



Strengthening Formal Justice Systems' Responses to Violence Against Women and Girls



23 May 2022

Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji* and Virtual via Zoom

**the conference will be in-person for Fiji participants only*

(simultaneous interpretations in Tetun, Portuguese, Mandarin, Russian and other requested languages)

Join us for an interactive conference convening justice sector actors and other stakeholders to discuss approaches to strengthening the formal justice systems' responses to violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the Asia and the Pacific region. The conference will identify common gaps and barriers, good and promising practices and successful outcomes, as well as increase regional knowledge sharing on better handling and adjudication of VAWG cases. Participants will comprise judges, prosecutors, lawyers, government officials, civil society organizations, academia, development partners and other interested parties.

Globally, 1 in 3 women have experienced physical, sexual, psychological and other forms of violence. In the Asia and the Pacific region, the prevalence of violence against women and girls is also high, with women and girls in the Pacific Island countries facing some of the highest rates of violence globally. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated VAWG and they are facing even higher rates of violence. This harsh reality persists despite laws to protect women and girls against violence. For example, survivors face harmful gender discrimination, bias and stereotyping, social stigma, and inadequate institutional mechanisms to provide them with adequate protection under the formal justice system. Furthermore, they face other access to justice issues such as low literacy; limited awareness or knowledge of women's and girls' rights, cultural and social norms that excuse violence against women or discourage survivors from pursuing formal justice remedies; lack of support from family members and community leaders; and insufficient support services. Evidence and experience suggest that laws alone are not enough to eliminate VAWG and capacity of formal justice sector personnel and stakeholders responsible for handling and adjudicating VAWG cases need to be strengthened, as well as institutional mechanisms to deal effectively and efficiently with VAWG cases. Additionally, complementary tools for increasing legal literacy and access to justice need to be utilized.

Please go to this link to register:

<https://adb-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlqd-IsrTIsE9ScaT5WgRVWJ3DOMlr8ZpSL>



Asia-Pacific Conference on the Promotion of Gender-Responsive Judicial Systems

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Violence Against Women and Girls



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OPENING CEREMONY	
9:00-9:15am Manila 6:00-6:15am Islamabad 10:00-10:15am Dili 11:00-11:15am Sydney 1:00-1:15pm Suva (15 mins)	OPENING REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mereseini Rakuita, Principal Strategic Lead, Pacific Community (SPC) Munkhtuya Altangerel, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative Bruce Gosper, Vice-President (Administration and Corporate Management), Asian Development Bank (ADB) +Master of Ceremonies: Christina Pak , Principal Counsel, ADB
9:15-9:30am Manila 6:15-6:30am Islamabad 10:15-10:30am Dili 11:15-11:30am Sydney 1:15pm-1:30pm Suva (15 mins)	SETTING THE SCENE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Violence Against Women and Girls in Asia and the Pacific by Samantha Hung, Chief of Gender Equality Thematic Group, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, ADB and Abigail Erikson, Senior Advisor, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, UN Women (10 mins) Short skit shedding light on a survivor's experience in the criminal justice system (3-5 mins)
9:30-9:45am Manila 6:30-6:45am Islamabad 10:30-10:45am Dili 11:30-11:45am Sydney 1:30-1:45pm Suva	Wellness Break (15 mins)
PLENARY SESSION 1	
9:45-11:00am Manila 6:45-8:00am Islamabad 10:45-12:00pm Dili 11:45-1:00pm Sydney 1:45-3:00pm Suva (1 hour and 15 mins)	Session 1: Addressing Gender-Based Violence in the Formal Justice System – regional and international perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying gaps, barriers and solutions to achieve fair and effective protection of women and girls in the formal justice system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure victim's dignity in the legal-judicial process Provide effective protection measures to minimize repercussions and remove fear Provide reparation to rebuild lives post violence Q & A

Asia-Pacific Conference on the Promotion of Gender-Responsive Judicial Systems

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	<p>Moderator: Zarizana Abdul Aziz, Gender and Human Rights Lawyer and Adjunct Professor at George Washington University</p> <p>Panel Contributors: Hon. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Supreme Court of Pakistan; Shamina Ali, Coordinator, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and Chairperson, Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women; Tevita Seruilumi, Pacific Justice Sector Program; Genoveva Tisheva, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee Expert and Lawyer with Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation; Andy Yetriyani, Commissioner, National Commission for Eradication of Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan, Indonesia); Emily Morrison, Consultant, Sustainable Solutions Timor-Leste, UNDP Timor-Leste</p> <p>+Facilitator: Laura Arboleda Gutiérrez, Qualified lawyer (Colombia) and Master of Public Policy candidate, The London School of Economics and Political Science</p>
11:00-11:15am Manila 8:00-8:15am Islamabad 12:00-12:15pm Dili 1:00-1:15pm Sydney 3:00-3:15pm Suva	Wellness Break (15 mins)
PLENARY SESSION 2	
11:15am-12:30pm Manila 8:15-9:30am Islamabad 12:15-1:30pm Dili 1:15-2:30pm Sydney 3:15-4:30pm Suva (1 hour and 15 mins)	<p>Session 2: Good Practices in Increasing Confidence in the Formal Justice System – regional and international approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiatives implemented by judicial systems to increase access to justice, e.g. specialized GBV judges and prosecutors, mobile courts, fast-tracking, victim-centred approach and online testimony and hearings Capacity building of justice personnel – during COVID-19 and beyond (showcasing of ADB interactive e-module) Advocacy tools (presentation of video and illustrations) Q & A <p>Moderator: Hon. Dr. Robyn Layton AO QC, Former Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia and Adjunct Professor at University of South Australia</p> <p>Panel Contributors: Hon. Justice Ananda Mohan Bhattarai, Supreme Court of Nepal; Hon. Judge Robyn Tupman, District Court of New South Wales, Australia and Secretary Treasurer, The International Association of Women Judges; Hon. Judge Shazib Saeed, District & Sessions Judge/Director General, Case Management, Lahore High Court/Visiting Faculty, Punjab Judicial Academy, Pakistan; Rea Abada Chiongson, Senior Legal Adviser on Gender, International Development Law Organization; Samar Minallah Khan, Communications and Behaviour Change Specialist and International Filmmaker</p> <p>+Facilitator: Nikita Singh, Qualified lawyer (Australia) and Master of Public Policy candidate, The London School of Economics and Political Science</p>
12:30-1:30 pm Manila 9:30-10:30am Islamabad 1:30-2:30pm Dili 2:30-3:30pm Sydney 4:30-5:30pm Suva	Break (1 hour) (Dinner Break for Fiji participants – sponsored by ADB)



TAILORED SESSIONS – Concurrent Breakout Sessions 3A, 3B and 3C

(to be held in separate Zoom breakout rooms for virtual participants)

(to be held in separate conference rooms for Fiji participants)

1:30-2:30pm Manila
10:30-11:30am
Islamabad
2:30-3:30pm Dili
3:30-4:30pm Sydney
5:30-6:30pm Suva

(1 hour)

Session 3A: Concurrent Breakout Session for Judges [Closed session for judges; the session will be recorded for documentation purposes but will not be livestreamed or made available to the public to allow for open exchanges]

- Judges from Asia and the Pacific region and beyond will share experiences in adopting good practice measures applying gender perspectives in adjudicating GBV cases, as well as discuss specialized mechanisms, judicial tools and knowledge resources

Moderator: *Hon. Dr. Robyn Layton AO QC*, Former Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia and Adjunct Professor at University of South Australia

Panel Contributors: *Hon. Chief Justice Kamal Kumar*, Supreme Court of Fiji; *Hon. Judge Robyn Tupman*, District Court of New South Wales, Australia and Secretary Treasurer, The International Association of Women Judges; *Hon. Justice Vui Clarence Nelson*, Supreme Court of Samoa and Member, Committee on the Rights of the Child (Convention on the Rights of the Child); *Hon. Justice Hima Kohli*, Supreme Court of India

+Facilitator: *Maria Cecilia T. Sicangco*, Senior Legal Officer, ADB

Session 3B: Concurrent Breakout Session for Prosecutors [Closed session for prosecutors; the session will be recorded for documentation purposes but will not be livestreamed or made available to the public to allow for open exchanges]

- Prosecutors from the Asia and the Pacific region and beyond will discuss issues and challenges in investigating and handling violence against women and girls cases and share experiences in adopting good practice measures

Moderator: *Zarizana Abdul Aziz*, Gender and Human Rights Lawyer and Adjunct Professor at George Washington University

Panel Contributors: *H.E. Dr. Alfonso Lopez*, Prosecutor General, Timor-Leste; *[Christopher Pryde]*, Director of Public Prosecutions, Fiji – TBC; *Asiya Yasin*, Public Prosecutor, Punjab, Pakistan; *Shyamala Alagendra-Khan*, Gender Advisor, United Nations Sri Lanka Accountability Team, Former Prosecution Trial Lawyer, International Criminal Court, and Former Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions, Fiji; *Hon. Justice Sandi McDonald*, Supreme Court of South Australia and Former Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions

+Facilitator: *Lea Halberstein*, Juris Doctor (JD) candidate, Northeastern University School of Law

Session 3C: Concurrent Breakout Session for Victim/Survivor Advocates and Civil Society Organizations [open session]

- Participants will exchange experiences in adopting good practice measures applying gender perspectives and standards of practice and guidelines in violence against women and girls cases and discuss examples to improve the formal judicial system



	<p>Moderator: Kate Eastman AM SC, Human Rights Lawyer</p> <p>Panel Contributors: Nalini Singh, Executive Director, Fiji Women's Rights Movement; Bárbara de Oliveira, Partner, JU'S, Jurídico Social Consultoria, Timor-Leste; Catriona Martin, Pro Bono Director-Asia Pacific, DLA Piper; Liliwaimanu Vuiyasawa, Gender and Child Care Consultant, Gender Economic Inclusion Group, International Finance Corporation; Henry Cornwell, Counsel, ADB; Asmita Basu, Law, Gender and Human Rights Specialist</p> <p>+Facilitator: <i>Nelania Sarmiento, Communications and Liaison Officer (Consultant), ADB</i></p>
2:30-2:45pm Manila 11:30-11:45am Islamabad 3:30-3:45pm Dili 4:30-4:45pm Sydney 6:30-6:45pm Suva	Wellness Break (15 mins)
CONCLUDING SESSION	
2:45-3:00pm Manila 11:45am-12:00pm Islamabad 3:45-4:00pm Dili 4:45-5:00pm Sydney 6:45-7:00pm Suva	<p>Session 4: Concluding Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back on breakout sessions from rapporteurs • Q & A