous public health problem globally and in all regions; it leads not only to great human suffering but is now revealing to have important social and economic costs. It is hoped that these high numbers will raise awareness and a sense of urgency for all leaders to take the necessary actions.¹

Various countries, as well as the scientific community, have already focused on this issue. For example, in 2019, a scientific article ² observed that survivors were scarred and lived with long-term effects that constituted risk factors for lifetime physical, sexual and reproductive, and mental health.³ It was also observed that the effects of GBV and maltreatment impacted whole societies and economies and increased demands on overstretched health systems and perpetuated poverty and gender inequality by constraining educational attainment and economic productivity of the survivor and their family.⁴ The intergenerational cycle of violence and trauma could also cause a legacy of suffering as multi-country

¹ Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018. Global, regional and national prevalence estimates for intimate partner violence against women and global and regional prevalence estimates for non-partner sexual violence against women. Geneva: World Health Organization, on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women Estimation and Data (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNODC, UNSD, UN Women); March 9, 2021. Pp XVIII see also: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Costs of intimate partner violence against women in the United States. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2003 (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/IPVBook-a.pdf>, accessed 4 February 2021). And Estimating the costs of gender-based violence in the European Union: report. Vilnius, Lithuania: European Institute for Gender Equality; 2014 (<https://eige.europa.eu/publications/estimating-costs-gender-based-violence-european-union-report>, accessed 29 December 2020).

² Countering the pandemic of gender-based violence and maltreatment of young people: The Lancet Commission Published Online December 20, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1016/> see also www.thelancet.com Volume 395 January 11, 2020 pp 98-99

³ Garcia-Moreno C, Zimmerman C, Morris-Gehring A, et al. Addressing violence against women: a call to action. Lancet 2015; 385: 1685–95. - WHO. Child maltreatment: key facts. 2016. <https://www.who.int/newsroom/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment> (accessed Dec 13, 2019).- The Lancet. Adversity in childhood: how the past defines the future. Lancet 2016; 388: 2324.- Patel V, Saxena S, Lund C, et al. The Lancet Commission on global mental health and sustainable development. Lancet 2018; 392: 1553–98.

⁴ Duvvury N, Callan A, Carney P, Raghavendra S. Intimate partner violence: economic costs and implications for growth and development. World Bank, 2013. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/412091468337843649/Intimate-partner-violence-economic-costsand-implications-for-growth-and-development> (accessed Nov 25, 2019).

studies showed that boys who witnessed their mother being beaten had more than 2.5 times the odds of ever perpetrating violence against their own partner.⁵

As a result of these findings, Lancet not only described this impact as being a “public health priority, an equity imperative and a travesty of human rights but also as an economic sinkhole”⁶ Why did Lancet describe it as a “economic sinkhole”? According to the Lancet, GBV reduced global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2% per year,⁷ or roughly the size of the entire Canadian economy⁸ which was equivalent to an annual loss of more than US\$1.6 trillion when considering only direct medical costs and immediate productivity losses.⁹ In some countries, the annual costs of GBV have been estimated at more than 3.5% of GDP, which is double what many governments invest in educating their populations.¹⁰ The long-term, cumulative economic burden in terms of lost income-generation capacity has been considered to be much higher.¹¹

Studies have shown that investing in the prevention of violence is a cost-effective approach for states. By investing in the effective implementation of behavioural, legal and regulatory solutions, states will not be the only beneficiaries by saving on the cost of responding to violence¹² private sectors will benefit as well because preventing violence against women can also improve productivity gains for the private sector.¹³

⁵ Countering the pandemic of gender-based violence and maltreatment of young people: The Lancet Commission Published Online December 20, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1016/> see also www.thelancet.com Volume 395 January 11.2020 pp 98-99 citing Fleming PJ, McCleary-Sills J, Morton M, Levto R, Heilman B, Barker G.

Risk factors for men’s lifetime perpetration of physical violence against intimate partners: results from the international men and gender equality survey (IMAGES) in eight countries. PLoS One 2015; 10: e0118639.

⁶ Countering the pandemic of gender-based violence and maltreatment of young people: The Lancet Commission Published Online December 20, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1016/> see also www.thelancet.com Volume 395 January 11.2020 pp 98-99

⁷ Fleming PJ, McCleary-Sills J, Morton M, Levto R, Heilman B, Barker G. Risk factors for men’s lifetime perpetration of physical violence against intimate partners: results from the international men and gender equality survey (IMAGES) in eight countries. PLoS One 2015; 10: e0118639. and Anstey C. The price of violence against women and girls. The World Bank, March 7, 2013. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/opinion/2013/03/07/putting-a-price-on-violence-against-women-and-girls> (accessed Nov 25, 2019)

⁸ Counting the Cost: The Price Society Pays for Violence Against Women Report CARE at pp 4 citing (UN Women, 2016).

⁹ Countering the pandemic of gender-based violence and maltreatment of young people: The Lancet Commission Published Online December 20, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1016/> see also www.thelancet.com Volume 395 January 11.2020 pp 98-99

¹⁰ The World Bank. Gender-based violence (violence against women and girls). April 2, 2019. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/violence-against-women-and-girls> (accessed Nov 25, 2019).

¹¹ Countering the pandemic of gender-based violence and maltreatment of young people: The Lancet Commission Published Online December 20, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1016/> see also www.thelancet.com Volume 395 January 11.2020 pp 98-99

¹² Counting the Cost: The Price Society Pays for Violence Against Women Report CARE at pp 5 citing Laxminarayan et al., 2006, p.48-49

¹³ Counting the Cost: The Price Society Pays for Violence Against Women Report CARE at pp 5 citing CARE Australia, 2017 & CARE International Sri Lanka, 2014

During the Kyoto conference Luis Rivera-Galicia of Spain also revealed findings from his 2016 study in Spain which was consistent with the above studies. It was revealed that Spain had also endured significant economic costs in terms of expenditures on service provision and healthcare for victims of gender related violence as well as lost income for women and their families, work absenteeism of victims and aggressors, police and legal costs in 2016. In evaluating these costs as well as accommodation needs or other activities of third sector organizations, Luis Rivera-Galicia estimated the total tangible cost of VAW in Spain in 2016 to be between 1,281.0 and 8,540.9 million Euros which represented between 0.11% and 0.76% of Spanish GDP.¹⁴

A statistical analysis regarding the impact on women was also shown to be very important to even the most prestigious organisations in other ways according to Melissa Deehring, another speaker at the Kyoto conference. Melissa observed that originally the Harvard Business School had believed that it was doing fine when dealing with implementing gender equality at its institution. However, upon doing a survey and evaluating transcripts in which their professors were instructing students, they discovered that this was not the case, as professors were interrupting or talking over female students thereby holding the women back from fully participating in the classes and even causing some to drop out of the programs. Upon altering how professors instructed their classes and implementing anonymous grading, it was discovered that the number of women who dropped out of Harvard's Business School had decreased."

Soroptimist International supports a human-rights based approach to eliminating gender-based violence. SI will continue to empower communities to break the cycle of violence through awareness raising campaigns, educational programmes, assisting victim support centres, and engaging with policymakers at the local and global level. To learn more about SI's current efforts to end violence against women, visit our [International President's Appeal](#) webpage.

¹⁴ The costs of gender-based violence against women in Spain August 2019 Conference: 62nd ISI World Statistics Conference At: Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) Project: [El Coste Económico de la Violencia de Género en España 2016](#) by [Luis F. Rivera-Galicia](#) et al <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335570186> [The costs of gender-based violence against women in Spain](#)