Press Release

The African Union Commission, UNDP, and Partners Validate a Regional Harmonized and Standardized Data Collection Toolkit on Violence Against Women and Girls

The UNDP, in partnership with the African Union Commission's Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate and a consortium bringing together the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), the Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS and Health Service Organizations (EANNASO), and the Population Council Kenya, under the framework of the Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme, this week launched a three (3) day regional validation workshop in Nairobi, Kenya from 3 - 5 October 2022 with key stakeholders to discuss and validate the Harmonized and Standardized Data Collection Toolkit on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The meeting has attracted more than 30 delegates from relevant key stakeholders, including the AUC Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Member States, National Ministries of Gender and Statistics Offices, Regional and National Civil Society Organizations, and UN Agencies.

The overall objective of the workshop is to provide the stakeholders the opportunity to discuss, assess and evaluate the content and structure of the data collection toolkit whilst also giving them the chance to share their regional and national experience and knowledge to improve the quality of the Toolkit.

There are notable improvements in the adoption of human rights instruments and policies on ending VAWG both at the national and regional levels by the Member States. However, there is a lot to be done to effectively translate laws and policies into action and tangible benefits. Despite the importance of access to and use of VAWG data to inform policies and

programmes, not more than 5% of African countries can generate and use vital statistics from their civil registration systems or routine administrative records related to VAWG and harmful practices (HP).

The Data Collection Toolkit being validated was greatly informed by the extensive capacity needs assessment surveys that explored methodologies, approaches, and publicly available data collection tools for capturing data on VAWG and HP. The needs assessment surveys the need to develop a harmonized and standardized data collection toolkit to guide users on indicators and methodologies for collecting data on VAWG and HP. The toolkit is expected to strengthen the capacity of regional partners to ensure that relevant harmonized and standardized data collection tools are produced and utilized to inform policy, evidence-based decision-making, and advocacy.

"This workshop is a culmination of several months of extensive work, and the meeting is very important in providing quality assurance to the final content of the toolkit," said Dr. Caroline Kabiru, a Senior Researcher and representative of the APHRC consortium.

Ms. Odette Kabaya, the Regional Gender Advisor and Team Leader - GEWE - UNDP RSCA, in her opening remark, said that "The value addition of the Toolkit is to bring together relevant approaches, methodologies, and indicators in One Stop Centre, to ease their access and utilization. It also generates comparable data on VAWG, HP, and SRH&RR through putting in place harmonized and standardized data collection. The toolkit also comprehensively addresses a range of diverse indicators, for example social norms, care work, masculinity, online violence, migration, people with disabilities, etc".

"To address the challenges related to collection, generation, and utilization of data, it is critical we consider the following key takeaways; putting in place effective coordination mechanisms, ensuring relevant data is generated, collected, and utilized," noted Ms. Prudence Ngwenya, the Acting Director, Women, Gender and Youth Directorate, African Union Commission, who also officially opened the workshop. Ngwenya reiterated the inclusiveness of the process by leaving no one behind, having the right human and financial resources, and ensuring collective ownership of the process related to data collection, generation, and utilization of data.