

UNFPA Encourages Asian Men to Stop Violence against Women

BANGKOK, 25 November – Beatings, “honour” crimes, coerced sex, early marriages and other forms of violence against women and girls are rampant throughout Asia. UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is working to involve men across the region in the effort to end these human rights violations.

Many UNFPA offices are working with local partners to highlight the issue during this year’s 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, a campaign that runs from today, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10 December, International Human Rights Day.

In [Sri Lanka](#), for example, UNFPA has partnered with a range of men from celebrity cricketers to fishermen, from diplomats to students, to produce short videos condemning violence against women (see links to videos below). The television announcements are part of the national “Men too can make a difference” campaign, which also includes billboards at key railway stations, street drama and thematic seminars targeting policy makers.

Legislative reform, law enforcement, the training of medical staff to recognize signs of abuse, and the empowerment of women are all part of the complex solutions needed to end violence against women.

In the **Lao People’s Democratic Republic**, UNFPA is joining the Lao National Commission for the Advancement of Women, the minister of justice, male parliamentarians and others at a conference highlighting the importance of male involvement through law enforcement. The conference will focus on the outcomes of the latest country report on the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#), a human rights treaty adopted 20 years ago that obliges states to ensure human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

In **Cambodia**, UNFPA is supporting the Ministry of Women’s Affairs to produce a short film highlighting men’s critical role in preventing gender-based violence. The film will be screened at a conference on the topic in the country’s northern Siem Reap province.

In **China**, UNFPA is supporting the All China Women’s Federation to organize a two-day national conference. Global experience in engaging men and boys to end violence against women will be highlighted.

Violence against women remains one of the most pervasive and least recognized human rights abuses in the world. As many as one in three women has been abused in some way, most often by someone she knows. One woman in four is abused during pregnancy. The effects of violence against women are profound and include unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and psychological problems.

UNFPA and others in the United Nations family are taking steps to break the silence and end the violence. Last year, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the [UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign](#). This year, the Secretary-General is launching a [Network of Men Leaders](#) who pledge to act to end violence against women and girls in their communities. Two new Security Council resolutions passed this year – 1888 and 1889 – strengthen the UN’s ability to address sexual violence in conflict and to involve women in post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction.

-By Laura Vinha

Links:

[Involving Men in Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Reproductive Health Ending Widespread Violence Against Women](#)

[UNSG’s Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women](#)

[Message of Thoraya Obaid, UNFPA ED](#)