

- » Acts, omissions or threats that inflict harm to a family member's physical or mental health (e.g. Thailand's DV law);
- » Acts of psychological violence that cause emotional suffering or offend human dignity (e.g. DV laws in the Philippines⁵ and Viet Nam);
- » Attempts to make a woman financially dependent (e.g. the Philippines' Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) law);
- » Acts that cause damage to property or assets (e.g. Malaysian, Lao PDR and Viet Nameese DV laws);
- » Acts of sexual violence (e.g. the Philippines' VAWC includes marital rape and sexual harassment within intimate relationships in its definition of sexual violence);
- » Harmful practices in domestic settings (e.g. the Viet Nameese DV law includes forced child marriages and forced marriages.).

A comprehensive law on VAW, as is required under the due diligence standard, should have a comprehensive inventory of relationships within which VAW may occur and clearly define those falling within its ambit of protection. For instance, laws on DV should include all domestic and current and past intimate relationships, in addition to marital relationships.

Best Practices in Prevention

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on VAW, as a general rule, States have sought to discharge their obligations to prevent VAW by adopting specific legislation, developing awareness raising campaigns, and training specified professional groups.⁶

While adopting special laws on VAW, it is essential that underlying causes of VAW are addressed. In this regard, many countries in Asia have adopted gender specific DV laws (e.g. Viet Nam and Cambodia) that acknowledge that women's and men's experiences of violence differ and that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal

5. The Philippines' Anti-VAWC law also includes intimidation, harassment, stalking, and marital infidelity in its definition of psychological violence.

6. United Nations Economic and Social Council, 'Integration of the Human Rights of Women and the Gender Perspective: , The Due Diligence Standard as a Tool for the Elimination of Violence Against Women,' Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on VAW, Yakin Ertürk, January 2006, available online <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/5BC588B7F61EDFFE8525710900583DCE>