

Silence to Strength

Supporting Survivors of Gender-Based Violence



25 November 2025, 2:00–3:30 p.m. (GMT+8)

Auditoriums 1–3, ADB Headquarters and Zoom

Background

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (IDEVAW) is commemorated annually on 25 November, the first day of the global campaign of 16 days of activism against violence against women. Since 1991, the campaign has contributed to the groundswell that facilitated the recognition that violence against women is a violation of human rights.

Violence against women remains a serious issue across the Asia-Pacific region. The impact on the lives of victim-survivors is grave. Their families and communities are also affected, decreasing productivity and placing economic burden on health, social, and justice services, and ultimately, development and progress. Violence against women is rooted in deeply entrenched attitudes, gender social norms, and unequal power relations that promote and excuse the violence. The numbers are staggering—in Southeast Asia, 33% of ever partnered women and up to 68% of women in the Pacific have experienced violence at the hands of their partners while up to 75% of women in the Asia and Pacific region have experienced sexual harassment.¹ Across Asia, studies show that 30%–40% of women suffer sexual harassment at work. ADB Strategy 2030 Midterm Review's Pillar on Resilience and Empowerment recognizes that intersecting crises have affected women and girls disproportionately and that there are alarming regional trends including higher rates of gender-based violence.

While efforts to address and prevent violence against women have increased over the years in the region, prevalence rates remain high, and support services have had to diversify their approach to find pathways for initial support and economic empowerment of survivors and their families. Legislative changes also offer more protection for survivors of violence, but implementation gaps remain. In addition, there have been shifts in the nature and trends of violence against women, including increasing rates of coercive control and higher incidence involving younger offenders. Support services and agencies responding to violence against women have also had to keep abreast of these changing dynamics while trying to maintain and mobilize sufficient resources to provide required services with a survivor-centered approach.

Frontline services have played a pivotal role in raising and amplifying awareness not only on the elements of violence against women but also on the importance of tailored crisis and recovery responses for survivors. Support services and referral pathways remain a key partner for ADB as they provide a critical service not just for project-affected communities and partner government agencies but also for project management units and contractors. For IDEVAW 2025, experts from the region will discuss the work of key support services and how they engage with survivors using a survivor-centered approach. The panel discussion will explore how resources are mobilized and what a survivor-centered approach could mean for ADB operations.

Objectives

To commemorate IDEVAW 2025, this event aims to:

- Strengthen understanding of the dynamics of violence against women and the challenges in the provision of survivor support.
- Identify models of survivor-centered approach support and innovative approaches towards empowerment.
- Build understanding of opportunities for embedding a survivor-centered approach through the private sector
- Build understanding and awareness of the role of internal justice systems in the support for survivors

¹ UN Women, 2025. Facts and Figures | UN Women – Asia-Pacific.



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1:30–2:00 p.m.

Registration

2:00–2:05 p.m.

Introduction and Welcome:

Samantha Hung, Director, Gender Equality, ADB

2:05–2:10 p.m.

Opening Remarks:

Yevgeniy Zhukov, Director General, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department, ADB

2:10–2:50 p.m.

Moderated Panel

Moderator: Samantha Hung, Director, Gender Equality, ADB

Panelists:

- *Diana Camacho-Mercado, Assistant Secretary, Department of Budget and Management, Philippines*
- *Jaeneen Cunningham, Executive Director, Safe Haven Community Australia*
- *Evonne Kennedy, Executive Director, Business Coalition for Women, Papua New Guinea (PNG), and Board Member of Bel Isi PNG*
- *Angel Aquino, Actress for Film and TV, and Survivor and Advocate against Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence, Philippines*
- *Davide Marzano, Director, Office of Professional Ethics and Conduct, ADB*

2:50–3:20 p.m.

Q & A

3:20–3:25 p.m.

Illustrated Event Highlights by Tofu Creatives

3:25–3:30 p.m.

Closing Remarks:

Samantha Hung, Director, Gender Equality, ADB