



17 April 2014 – “A more comprehensive and targeted response to address acts of violence against women and girls is needed” [says](#) the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Rashida Manjoo.

In 2010 the UK declared violence against women a priority and in 2010 developed a strategy to directly address the problem. However the independent expert charged by the UN Human Rights Council to monitor, report and advise on violence against women, its causes and consequences notes that, “despite many positive developments, violence against women remains a pervasive challenge throughout the United Kingdom”.

The largest challenge faced by the UK today in this field is in addressing the specific needs of survivors of violence and the expert urged the government to consider the best interests of all women and girls. It is estimated that in the course of last year 1.2 million women were victims of domestic abuse and over 400,000 women were victims of sexual violence. Women’s organizations in the UK informed the Special Rapporteur that ethnic minority and migrant women experience a disproportionate rate of domestic homicide, and that women of Asian origin are up to three times more likely to commit suicide than other women as a result of violence.

The current austerity measures are having a disproportionate impact, not only in the specific provision of violence against women services, but more generally, on other cross-cutting areas

affecting women, such as poverty and unemployment, which are contributory factors to violence against women and girls. “It is important to recognize that the reduction in the number and quality of specialized services for women does impact health and safety needs of women and children, and further restricts them when considering leaving an abusive home, thus putting them at a heightened risk of re-victimization,” stressed the UN expert.

Women are most at risk of being killed by people they know a [2012 homicide report found](#) .

Women

[account for 70% of the victims](#)

of homicides stemming from domestic violence. In an effort to increase protection, UK officials have piloted and completed the evaluation of a series of initiatives, including Domestic Violence Protection Orders, which enable the police and magistrates to exclude a perpetrator from the home for up to 28 days.

Violence against women remains a grave global problem. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, rape is widespread and used as a weapon of war, sexual violence has caused heated confrontations in India, in Europe domestic violence is still all too common and this occurs in all parts of the world. To protect women and to raise awareness UNRIC has launched a campaign in 2011 titled [Say NO to Violence Against Women](#) . The campaign uses words and images to not only raise awareness, but as a call to action for everyone.