

In addition, other protective measures—such as legal aid, medical assistance, shelter services, and psycho-social counseling—are made available by all countries in the region.<sup>12</sup> In this regard, it is relevant to take note of the Philippines' Anti VAWC law which lays down a comprehensive set of guidelines and programs for the delivery of such services. Support services are delivered through a range of state sponsored facilities, such as health facilities, shelter homes, counseling centers, etc. The establishment of one-stop crisis centers—for example in Malaysia, rape crisis centers in the Philippines, counseling centers in Lao PDR, and government social protection centers in Viet Nam—allow women to access multiple services in a single location.

It is also essential that measures are taken to ensure that law enforcement officers and public officials responsible for implementing laws/policies on VAW and delivering services receive training to sensitize them to the needs of women. For instance, special laws in the Philippines mandate trainings on human rights and gender sensitivity for all government personnel involved in the protection and defense of women.

Other important components of effective implementation include education programs, the creation of interagency/multi-sectoral bodies to promote coordinated and cohesive implementation, and institutionalized monitoring and evaluation processes and systems.

## Best Practices in Prosecution and Punishment

A fundamental obligation of the State under the due diligence standard is to investigate and appropriately punish acts of VAW. Meeting this obligation requires clearly defining the powers and duties of law enforcement functionaries – particularly the police – including the duty to investigate and record complaints, to track police accountability; to reduce delays in court proceedings and encourage timely and expedited proceedings, and other measures to foster confidence in the police and judiciary. The due diligence standard also entails the recognition of women's agency and the adoption of a victim-centric approach to prosecution that guarantees appropriate privacy, safety and respect,

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12. The adequacy and outreach of these services remains a challenge.