
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MELANESIA AND EAST TIMOR

BUILDING ON GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROMISING APPROACHES

2008



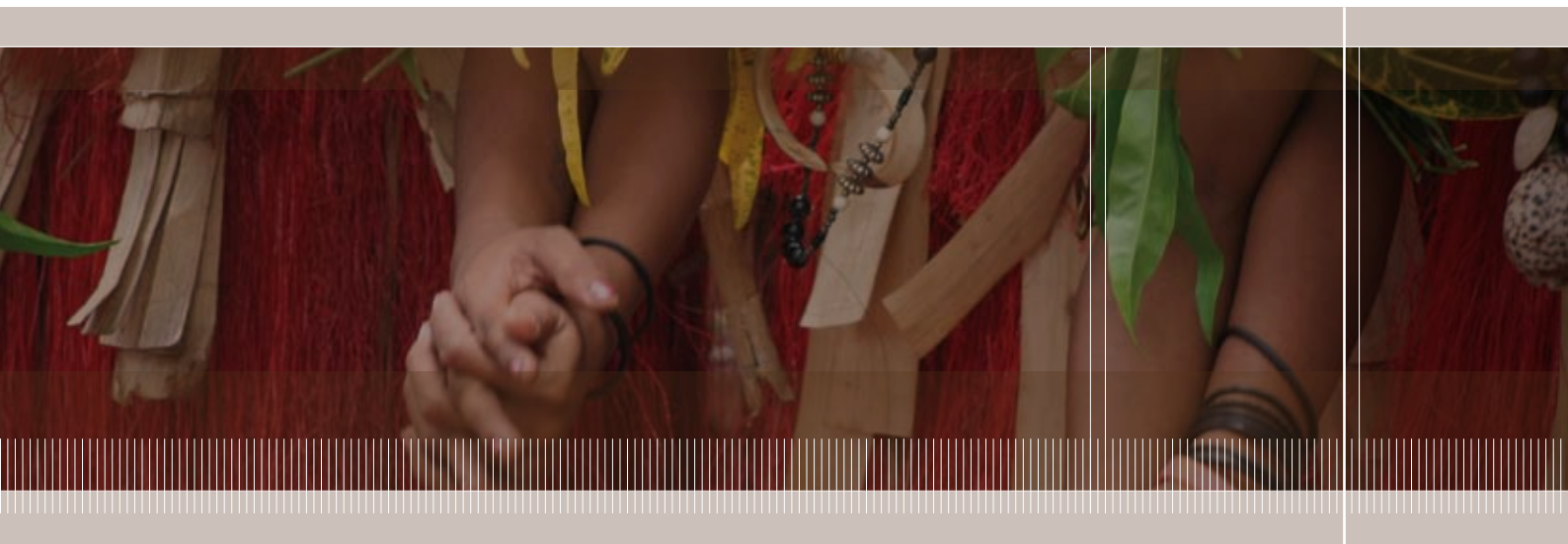
Australian Government

AusAID
Office of Development Effectiveness

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MELANESIA AND EAST TIMOR

BUILDING ON GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROMISING APPROACHES

2008



© Commonwealth of Australia (2008).

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the Commonwealth. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Commonwealth Copyright Administration, Attorney General's Department, Robert Garran Offices, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600 or posted at <http://www.ag.gov.au/cca>

ISBN 978-1-921285-54-7

For further information contact:
Office of Development Effectiveness
AusAID
GPO Box 887
Canberra ACT 2601
Phone +61 2 6206 4000
Facsimile +61 2 6206 4880
Internet www.ausaid.gov.au
www.ode.ausaid.gov.au

Disclaimer

The views in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Office of Development Effectiveness.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	v
Acronyms and abbreviations	vi
Executive summary	vii
Chapter 1: Background to the report	I
Chapter 2: A framework for understanding violence against women and girls	4
2.1 Scope, magnitude, consequences and causes of violence against women	4
2.2 Interventions to prevent and respond to violence against women	6
Chapter 3: What is known about violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor?	8
3.1 Previous studies on violence against women	8
3.2 Common forms of violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor	11
3.3 Women's responses to violence	14
3.4 Challenges to addressing violence against women	16
Chapter 4: An integrated approach to addressing violence against women	21
4.1 Why is an integrated approach important?	21
4.2 Barriers to achieving an integrated approach to violence against women	21
4.3 Promising practices in integrated approaches to violence against women	24
4.4 Overarching recommendations	28
Chapter 5: Improving women's access to justice	30
5.1 Why is access to justice important?	30
5.2 Barriers faced by women in accessing justice	30
5.3 Promising practices in increasing women's access to justice	33
5.4 Recommendations for increasing women's access to justice	41



Chapter 6: Support for survivors	43
6.1 Why are support services important?	43
6.2 Barriers faced by women and girls seeking support services	44
6.3 Promising practices in supporting survivors of violence	46
6.4 New opportunities for increasing access to support	50
6.5 Recommendations for improving support services	52
Chapter 7: Prevention of violence	54
7.1 Why is prevention important?	54
7.2 Barriers to prevention	54
7.3 Promising practices in violence prevention	55
7.4 New opportunities for violence prevention	62
7.5 Recommendations for strengthening violence prevention efforts	68
Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations	70
8.1 Recommendations	70
8.2 Recommendations for Australia	71
8.3 Recommendations for all stakeholders	73
8.4 Recommendations for increasing women's access to justice	74
8.5 Recommendations for improving support services	75
8.6 Recommendations for strengthening violence prevention efforts	76
Annexes	
Annex 1: Situation of women in Melanesia and East Timor: A comparative analysis	80
Annex 2: Organisations consulted	86
Annex 3: Advisory group members	91
Annex 4: Members of the research team	93
Annex 5: References	94
Country supplements	
Papua New Guinea	103
Solomon Islands	129
Fiji	149
Vanuatu	169
East Timor	189

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written by Mary Ellsberg, Senior Adviser, Gender Violence and Human Rights, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health; Christine Bradley, independent consultant; Andrew Egan, Evaluation Director, and Amy Haddad, Evaluation Officer, both of the Australian Agency for International Development's Office of Development Effectiveness. The four authors carried out the field work and data collection, analysis and interpretation with the help of the local researchers listed in Annex 3. Monique Widyono assisted with research and in writing the report. Jui Shah and Teri Gilleland Scott assisted with editing and proofreading. The authors received helpful comments on drafts from: Sally Moyle, AusAID Gender Advisor; Barbara O'Dwyer, AusAID Gender Thematic Group; Imrana Jalal, Human Rights Adviser, Regional Rights Resource Team; Andrew Morrison, Lead Economist, Gender and Development, World Bank; the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and the Vanuatu Women's Centre. The authors gratefully acknowledge the hundreds of individuals and organisations who shared their experiences and knowledge, in particular, the members of the technical advisory groups in each country covered (Annex 3). The views expressed in this report reflect those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect those of the Australian Government.



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMKV	Association of Men Against Violence (Asosiasaun Mane Kontra Violensia), East Timor
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CAVAW	Committee Against Violence Against Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
FOKUPERS	East Timorese Women's Communication Forum (Forum Komunikasi Untuk Perempuan Loro Sae)
FSC	Family Support Centre
FSVAC	Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee, Papua New Guinea
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
FWRM	Fiji Women's Rights Movement
ICRAF	Individual Community Rights Advocacy Forum, Papua New Guinea
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
JSMP	Judicial System Monitoring Program, East Timor
KWP	Kup Women for Peace, Papua New Guinea
LRC	Law Reform Commission
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
ODE	Office of Development Effectiveness, AusAID
OPE	Office for the Promotion of Equality, East Timor
PATH	Program for Appropriate Technology in Health
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRADET	Psychosocial Recovery and Development in East Timor
RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team
SEPI	Office of the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality, East Timor
STI	sexually transmitted infection
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNTF	United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
VBMSI	Vois Blong Mere Solomon Islands (Voice of the Women)
VWC	Vanuatu Women's Centre
WHO	World Health Organization
WSB	Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group, Vanuatu

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Violence against women is a serious global problem, affecting all countries of the world, including Australia. It has significant human rights dimensions, causing trauma to women, families and communities. It is both a symptom and a cause of gender inequality and discrimination. Violence against women is a major barrier to development in Melanesia and East Timor. A more comprehensive and effective response to violence against women is urgently required if the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved in Melanesia and East Timor.

Violence against women increases health care, social service, policing and justice system costs and results in loss of productivity from both paid and un-paid work. A World Bank report on gender-based violence suggests that lost wages due to family violence amounted to 2.0% of GDP in Chile and 1.6% in Nicaragua, while in 2003, the Colombian national government spent 0.6% of its total budget on services to survivors of family violence. Estimates suggest that domestic violence cost Australia \$8.1 billion in 2002-03. In Melanesia and East Timor a high incidence of violence against women, combined with the culture of fear it generates, retards women's participation in political, social and economic life.

The Office of Development Effectiveness has assessed the effectiveness of current approaches to addressing violence against women and girls in five of Australia's close partner countries: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and East Timor. More than 700 individuals and representatives of government, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and international organisations were consulted during a participatory assessment. The resulting package of reports is grounded in the perspectives and hopes of a broad spectrum of Melanesian and East Timorese society. The package comprises this regional report and five country specific reports, with the latter containing more specific recommendations for each country. This regional report seeks to: (i) articulate a framework for action that is relevant for all actors working to address violence against women across the region; and (ii) identify 'promising practices' that could guide efforts to scale up efforts to address violence against women.

What we know about violence against women in the region

Violence against women is severe and pervasive in Melanesia and East Timor. However, there is little published, quantitative research on violence against women in the region. This study confirms that the two most common forms of violence against women in these countries are consistent with global trends: (i) physical, psychological and economic violence against women by intimate partners and (ii) all forms of sexual violence perpetrated by intimate partners or others.



Women's low status in the region is a major obstacle to reducing violence against them. This low status is reinforced by some common customary practices and attitudes that put women at risk of violence. These practices, alongside economic factors, make it difficult, and often impossible, for women to protect themselves from violence. The three most important are:

- > *Bride-price* was cited in all countries except Fiji as the biggest factor (along with economic dependence) in perpetuating violence by men against their wives as it gives women the status of "property".
- > *Economic dependence* disempowers women in all of the study countries. Reliance on a male breadwinner and lack of control over economic resources is a major deterrent for women to complain about or escape from violence.
- > *Compensation and reconciliation* to maintain peace between groups and their (male) leaders is often prioritised over women's interests in the traditional cultures of Melanesia and East Timor. The practice of compensating women's husbands, fathers or tribal group creates a disincentive for addressing violence against women.

A framework for action

International evidence¹ indicates that efforts to reduce violence against women must be long-term, and focused on addressing structural inequalities together with providing victim support and access to justice. Multisectoral solutions are required, as isolated interventions are largely ineffective. This report assesses efforts to date in the region against such a multisectoral framework for action. The framework is based on three main strategies that have proven successful in other countries in reducing violence against women.

1. **Increasing women's access to justice** by passing and implementing laws and policies that discourage violence and impose consequences on offenders; provide women with the means to protect themselves and their children from violence and the information necessary to access their rights; and ensure women are treated humanely and fairly by justice-system personnel.

Across the region, legal systems lack resources, causing significant backlogs, and are facing enormous logistical difficulties in providing services to rural communities. There is limited training for police and specific sexual offences units are under resourced. Many rural women rely on informal or custom-based systems but feel that these systems do not guarantee protection. Low rates of education and literacy, and barriers of language and mobility, mean many women do not know about their rights or the laws, where they do exist, intended for their protection.

¹ Office of Development Effectiveness, *Violence Against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: A Review of International Lessons* (2007).

However, some efforts have led to improvements in women's access to justice in the region. This has included strategies for improving overall gender equality in the sector in PNG and boosting the number of women on village courts, preparing comprehensive domestic violence legislation in East Timor and issuance of Domestic Violence Protection Orders in Vanuatu. In general, however, the formal and traditional justice systems in the five countries still have a long way to go in providing justice and protection for women.

2. **Increasing women's access to support services** including psychological, medical and legal support, and safe havens, as well as increasing support to organisations that provide these services.

As for the justice sector, existing services for supporting survivors of violence are limited, concentrated in urban areas and out of reach for rural women, who make up the majority of the population. Across the region, there is a huge unmet need for emergency and temporary shelter for abused women. Services are almost exclusively provided by NGOs and faith-based groups.

The quality of care women survivors receive is variable. Many support programs do not have trained counsellors. There is a tendency to fall back to traditional ideas of women's roles, encouraging forgiveness and acceptance and victim-blaming exhortations to be a "better wife".

3. **Prevention of violence** through coordinated efforts at all levels aimed at raising awareness; changing community attitudes about violence; and increasing women's status in society.

The greatest obstacle to eliminating violence against women is the belief, commonly held throughout Melanesia and East Timor, that it is justified. Women are often considered to be "at fault" and, therefore, deserving of the violence. A second obstacle is the perception that violence is a problem to be addressed by women only, and that others do not have a role to play. Violence is often seen as a private, family matter in which outsiders should not intervene.

Consistent with global trends, the longer-term prevention strategy has received less attention across the region compared with efforts to improve women's access to justice and services.

Promising practices

Despite major obstacles to progressing these strategies, several examples of promising practices were identified during the study. These could support a scaled up response. Some examples are:

- > **The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC)** was established in 1984 to counter the culture of silence surrounding violence against women. It provides crisis counselling and legal, medical, and other practical support services for women and children



who experience violence. The FWCC also provides technical support for other organisations working in the Pacific region, such as the Vanuatu Women's Centre.

- > **The Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC)** is closely supported by the FWCC. The VWC has set up a network of community-level Committees against Violence against Women in all six provinces of Vanuatu. These committees are staffed by volunteers who receive basic training in legal literacy and counselling to provide support to women who are suffering domestic abuse or sexual assault. They coordinate closely with local authorities, such as police, health providers, and chiefs. Importantly, the committees have been instrumental in extending the reach of services to rural women – a key challenge for the region as a whole.
- > In Papua New Guinea, the **Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee (FSVAC)** plays a coordination and advocacy role across non-government and faith-based groups. The Government of PNG Department of Community Development has just adopted a new strategy for the FSVAC. This is a real achievement. To date, participation from government agencies in FSVAC has been weak or absent.
- > In East Timor a local NGO, **Association of Men Against Violence (Asosiasaun Mane Kontra Violensia, AMKV)**, is undertaking critical attitudinal and behaviour change interventions targeting men. Men are too often neglected as partners in efforts to prevent violence against women. Additional support from donors would help strengthen AMKV and pave the way for AMKV to share its innovative approaches across the region.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that much progress has been made in the last 15 years in addressing violence against women. Thanks largely to the efforts of women's rights activists, all partner governments have made a public commitment to ending violence against women. However, there remains an enormous gap between public discourse and reality.

International donors have made important contributions to ongoing efforts, but support is poorly coordinated—between donors, and even among programs within the same agencies. To maximise the impact of development assistance, it is crucial to develop broad strategies involving a greatly increased and sustained contribution of financial resources, but also a commitment to discuss gender equality and violence against women in high level, policy dialogue with partner governments.

Recommendations

These conclusions, and the platform of 'promising practices' evident in the region, generate a series of recommendations for implementing the framework of action in each country. The recommendations emerged from the participatory approach used in this evaluation. They represent a proposed action plan for *all* actors. Partner

country governments will need to take the lead in mounting an effective response to violence against women. NGOs and civil society actors in each country have a major contribution to play. And donors need to significantly increase, and sustain over time, their levels of support.

Recommendations to **increase women's access to justice** focus on supporting national-level legal reforms alongside an integrated, long-term commitment to strengthen the response of the police and formal justice system. Also important are coordinated efforts to strengthen the capacity of community-based systems to deliver women justice, and increase support for organisations providing women's legal literacy and human-rights training.

Recommendations for **improving support services** focus on providing long-term support and resources for organisations that provide support services. Their capacity needs building to improve the quality of services, matched with investment in integrated models of service delivery. Efforts to extend access to services for women outside urban areas and to increase support for informal, community-based networks are critical.

Violence prevention recommendations stress the need to support integrated initiatives that have a strong emphasis on identifying and transforming gender norms. Partnerships with men are crucial and require strengthening. Strategic opportunities for integrating interventions to address violence against women into different operational areas should be identified.

These recommendations should be seen as a starting point, rather than the end point, of efforts to eliminate violence against women in the region. Local groups consisting of eminent government and non-government representatives in each country are developing specific plans in each country to implement these recommendations.

In addition to supporting these local plans, the report makes some specific recommendations for Australia. These include:

- > Integrating approaches to gender equality across all its interventions, with a commitment to seize opportunities to progress components of the framework of action.
- > Stepping up its high-level policy dialogue on violence against women with partner governments.
- > Developing broad strategies involving a greatly increased and sustained contribution of financial resources.
- > Encouraging greater investment in research on violence against women.



CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

In 2007, the Australian Agency for International Development's (AusAID) Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) argued that violence against women is a major barrier to development in Melanesia and East Timor, with serious effects on the health and welfare of the women experiencing violence, as well as their families, communities, and countries. ODE suggested that the Australian aid program could do more to assist partner countries address violence against women.² Following this initial report, ODE commissioned a study to assess the effectiveness of current approaches to addressing violence against women and girls in five countries: Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands Vanuatu and East Timor.

The goal was to contribute to the evidence base for effective interventions in the area of violence against women³ through a participatory assessment of what has been achieved in the region. An international evaluation team carried out the assessment. The team designed a multistage participatory methodology to identify lessons learned and examples of promising interventions that could be scaled up or applied in other countries. The study focused as much as possible on women's own experience of violence, and what protection and prevention does or does not help. More than 700 individuals and representatives of government, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and international organisations were consulted.

1.1 Methodology

With few exceptions, the interventions and programs included in this study have not been systematically evaluated for effectiveness. Therefore, it is difficult to identify best-practice models for addressing violence against women. Rather, several strong examples of 'promising' practices in the region are featured. Many are small, local efforts needing support to scale up and expand their reach. Practices were sought that:

- > address the need to transform harmful gender norms, attitudes and practices which underlie violence against women
- > have shown some indication of success or effectiveness in addressing violence against women—usually in the areas of strengthening access to justice, strengthening other services for survivors, and awareness-raising
- > women living with, or affected by, violence identified as helpful in responding to their needs.

The study also details a number of practices that cannot yet be listed as promising, either because they are too new or because not enough information is available about their impact in the community. These are highlighted in this report as 'interesting

² Office of Development Effectiveness, *Violence Against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: A Review of International Lessons* (2007).

³ In this report, the terms *violence against women* also includes violence against girls.



practices' that are worth following up, based on the evaluators' experiences with proven effective models in other parts of the world.

Finally, strategies that have been used elsewhere effectively, and that the team felt might be usefully adapted in Melanesia and East Timor, are identified as 'opportunities' for future intervention.

These steps formed the study's methodology:

1. **Document review** of more than 100 policy briefs, reports and studies on violence against women in the region, which provided a preliminary analysis of current and past work and international and regional lessons learned.
2. **Site visits** by the evaluation team of four to nine days were carried out in each country during September and October 2007. Helped by local researchers, the team carried out:
 - > **Semi-structured interviews** with key individuals, including policymakers, civil society leaders, women's groups, government officials, service providers, researchers and survivors who have used services, which provided valuable insight into how violence against woman is addressed.
 - > **Focus group discussions** with a diverse range of social actors, such as police officers, church members, community men and women and magistrates. The evaluation team used participatory techniques, including Venn mapping, free listing, timelines and open-ended stories to explore community attitudes toward violence against women and the options available to respond, at the community level and more broadly.⁴
 - > **Local researcher training.** The evaluation team trained local researchers to use participatory interviewing techniques and carry out additional interviews and focus group discussions in rural areas. In each interview or focus group discussion facilitated by either an international or local researcher, there was also at least one dedicated note-taker. Notes and reports from each interview were compiled, with care taken to record verbatim quotes as much as possible.
3. A **local advisory group** was set up in each country, including several knowledgeable, highly respected and well-placed women and men. The groups reviewed preliminary findings, formulated recommendations (with the international team) and identified possible next steps.⁵ Group members will also play a critical role in using the evaluation results to galvanise action in their respective countries and throughout the region.

⁴ These techniques are described at length in Ellsberg and Heise 2005, and are available online: www.path.org/publications/details.php?i=1524

⁵ Annex 3 lists advisory group members.

4. The **selection of promising practices** to be reviewed was made in collaboration with AusAID's program staff, local activists, country advisory groups and local researchers. In all, more than 700 individuals participated, either through personal interviews, focus group discussions, or as members of local advisory groups.⁶
5. **Preliminary findings** were prepared by the international team based on the reports from the site visits and local researchers. Findings were presented during a workshop in Port Moresby in March 2008, which involved the local researchers, AusAID representatives and advisory group representatives from all five countries.
6. **Major lessons learned and recommendations** for future development assistance in the field were developed by local advisory group members through a participatory, consensus-building process led by the international team during the Port Moresby workshop.
7. **Final documents** were reviewed by local advisory group members in each country, to ensure recommendations were faithful to what was agreed upon.

The result of this lengthy, complex process is a package of reports grounded in the perspectives and hopes of a broad spectrum of Melanesian and East Timorese society. This overall report outlines a framework for guiding cooperative action to address violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor. It is supported by five, brief, country-specific reports which permit a nuanced approach to proposed solutions and translate the framework into concrete, actionable proposals tailored to each country.

This package of reports is not a situational analysis, nor a comprehensive listing of all inspiring work being done in the region on violence against women. The short time frame for this evaluation was not sufficient to allow for an exhaustive review in every country. These reports therefore only include programs visited by at least one project team member.

The challenge of synthesising the enormous quantity of information gathered from all countries during this process—into relatively concise, policy-oriented briefs—required a focus more on common themes and solutions than the rich diversity of experiences encountered.

The team hopes that the package of reports and process of dialogue this project has generated will provide a blueprint for strengthening responses to violence against women in the region that is accurate, relevant and useful—for international donor agencies, government organisations, NGOs, community members, local decision-makers, activists and most importantly, the women who are affected by violence.

Note: Direct quotes from the research are included in this report in italics.

⁶ Annex 2 lists organisations consulted.



CHAPTER 2: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

During the last decade, violence against women and girls—also referred to as violence against women and gender-based violence—has gained international recognition as a grave social and human rights concern affecting virtually all societies around the world. Epidemiological research has demonstrated that this violence is a major cause of ill health amongst women and girls. Its impact can be seen directly, through death and disability due to injuries, and indirectly, through increased vulnerability to physical and mental health problems. Violence and the fear of violence severely limit women's contribution to social and economic development, thereby hindering the achievement of important national and international development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and improving maternal and child health.

2.1 Scope, magnitude, consequences and causes of violence against women

Violence against women includes, but is not limited to:

- > **physical violence**, such as slapping, kicking, hitting or use of weapons
- > **emotional abuse**, such as systematic humiliation, controlling behaviour, degrading treatment, insults and threats
- > **sexual violence**, including coerced sex or being forced into sexual activities considered degrading or humiliating
- > **economic abuse**, such as restricting access to financial or other resources with the purpose of controlling or subjugating a person.

Both men and women can be victims or perpetrators of violence, but the characteristics of violence commonly committed against women and men differ. Women are more likely to be physically assaulted or murdered by someone they know—often a family member or intimate partner. They are also at much greater risk of being sexually assaulted or exploited, in childhood, adolescence or adulthood. Men are the main perpetrators of violence against men as well as against women.

Prevalence estimates for intimate partner violence vary widely among countries and sometimes even between studies in the same countries. A study of 10 countries—the *Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women*—carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO), found between 13 and 62 per cent of women have experienced physical violence by a partner over the course of their lifetime, and between 3 and 29 per cent of women reported violence within the

previous 12 months (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen et al. 2006). Internationally, 8 to 26 per cent of women and girls report having been sexually abused as children or adults. An estimated one of every three women globally is beaten, raped or otherwise abused during her lifetime (Heise, Ellsberg et al. 1999). A recent study, for example, found that in South Africa a woman is murdered by an intimate partner every six hours (Mathews, Abrahams et al. 2004). Women are also subjected to different types of violence throughout their lives.

Violence against women has serious consequences for women's health and wellbeing, ranging from fatal outcomes (such as homicide, suicide and AIDS-related deaths) to non-fatal outcomes (such as physical injuries, chronic pain syndrome, gastrointestinal disorders, gynaecological problems, unwanted pregnancy, miscarriage, low birth-weight of children and sexual dysfunction). Sexual abuse in childhood and adolescence is also associated with higher risk of subsequent victimisation, early sexual activity, substance abuse and multiple sexual partners. Researchers have documented negative outcomes among children of women who experience violence, including increased levels of child mortality and emotional and behavioural problems (WHO 2002; Ellsberg, Jansen et al. 2008).

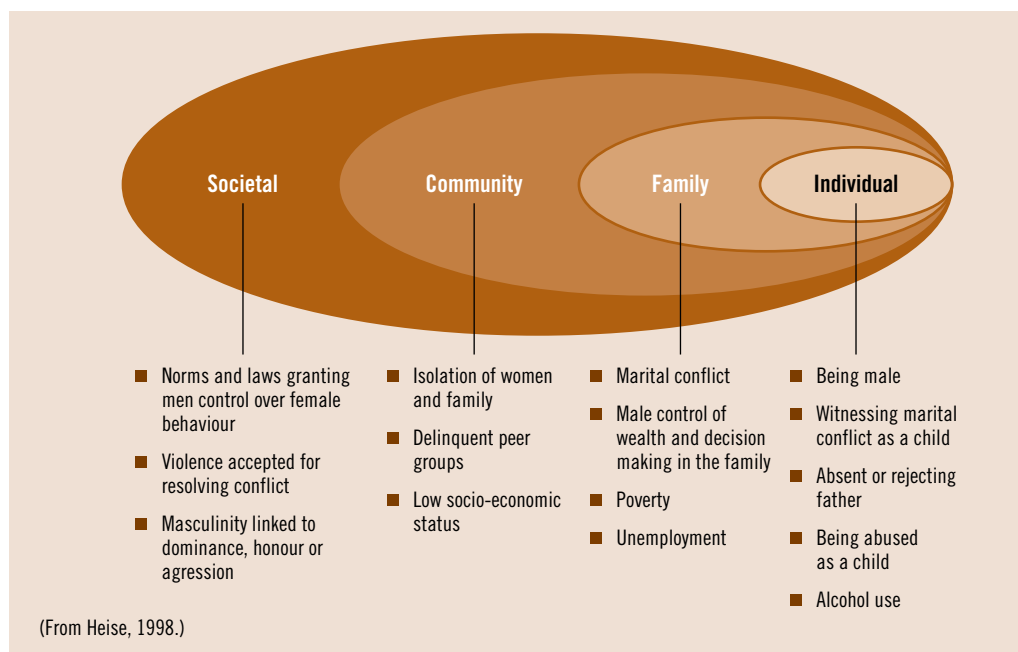
The link between violence against women and HIV infection is well established. Women who have experienced physical and sexual violence have higher rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The fear of violence also prevents many from negotiating safe sexual practices (e.g. condom use) and seeking treatment for STIs or other injury (e.g. genital trauma). (Maman, Campbell et al. 2000)

Violence against women causes significant economic costs—lower worker productivity and income, disability, lost years of life and lower rates of accumulation of human and social capital. This has intergenerational impacts: children miss out on the better outcomes and lower household poverty that result from increases in women's productivity and earnings. It also constrains poverty reduction efforts and generates other forms of violence now and in the future. (Morrison, Orlando 2004; Morrison, Ellsberg et al. 2007)

Violence against women is complex and shaped by forces operating at individual, relationship, community and society levels. Key risk factors include witnessing or suffering abuse as a child, exposure to violence as a child, male control of household decision-making and wealth, cultural norms supporting violence as a way of resolving conflicts, cultural norms supporting male dominance over women, low educational levels of men and women, and policies and laws that discriminate against women. Male abuse of alcohol is an important trigger. Figure 2.1 presents an ecological framework used by WHO and others to show risk factors for violence at different levels.



FIGURE 2.1 AN ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLAINING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



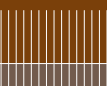
2.2 Interventions to prevent and respond to violence against women

Because violence against women is multicausal and multidimensional, interventions to prevent and respond to the issue must also take place on multiple levels. A World Bank review of global best practices concluded that multisectoral solutions are a critical part of any effective strategy addressing violence against women. Such strategies must improve coordination between sector-specific approaches, civil-society initiatives and government institutions. They must also take into account the need for change in all layers of the ecological framework—from national laws, policies and institutions, to community-level norms and support networks—and households and individual attitudes and behaviours (Bott, Morrison et al. 2004; Morrison, Ellsberg et al. 2007).

This study focused on three main strategies used throughout the world to reduce violence against women:

1. **Increasing women's access to justice** by passing and implementing laws and policies that discourage violence and impose consequences on offenders; providing women with the means to protect themselves and children from violence through access to restraining orders, divorce and child maintenance; and ensuring humane, fair treatment by justice-system personnel (including judges, police and forensic doctors). In Melanesia and East Timor, where parallel systems of justice operate, women need to have their rights upheld through both formal and traditional systems, and have access to the information necessary to exercise their rights effectively.

2. **Increasing women's access to support services**, such as psychological, medical, and legal support, as well as safe haven. The level of support for survivors of violence provided by government institutions, NGOs, women's rights groups, faith-based organisations and community-based organisations, also needs to be increased.
3. **Prevention of violence** by coordinating efforts to raise awareness; changing community attitudes about violence; and increasing women's status in society through political, social and economic empowerment. Preventing violence against women involves dialogue between all sectors of society at national, regional, and community levels. Prevention must also include awareness campaigns, advocacy and ongoing community-level activities.



CHAPTER 3: WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MELANESIA AND EAST TIMOR?

3.1 Previous studies on violence against women

There is little published, quantitative research on violence against women in the region. Studies conducted in East Timor, Fiji and PNG have used different methodologies and definitions, making findings difficult to compare. It is hard to know, for example, to what degree the findings of national studies conducted long ago in Fiji (1999) and in PNG (1982–85 and 1994) are still relevant.

Violence against women is difficult to research accurately because it is a sensitive and often shameful topic for survivors to discuss, and without strict standards of privacy and confidentiality, female respondents could be subjected to reprisals. For these and other reasons, WHO has produced a manual establishing ethical guidelines for researching violence against women and descriptions of appropriate quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Ellsberg and Heise 2005). These methods were used by WHO for its *Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women* in more than ten countries (WHO 2005). This approach allows cross-country comparisons, which help build understanding of the factors relating to violence. It also provides a baseline for tracking future trends and the impact of interventions. Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are carrying out national studies using the WHO methodology.

Table 3.1 presents results from existing studies on violence against women in the region (records from police and service agencies are not included). Because the number of women who report violence is generally only a small proportion of those suffering violence, these data are not a reliable estimate of the extent of violence (Ellsberg and Heise 2005). Variations in reporting rates are more likely to reflect changes in agency practice than changes in the prevalence of violence.

TABLE 3.1 RESULTS FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MELANESIA AND EAST TIMOR

Study	Methodology	Major findings
EAST TIMOR		
Hynes, Ward et al. 2003	Population-based survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 1 in 5 married women is afraid of her partner. > 1 in 4 women had been physically assaulted by her partner during the previous 12 months. > 1 in 10 women had been beaten while pregnant and half of these experienced a negative pregnancy outcome. > 16% of married women reported sexual coercion by their husbands during the previous 12 months. > 1 in 4 women reported sexual violence during the crisis versus 1 in 8 post-crisis. > During the crisis, 27% of women reported physical violence from outsiders (militias and military), whereas post-conflict rates were one-quarter of those during the crisis period.
FIJI		
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) 1999	Participatory research, interviews and focus groups conducted with 1575 women in 8 provinces, and using retrospective analysis of the FWCC and police cases over the previous 5 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 66% of women had been physically abused by partners and nearly half repeatedly abused. > 26% of women had been beaten while pregnant (= 42% of physically abused women). > 48% of married women had been forced into sex by their husbands. > One-third of women had been hit for refusing sex. > Many women had been abused by female in-laws and siblings. > 13% of women had been raped. > 30% of rape victims were 11 to 15 years old. > 31% of perpetrators were family members.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA		
PNG Law Reform Commission 1992	Quantitative research covering 16 provinces and Port Moresby; postal questionnaire sent to public servants and wives; surveys of 2 squatter settlements; studies of domestic violence cases at a major hospital and 3 police stations; case studies of abused wives, and 3 anthropological studies (N=1203 women and 1192 men).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 67% of wives had been beaten by their husbands (national average). > Close to 100% of wives in the Highlands were beaten by their husbands, but half that for Oro and New Ireland provinces. > In urban areas, 1 of every 6 women interviewed needed treatment for injuries caused by their husbands. > 97% of patients treated for domestic violence injuries were women. > 94% of domestic violence complaints made to the police were made by women. > When wives hit husbands, it was usually in self-defence.
PNG Institute of Medical Research 1994	Study on sexual violence involving 432 interviews with women and men and 61 focus groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 55% of women had been forced into sex against their will. > Half of married women had been forced into sex by their husbands. > 60% of men interviewed reported having participated in lainap (gang rape) at least once.
Riley, Wohlfahrt et al. 1985	Study of case records of sexual assault victims needing medical treatment at Port Moresby Hospital (N=91).	<p>Of the female victims seeking treatment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > half were younger than 16, one quarter younger than 12, and one in 10 younger than 8 > many perpetrators were family members.
UNICEF and Resources 2005	Situational analysis based on qualitative data including focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, testimonies, life stories, and observations, from 3 selected areas spanning 7 provinces in PNG.	Many examples of child sexual exploitation were found in towns and in the vicinity of mines, logging operations, fisheries and other sites of resource exploitation or large-scale construction.
Amnesty International 2006	Interviews with women and service providers in 5 provinces and in the capital.	Widespread and extreme physical and sexual violence was reported by women and service providers.

3.2 Common forms of violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor

To gain a broad understanding of how violence against women is perceived in the region, the project team asked many groups—women and men—to participate in a ‘free-listing’ exercise and put forth what they consider to be forms of violence against women, and to say which forms are the most common and the most severe. Women who had undergone physical or sexual violence were invited to describe their experiences, and staff of agencies working with women who were living with, or had survived, violence were asked about the cases they see.

Women and men were usually consulted separately and generally produced different responses. For example, men tended to discount acts that did not result in injury:

Violence means there's a lot of force, where she gets an injury, where he hits her and causes a mark. If he just slaps her, it's OK (village men's focus group discussions, Vanuatu).

Men were less likely to mention emotional abuse, unless they had received awareness training. They typically recognised rape of unrelated women, or of girls as a serious offence (especially incest, or when an illegitimate child results), but not rape within marriage. Both women and men perceived physical violence by husbands against wives as the most common form of violence against women, often resulting in injuries and sometimes in death.

Intimate partner violence

Not surprisingly, women, even teenage girls, could consistently talk at length and in detail about the multiple types of physical, sexual, emotional, social and financial abuse they or others known to them had experienced. Abuse by intimate partners topped the list in every group discussion, in all countries. The examples in Box 3.1 show that physical violence is one part of a constellation of behaviours that simultaneously display and reinforce men's dominant role.



BOX 3.1: EXAMPLES OF COMMON TYPES OF ABUSE BY INTIMATE PARTNERS, AS REPORTED BY WOMEN*

*These types of abuse were reported in all countries, but for space reasons only typical, selected examples and quotations are included.

Physical

Hitting, kicking, punching, whipping with belt, hitting with any object close at hand, stabbing, throwing boiling water, hot oil or hot food, burning with cigarettes, breaking teeth, chopping off fingers

The husbands of working women like to give their wives black eyes, so everyone can see he's still the boss (FGD -- PNG)

Beating and choking, whipping with rope, pulling hair, breaking bones, burning with fire, banging head on floor.

Women need more training on domestic violence as a crime. They think of it as a normal, acceptable event because it happens daily (policewoman in a Victim Protection Unit, East Timor).

Early this year, there was a serious case [in our area] where the wife died; her neck was broken by her husband. Last year, another woman was killed who was pregnant (young women during focus group discussion, Solomon Islands).

Emotional

This degrades the woman; it lowers her self-esteem. She feels hurt and bad, even to the point of committing suicide ... I know women who have done this (young women during focus group discussion, Solomon Islands).

They call us slut, or pamuk (prostitute) and other rude words. They talk down on you. They say 'You're just a woman'. And psychologically, it's very damaging (survivor during focus group discussion, PNG).

Sexual

My own case is that if my husband has beaten me up, I don't want to have sex with him afterwards. But then he would force me, even in front of the kids, he would strip me off and the kids are telling him "Daddy, Daddy, stop", but he just treats me like that (survivor during focus group discussion, PNG).

Boys beat up their girlfriends who want them to use condoms (young women during focus group discussion, Solomon Islands).

Financial

He treats me like old clothes. My children and I are suffering till now, but he always has money for his drink. When I ask him for money for food, he beats me and beats me until our children come to separate us (personal story, East Timor).

Destruction or theft of property

Husbands and sons taking the woman's things, even her pots and pans, to sell for money for kwaso (homebrew) or drugs; burning her clothes because of jealousy (provincial women's focus group discussion, Solomon Islands).

Forced pregnancy

It's only men who own the land, so the in-laws put pressure on the woman to have a son. They say, "When are we going to have a landowner?" Even if she has five daughters, she has to carry on trying to get pregnant to have a boy. If she doesn't get pregnant, it leads to fights with the husband (women's focus group discussion, East Timor).

BOX 3.2: TYPES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OCCURRING IN THE COMMUNITY***Opportunistic rape**

If a girl has to stay late at school, she has to walk home alone, and then she can be raped (Vanuatu). If women have to walk anywhere, they try not to go by themselves, so they don't get raped (PNG).

Punishment or 'payback rape'

Even after the tensions, women married to men from the opposite side were still being raped, as punishment (Solomon Islands).

Men don't like women who act 'bigheaded'. Sometimes a man will get his mates to come round when he's having sex with his girlfriend, and they all rape her, to teach her a lesson (PNG).

Sexual abuse of girls, incest (especially father-daughter)

I have interviewed girls where fathers, uncles, brothers, even grandfathers and adopted siblings, were perpetrators of sexual violence (East Timor).

Gang rape

Pack rape is very common in PNG. They call it lainap. Recently, there was a case in the paper of 30 men doing this. And another [gang rape] of two young girls at the Goroka Show, right in the middle of the crowd, while the band was playing (PNG).

Abduction for rape

Sometimes men steal a girl and keep her for days or weeks and rape her continuously. This happens in town, and in the villages, too (PNG).

Conflict-related rape

Girls were just being picked up by the military in dark-glass cars, and no one could say anything because they were afraid for their lives (Solomon Islands).

Sexual harassment at workplaces and schools

It's very, very common in workplaces in PNG. It's happening everywhere these days, where the boss says, "You must do this", or she'll lose her job. Even a married woman has to do it, and she can't tell her husband, because if she does, he will beat her up on the spot (PNG).

Girls can get raped at high school, or at primary school, by the teachers. It's a common thing. They will probably call them in for some lessons or homework to do, and then the teacher starts playing a game, like 'If you do this for me, I can help you out in your subject or in your homework'. Even if she refuses, the teacher can push himself on her (PNG).

Sexual exploitation of women and girls by husbands, brothers, fathers

The father takes the money and sends the girl to the logging camp. Or they negotiate for the logger to build a house or buy an outboard motor. Some girls are only 14 or 15 (Solomon Islands).

We know there are men going round the internally displaced persons camps looking for women and girls to take for trafficking, but it's hard to get the information we need to catch them (East Timor).

*all quotes from focus group discussions



Sexual violence and exploitation

Sexual coercion inside and outside intimate relationships was common in all countries visited. While women acknowledged being forced to have sex with their husbands against their will, they for the most part did not understand this to be rape. In general, women do not talk even with friends about what happens in their sexual lives, seeing this as ‘shameful’, and knowing too that society expects them to comply with their husband’s sexual demands. Sexual violence outside marriage was also considered to be common, particularly in situations of conflict or emergency (Box 3.2).

Other forms of violence against women

In addition to domestic and sexual violence, women perceived several other behaviours or practices as serious forms of violence, such as:

- > arranged marriages
- > forced marriage as part of a dispute settlement
- > mistreatment of widows
- > sorcery accusations⁷
- > violence against sex workers
- > violence by women against women, particularly in disputes over men.

3.3 Women’s responses to violence

Through two stories of fictional women—one beaten by her husband, and another involving her younger sister who was raped by a schoolmate—this study explored the types of support to which women might have access in Melanesia and East Timor. The stories were presented during focus groups discussions and participants were asked where these women would go for help, what kinds of barriers they would encounter, and what would be the likely outcomes of their efforts.

The answers were strikingly similar throughout the region, and in line with international studies (WHO 2005). Women overwhelmingly seek the support of informal networks first. Formal services, such as women’s centres or the police, are used only as a last resort, for various reasons.

When responding to the story of Laila,⁸ the battered wife, participants said she might turn to her friends or family for immediate shelter; however, neither would be able to help for long. Laila’s friends might fear becoming involved, including because she may fear reprisals from her own husband. The family might feel the husband had a right

⁷ In PNG, there are an increasing number of cases in which women (and occasionally men) are accused of being witches and are brutally tortured, often to death. This appears to be linked to the recent spread of HIV/AIDS and the lack of understanding about how it is spread.

⁸ The names and circumstances in the story were modified in each country to make the story more typical for each setting.

to beat Laila, particularly if a bride-price had been paid. They might worry about being forced to return the bride-price to the husband's family. Also, given that customary law in several countries gives custody of children to the husband's family, the wife might lose her children if she separates.

When this happens, the father would tell the children that their mother ran away because she did not like them. Children suffer when their mother is not there (local court clerk, Vanuatu).

Because domestic violence is seen as a private matter, participants said other community members or relatives would unlikely intervene to protect Laila from her husband. *Mi no wantem save* ('I don't want to know' in Bislama) and *Ino bisnis blo mi* ('It's not my business' in Bislama) are phrases commonly used by those who witness violence but do not intervene to stop it.

Laila might also seek the support of the local chief or church pastor. The pastor would remind Laila that she vowed to stay in her marriage 'till death do us part', and would encourage her to 'forgive and forget' and return to her husband.

If the case is in the rural area, then [the] FWCC is too far and so pastors are usually the first stop. In some villages, the pastors can continue to visit them and counsel them based on biblical principles. The pandits would be doing the same thing (Social Welfare Department, Labasa, Fiji).

The chief, on the other hand, might set up a *kastom* court meeting, in which the husband or both the husband and Laila would pay a fine before the chief sent Laila back to her husband. Most women come to realise, as a result, they can do very little about the violence.

She cannot speak out because of bride-price is one [reason] and secondly she is under threat ...Part of the reason is she has no place to go back, like her father and mother they do not want her, which happens to some women. And some they have a lot of children and they can't go back. So they have their own reasons (Kup women's focus group discussion, PNG).

In these cases, violence is not likely to stop. After attempting to solve the problem, many women resign themselves to their fates.

When responding to the story of Freya,⁹ the younger sister who was raped, participants said shame and fear would most likely keep Freya from reporting what happened, even to her family:

In school, I couldn't talk to friends because I was ashamed. No, I didn't tell any of my friends (rape and incest survivor, Salvation Army home, Labasa, Fiji).

⁹ The names and circumstances in the story were modified in each country to make the story more typical for each setting.

Although police tend to take sexual assault more seriously than domestic violence (unless the assailant is the husband), the absence of police in rural areas means that when a victim discloses a rape, it will most likely be dealt with by the local chief. The chief would probably order the family of the perpetrator to pay compensation to the rape victim's family, which, depending on the setting, might take the form of pigs, woven mats, kava, shell money, whale's teeth or cash. Even some magistrates argued that cases of rape should be dealt with by chiefs rather than courts.

I think the most that can be done is to call the parties involved, maybe the chief can do it in a chief's hearing—he will take a walk over to the house of the man, and ask him to pay compensation to her or to the family (usually not her). The payment is to prevent a payback against him, maybe to rape his daughter (male magistrate, Solomon Islands).

The families might also arrange for the victim to marry the rapist.

Normally, the relatives of the girl take the belongings of the girl and say, "Here, you can have her." A case I saw was a reconciliation where the parents of the boy or girl decide for them to marry (male magistrate, Solomon Islands).

Whatever the outcome, all agreed Freya would endure many hardships for the rest of her life because of the rape, and would receive little support or sympathy from her family or community.

She will hide it for a long time, because she's a student she should have decided not to join these people at the party, so her being raped is her own doing (village woman, Navutulevu, Fiji).

In our Indian community, if it happens, the girls will drink and [commit] suicide because of it (teacher, Fulton College, Fiji).

3.4 Challenges to addressing violence against women

Violence against women is increasingly recognised as a serious human rights and development issue around the world, but many factors make it difficult to eliminate.

Women's low status

The status of women in Melanesia and East Timor is relatively low compared to women in other parts of the world. As measured by the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) gender-related development index,¹⁰ of the 136 countries rated, Fiji ranked 82 and PNG 124. Rankings are not available for the other countries studied (by the team, as opposed to the UNDP), but the indicators for female literacy and education, economic survival and political participation are low relative to the same indicators for men. High rates of maternal mortality (except in Fiji) indicate poor levels of health for women, as does the narrow gap between female and male life expectancy (Annex 1).

¹⁰ The greater the gender disparity in basic capabilities, the lower a country's gender-related development index ranking compared with its human development index ranking.

These indicators confirm what women and men in the countries visited already know from their own experiences. People interviewed regularly commented on women's low status relative to men, which they viewed as a major obstacle to reducing violence against them. These types of remarks were frequently heard:

In our culture, we don't give much respect to the women and children.
(police officer, PNG)

We are still tied to our traditional culture, where men are dominant and where they control the family and the village. We still have the problem of that mentality (woman activist, East Timor).

To be effective, a program of action to reduce violence against women and girls must be long-term, and conceived broadly enough to address these long-standing attitudes and the structural inequalities in which they are embedded.

Cultural factors

The women and men consulted frequently referred to customary practices and attitudes they believe put women at risk of violence and make it difficult or even impossible for them to protect themselves against it. The region is rich in cultural diversity, but certain common features emerged.

Bride-price: In all countries, except Fiji, bride-price was cited as the biggest factor (along with economic dependence) in perpetuating violence by men against their wives.

He will say he's paid bride-price so that gives him the right to hit her. The chief and the family will agree with this. They will say that 'You are his property' (focus group discussion, Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC)).

Frequently, wives believe they must put up with the violence. Regardless, leaving their marriage would mean repaying the bride-price, which is usually far beyond their means. The modern tendency for bride-price to be paid mostly or wholly in cash reinforces the view that payment gives a husband property rights. In the experience of the director of Solomon Islands' only women's shelter:

The men come and they say "I bought her for \$5,000. I can do anything with her. She's my property, not yours." (Sr. Doreen, Christian Care Centre)

Economic dependence: Everywhere, women's reliance on a male breadwinner was seen as a major deterrent to even complaining about, let alone escaping from, violence. Control of land and property in the region's predominantly patrilineal cultures is in the hands of men,¹¹ and the preference for educating boys rather than girls (who will eventually marry and leave home) means women have fewer income-earning opportunities, and the income from cash-crops or royalties from mining and

¹¹ This also applies to the few matrilineal societies in the region, except those that are also matrilocal, meaning that women stay on their clan land and their husbands move to live with them.



logging (which in PNG and Solomon Islands can bring in massive sums) is seen as belonging to men.

Women say: "If I report my husband for what he did, I won't get any money from him when he's in prison." So only a woman who has a job can come forward and do something about it. But most don't have jobs, and need the husband so they'll have money for school fees and things for the children
(female police officer, Solomon Islands).

In the end, many women feel they have no choice but to risk their safety to preserve the material welfare of themselves and their children.

Polygamy: In former times, men in many Melanesian and East Timorese cultures had the right to take more than one wife if they had enough land. Today, everyone relies on cash, so if a woman's husband takes another woman (as a girlfriend or another wife), she and her children lose out financially. In Solomon Islands, this practice has become so common that the women in a man's life are referred to colloquially by numbers (01, 02, 03, etc.) according to the order in which the relationships began. Women complaining about the 'other women' is one main cause of wife-beating in all countries visited, and sometimes of fights between women.

Sexual double standard: Christianity's expectations of fidelity and chastity do not generally overcome local cultural tolerance for men's sexual adventures or misdeeds, and have boosted cultural condemnation of women's perceived sexual misdeeds. Woman-blaming attitudes are common everywhere. In Solomon Islands, for example, some married women raped during conflicts were made to pay compensation to their husbands' families because of the shame caused by the rapes. Young women and girls are especially afraid of the 'shame and blame' they will suffer if they report being raped.

If we say Maina has been raped by David, it will cause Maina trouble. She will be embarrassed all the rest of her life. She may be subject to further assaults. She may be easy prey (male magistrate, Solomon Islands).

Patterns of 'out-marriage' for women: In the region, women generally move to live with their husband's kin once married. This means they are often far from sources of family help. Even when they want to return to their family to escape abusive husbands they may be refused, especially when there is pressure on land and resources.

Patriarchal religions: The major religions in the region are Christianity and Hinduism, both of which support the belief that the husband is the head of the family. Although some progressive churches are moving toward a more egalitarian view of marriage, what some women's activists in PNG call 'the Gospel approach to domestic violence—forgive and forget' is the message most women receive from their churches.

Compensation and reconciliation: In the traditional cultures of Melanesia and East Timor, maintaining peace between groups and their (male) leaders remains a highly-regarded value. The interests of women and girls are not seen as separate from those

of the group, so injuries against a woman or girl are dealt with by compensating the males who had rights to her (father, brother, husband). Women are unhappy about family members benefiting from their injuries and feel it undermines their future safety.

If a suspect is doing violence and he can afford to pay compensation for that, then by accepting the compensation, the violence is allowed to continue (village woman, East Timor).

In PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, a woman or girl who has been raped might be made to marry her rapist to normalise relations between the two families and clans.

Violence against women within the context of armed conflict and emergencies

Gains made in addressing violence against women in the region have often been eroded by armed conflicts, political crises or natural disasters, which have created conditions in which violence against women has increased. Women in East Timor, for example, suffered from violence and intimidation by occupying forces and local militias during the Indonesian occupation (1975 to 1999). The conflicts following the independence referendum in 1999 and those subsequent to independence in 2002 devastated the country's infrastructure and caused massive displacement of people seeking safety. Even now, many thousands still live in camps, where women and girls are vulnerable to domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment and trafficking (Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 2007; International Crisis Group 2008).

In Solomon Islands, ethnic tensions erupted during periods of armed conflict between 1998 and 2003. Many people had to flee their homes and three quarters of women 'suffered direct personal trauma', including violence and threats (International 2004). Agencies assisting women noted an increase of those seeking help for domestic violence and rape at the same time as all other services, including the police, were barely able to function.

Even after the tensions, the men went back to the villages and were abusing their wives because there was nothing for them to do (trauma counsellor, Caritas, Australia).

Similarly, after the 2006 tsunami:

There was lots of violence and beating of women due to loss of property during the tsunami and men taking out their frustrations on women (staff member, Save the Children, Solomon Islands).

In PNG, tribal fighting continues to disrupt life in many parts of the Highlands, where nearly half the population lives. In Bougainville, the effects of the nine-year civil war that ended in 1999, during which all services ceased, are still being felt. Armed men and boys, who for years used guns to intimidate women, became habituated to violence. High levels of armed crime and sporadic civil unrest continue to contribute to women's vulnerability to violence in large areas of PNG, especially in urban areas.



Fiji has also suffered political turmoil for much of the last two decades. The four coups in recent history (two in 1987, one in 2000 and one in 2006) have had a chilling effect on women's rights advocacy and programs. Research carried out by the FWCC and others documented the myriad ways in which violence against women increased as a result (Ali 2007).

As well as conflicts, all countries in the region suffer regularly from natural disasters, including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, floods, mudslides, droughts, frosts and tsunamis. These disasters displace populations and increase women's dependency on men. They also increase women's vulnerability to physical and sexual violence, both from displaced males and from rescue workers.

HIV and AIDS as a cause and a consequence of violence against women

The increasing incidence of HIV and AIDS in the region adds a lethal potential consequence to sexual violence against women. In 2002, PNG became the fourth country in Asia-Pacific to reach the level of a generalised epidemic, in which the whole population is at risk. The number of known persons living with HIV or AIDS in the other countries in the region is still small but growing (Annex 1).

Sexual and physical violence against women contributes to the spread of HIV. Fear of partners' violent reactions makes women less willing to discuss using condoms or question their partners about their other sexual activities.

Women are now worried about getting HIV and it's causing more fights about the infidelity of the husband (Sr. Doreen, Christian Care Centre, Solomon Islands).

Women with abusive husbands are also afraid to admit they have been raped, been tested for STIs or HIV, or to disclose a positive diagnosis and access treatment. Social workers at Port Moresby General Hospital's Family Support Centre in PNG, for example, are finding:

Now that [antiretroviral therapy] has become available, women who kept quiet about their status when they were tested in pregnancy are coming to get the treatment. Some of them get bashed up when their husbands find out, even if they know they are responsible. We see them come in now with broken bones and quite bad injuries.

CHAPTER 4: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

4.1 Why is an integrated approach important?

Reducing violence against women requires simultaneous action at many levels by multiple actors. Government commitment and capacity, the participation of women in public life, a strong civil society and an understanding of gender and human rights issues are critical to creating an enabling environment for ending this type of violence. Commitment and coordination by international agencies and donors to support the efforts of national governments and civil society are also critical. Progress on these fronts is uneven across the region.

4.2 Barriers to achieving an integrated approach to violence against women

Lack of gender and human rights framework

Gender equality is an idea that has to be nurtured because it causes sensitivities. Merely talking about gender equality is a direct challenge to male dominance (Ministry for Women, Youth and Children, Solomon Islands).

Efforts to end violence against women are greatly strengthened when a coordinated approach to gender equality and human rights is taken. Without a shared understanding of these rights, it is not only difficult to effect permanent change on violence against women, it risks being counter-productive. The team witnessed numerous occasions where attempts to address violence against women were likely to have harmful effects on women because they were not based on a human-rights approach. Examples of such efforts are: counselling programs for abused women that encourage them to be more obedient to their husbands; approaches of some faith-based organisations to domestic violence that promote the authority of the husband; training materials on rape that place blame on the victim's dress or behaviour; and community responses to domestic violence resulting in vigilante groups and barbaric treatment of alleged offenders.¹² This is challenging for those providing funds, who want to ensure that competent gender analysis is applied in project design and appraisal (Box 4.1 describes a gender equality and human rights approach to violence against women).

¹² The team found examples of all of these, and many more.



BOX 4.1: ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN FROM A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE

Violence against women is both a cause and consequence of discrimination against women. Governments are obliged to respect, protect, promote and fulfil all human rights, including the right of women to be free from discrimination. Failure to do so results in, and exacerbates, violence against women. For example, if governments fail to criminalise certain forms of violence against women or allow discriminatory penal laws to remain in force, then these acts may be perpetrated with impunity.

A human rights approach places the discussion of gender-based violence within a broader framework of human rights and justice and challenges prevailing norms (e.g. ‘that domestic violence is a private issue’) and to empower individuals and communities to promote change. It further accepts that human rights are inalienable and indivisible—that women have a right to live free of violence under all circumstances and that they should not have to give up this right to maintain a family or ensure economic support for their children.

Adapted from United Nations 2006 and Guedes 2004

Implementation of international standards

As signatories to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), all governments in the countries studied are obliged to exercise due diligence in protecting women against violence (Box 4.2). Signatories are also obliged to report regularly on progress towards the CEDAW’s 16 substantive Articles—a process that has proved valuable in creating more general awareness about gender equality and human rights. Fiji, Vanuatu and East Timor have submitted their first reports. PNG and Solomon Islands are still preparing theirs.

As part of national efforts to comply with the CEDAW, all countries in the region have, at some point, created national commissions or task forces to address the status of women, including violence against women. These are typically convened by the national women’s machinery¹³ (although the Fiji Violence against Women Task Force was chaired by the Ministry of Justice). In Fiji and Vanuatu, preparation of the government’s CEDAW report has served as an opportunity for government ministries and civil society to engage on the issue. Regrettably, the commissions or task forces are generally short-lived and under-resourced. National women’s machineries are also notoriously weak and they occupy marginal political space, which impedes their ability to galvanise support for gender issues in male-dominated governments. In several cases, political instability, as with the coups in Fiji and the tensions in Solomon Islands, has interrupted coordination. In Solomon Islands, the Ministry for Women, Youth and Children’s Affairs was disbanded even before the tensions, and has only recently been re-established. In other cases, as in PNG, a combination of factors, including changing political will, eroded gains made in the 1980s.

¹³ Refers to the government department, office or division responsible for women’s affairs. In some countries, such as PNG, the national NGO representing women is considered to be part of the national women’s machinery.

BOX 4.2: OBLIGATIONS OF STATES ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN UNDER THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

States must promote and respect the human rights of women and exercise due diligence:

- (a) To prevent, investigate and punish acts of all forms of violence against women, whether in the home, the workplace, the community or society, in custody or in situations of armed conflict.
- (b) To take all measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence and to protect and promote the full enjoyment of all rights and fundamental freedoms.
- (c) To condemn violence against women and not invoke custom, tradition or practices in the name of religion or culture to avoid their obligations to eliminate such violence.
- (d) To intensify efforts to develop and/or utilize legislative, educational, social and other measures aimed at the prevention of violence, including the dissemination of information, legal literacy campaigns and the training of legal, judicial and health personnel.

Source: United Nations 2003

Lack of evidence base

As mentioned in Chapter 2, there is a dearth of current local research on the magnitude and characteristics of violence against women needed to inform policy decisions. Although there is abundant evidence that violence against women is a grave problem throughout the region, and one that merits urgent action, international experience has shown that rigorously performed research can be a powerful tool for advocacy. Research findings can persuade decision makers of the need to act and can guide programming so scarce resources are used most effectively to maximise impact.

Lack of coordination among stakeholders

All countries acknowledged the importance of increased coordination, not only among government agencies and civil society organisations, such as NGOs, but also donors and other international agencies. In general, most groups spoken to do not have much knowledge about what other countries were doing, or in some cases, what different branches of the same agency were doing in the same country. Increased coordination is clearly critical to maximise impact and avoid duplication of efforts.

Women's participation in public life

With the exception of East Timor, which introduced special measures resulting in women making up 26 per cent of parliamentarians and holding three seats in every local-level council, the virtual exclusion of women from decision-making bodies vastly increases the difficulty of getting issues of importance to women onto the political agenda. In Fiji, 11 per cent of parliamentarians are women, but PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have all had periods with no female member. In PNG, only four women have been elected to its 109-member Parliament in its 33 years of Independence and at all lower levels women are barely represented.



In default of government leadership, civil society organisations, mostly made up of women, have attempted to fill the gap. Only Fiji, however, has a solid tradition of civil society activism, including by women, and this has come under serious threat as a result of the country's four coups in the last 20 years.

All countries have national umbrella organisations of women, which have tended to be conservative and riven by internal dissensions. East Timor's strong women's movement, which grew out of the years of resistance to Indonesian occupation, has been strengthened through coordinated donor inputs as part of reconstruction and nation-building.

4.3 Promising practices in integrated approaches to violence against women

National policies to promote gender equality

In contrast to the majority of women's machineries in the region, which lack sufficient resources and political support to be effective, the Office of the Secretary for State for the Promotion of Equality in East Timor has made remarkable progress in the six years since being established (Box 4.3).

Strengthening the evidence base on violence against women

In Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, population-based surveys are being conducted with funding from AusAID and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to gather information on the prevalence, perceptions and nature of violence against women in-country. In Vanuatu the survey is being carried out by the VWC, and in Solomon Islands by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Based on the methodology developed by the WHO for its *Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women*, these surveys will provide the baseline data needed to support national activities to address violence against women.

BOX 4.3: OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY IN EAST TIMOR

Initially known as the Office for the Promotion of Equality (OPE), this body is now called the Office of the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI). Its head sits on the Council of Ministers and is therefore able to influence decisions. Strongly supported by United Nations' missions and agencies, the office has benefited from advice from senior international technical advisors on gender and violence against women and from substantial donor funding. Strengthening national capacity to address gender-based violence is one of its four core programs.

OPE/SEPI has worked on several fronts and with multiple sectors simultaneously. Its achievements include:

- > Legal changes to increase women's participation in decision-making bodies, including those that hear offences against women, at national and community levels, and training of female candidates in this area.
- > Draft legislation on domestic violence submitted to Parliament.
- > A new law giving local authorities duties to reduce domestic violence in their communities.
- > Development of a network of basic services for survivors.
- > Increased public awareness through extensive civic education and public awareness campaigns.
- > Advocacy with the Department of Education to include in school curricula the right of women to live free from violence.
- > Obtaining a grant of more than US\$5million under MDG-funding to work jointly on the economic empowerment of women, protecting them from violence. Funded activities under this grant (2008–10) include: strengthening referral systems and agencies in the districts, especially links between the police and NGOs; training and monitoring of the suco councils on implementing their new duties to reduce domestic violence; expanding the system of hospital-based safe spaces into the districts; and activities to prevent trafficking, protect female internally-displaced persons, and provide rehabilitation for perpetrators and increase men's activism.

Multisectoral coordination

PNG has developed an interesting model to increase coordination among organisations working to end violence against women called the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee (FSVAC) (Box 4.4). One strength of, and at the same time a challenge faced by, the FSVAC is that it is a hybrid model, managed by an NGO with government participation. While this gives it legitimacy and greater NGO participation, it prevents it from having as much convening power or weight as it might have if located in a government ministry and chaired by a high-ranking official (e.g. the Ministry of Community Development, where the Gender Division currently sits). The FSVAC has now developed a new strategy for the next five-year period.



BOX 4.4: THE FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE ACTION COMMITTEE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The FSVAC was founded in 2001 to enhance coordination among organisations working on violence against women in six focus areas:

1. institutional framework
2. legal reforms
3. services for victims
4. perpetrators
5. community prevention and response
6. data collection and research.

The FSVAC's role is to coordinate activities in each focus area, which involves working with dozens of groups around the country (with funding from bilateral and multilateral donors). Despite having only a small staff, the FSVAC has made valuable contributions in numerous ways, including: assisting with reform of sexual offences and child welfare legislation; promoting the Family Protection Bill; distributing legal literacy materials; developing training and advocacy materials; running national awareness campaigns, especially during the global 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women; collecting data from service providers; successfully lobbying for the establishment of FSCs in hospitals; and commissioning research. Provincial-level committees have also been set up in several provinces to coordinate local actions.

Source: Bradley and Kesno 2001

Strengthening women's political participation

East Timor is unique in the region for strongly promoting the political empowerment of women as a means of preventing violence against women. Remarkable progress has been made in increasing women's participation in public decision-making and leadership. During the 2001 elections, various affirmative action measures resulted in a national Parliament with 26 per cent female membership. The Independent Electoral Commission, which oversees and monitors the three levels of elections, has 25 per cent female membership. Women are also increasingly represented in high positions in government (Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 2007). Box 4.5 describes an innovative approach to grassroots empowerment of women that has beneficial effects on violence against women.

Regional initiatives to build capacity of local institutions

Regional coordination and exchanges among groups have been critical for the growth of the anti-violence movement in Melanesia and East Timor. The FWCC, in particular, has played a central role in mentoring local organisations and supporting regional initiatives. The Centre also provides technical support for other organisations working in the region, such as the VWC. The FWCC convenes the Pacific Women's Network on Violence against Women, which meets every four years and carries out regional training workshops for network members, including civil society organisations and government departments that deal with violence against women. Support is provided through ongoing in-country support visits and the regional training and attachment

program, as well as regular liaison (email and telephone). The regional training and attachment program is conducted once a year and is an important aspect of the FWCC's services. It gives participants maximum exposure to strategies and activities that address violence against women. The curriculum is continually reviewed and updated, taking into account the latest regional and international information and practices. It also provides for specific needs—for example, upgrading counselling skills, improving centre management and conducting advocacy campaigns.

BOX 4.5: PARTICIPATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF RURAL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The primary intention of the Participation and Enhancement of Rural Women's Leadership program was not to intervene in addressing violence against women. The program targets elections for *suco* councils and chiefs, who in 2004 were given both the power and duty to protect women from domestic violence.

In preparation for the first *suco* elections in 2004, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), cost-sharing with the UNDP and the European Commission, began a large-scale program of 'transformative leadership training' for potential female candidates. Roughly half the female candidates (1265 out of 2596) received training; of whom 29 per cent were elected. Seven of these were elected as *suco* chiefs and 22 as *aldeia* chiefs.

An evaluation of the longer-term impact of these successful candidates and their family lives, as well as their participation in council decision-making, was carried out in 11 districts at the end of 2006. Examples of the findings include:

- > increased confidence and ability to speak up, both in the family and in the council
- > less conflict and violence in the family, attributed to their husbands paying them more respect—'Men are happy when their wives are elected. It's a privilege for the family.'
- > some husbands more willing to share money and domestic chores with wives, thereby reducing domestic disputes and violence
- > some elected women able to raise the issue of domestic violence with their councils, as well as other women's issues such as family planning, sanitation, children's vaccinations, school facilities and women's sports.

In 2007, UNIFEM and other donors introduced the five-year Integrated Programme for Women in Politics and Decision-Making, to build on gains made. This program also aimed to promote women's effective engagement in local conflict prevention and peace-building.

Source: Program documents and evaluation, and interviews with UNIFEM staff.

The Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) has also played a critical role in providing training and technical assistance to governments and NGOs in human rights and justice with a gender focus (Box 4.6). Both the RRRT and the FWCC are recognised throughout the region for their enormous contribution in building capacity around women's human rights.

United Nations agencies, and particularly the regional UNIFEM Office in Suva, have also played an important role in supporting and facilitating coordination between governments and civil society in addressing violence against women. In addition



to financial support for local efforts, through the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTF),¹⁴ UNIFEM has provided regional capacity building for organisations working on topics covering violence against women, including project design and implementation skills.

BOX 4.6: PACIFIC REGIONAL RIGHTS RESOURCE TEAM

The Fiji-based Pacific RRRT works in eight countries in the region, including Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, to help state and non-state partner organisations build capacity on human rights and gender equality. The team works with policy makers, institutions and at the community level. The RRRT also offers workshops to community paralegals, judges, lawyers, medical practitioners, teachers, and police on human rights and gender equality, as well as to community members on their legal rights, and to government officials on human rights and the meaningful implementation of CEDAW.

The team has played a lead role in national legislative reform, including providing technical input into the drafting of the Family Law Act in Fiji (2003) and the recently passed Family Protection Act in Vanuatu (2008), both of which significantly increased options for women living with domestic violence. The RRRT has also provided input into draft instructions for a Bill of Rights for Solomon Islands as well as judicial training which has led to growing support for human rights, recognition of the importance of addressing violence against women as a human rights issue, and an increase in applications for international conventions in courts. Judgments in Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, for example, indicate that lawyers, activists and judges are using human-rights language more often and considering human rights more often to guide their decisions.

4.4 Overarching recommendations to strengthen the enabling environment for addressing violence against women

1. **Ensure all interventions are grounded in a human rights and gender-transformative approach.** This means all programs at national, provincial and local levels should explicitly acknowledge that gender inequality is reflected in community norms, institutional policies and practices and laws, and that violence against women is rooted in unequal power relations between women and men. Wherever possible, programs should adopt an integrated approach and aim to address the causes of violence and to transform gender relations, rather than simply providing palliative care.
2. **Support efforts to strengthen the evidence base on violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor.** There is a need for more research on violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor. Priority should be on:
 - > Research that documents the prevalence, characteristics and risk factors of all types of violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse, as well as under-documented forms of violence, such as commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, sexual violence in armed conflict and emergencies, and femicide (the murder of women). Research should be based on methodologies already being used internationally

¹⁴ In 2007, the PNG government received a grant from the UNTF to strengthen efforts to address violence against women.

(e.g. WHO's *Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women*) to enhance the ability to compare.

- > Efforts to strengthen national statistics offices and incorporate indicators of violence against women into national information systems, such as HIV surveillance.
 - > Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of promising practices.
 - > The support needed to broadly disseminate existing research findings and build regional capacity to carry out research in women's rights organisations and formal research institutions.
3. **Encourage coordination of aid among international donors to maximise impact.**
As much as possible, support should be provided to organisations working on violence against women as core funding with multiple-year grants, rather than just project-focused or earmarked funding.
 4. **Support multisectoral coordination, including between government and non-government actors, at both national and local levels.** Support could include:
 - > developing and implementing national, provincial, municipal and community plans of action for preventing violence against women
 - > supporting interagency task forces on violence against women (e.g. within the context of CEDAW reporting)
 - > conducting national coordinated campaigns and awareness-raising activities
 - > collaborating on training and capacity-building of local stakeholders across sectors.
 5. **Strengthen women's leadership and economic and political participation at all levels.** Priority should be given to providing women the necessary tools, skills and opportunities to participate fully in the social and economic development of their communities and nations.
 6. **Build capacity in project management, communication and gender analysis.**
Priority should be given to building a common body of knowledge and experience in the region, through:
 - > supporting regional initiatives for building the capacity of local groups in key areas such as monitoring and evaluation, program management, counselling skills, communication and advocacy
 - > strengthening existing networks, including opportunities for shared learning with innovative programs inside and outside the region
 - > supporting joint initiatives in developing tools, program materials, etc., to improve the quality of work in the region
 - > supporting exchanges and mentoring opportunities for organisations in the region.



CHAPTER 5: IMPROVING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE

5.1 Why is access to justice important?

Effective justice systems are important in reducing violence against women. First, they can provide physical protection by invoking powers greater than that of individual offenders. Second, they can provide a crucial statement about what behaviours are not acceptable—this is particularly valuable where relations between women and men are undergoing change. And third, successful prosecution of offenders removes the sense of shame-and-blame so often felt by survivors, and contributes to their emotional recovery. Successful prosecution also acts as a deterrent to future offenders and an incentive for other survivors to come forward with their complaints.

5.2 Barriers faced by women in accessing justice

The justice systems in the countries studied face many challenges in meeting the needs of all citizens, not just those of women. These countries have inherited legal systems from former colonising or occupying powers that are cumbersome, complex, long out-of-date and unsuited to local conditions in many ways. All are under-resourced, loaded with massive backlogs and face enormous logistical difficulties in providing service to the rural majority. These issues are compounded by additional constraints limiting the ability of the law to provide justice and protection for women and girls who experience violence. In many cases, the recommendations at the end of this chapter—for increased commitment to providing women with access to justice for violence perpetrated against them—will contribute to developing the justice sector more broadly.

The legal framework

Although there has been progress in each country with legal reforms, each is still hindered in multiple ways by the legacy of outdated colonial laws. For example, no country has laws specifically criminalising domestic violence. Sexual-offence laws inherited from colonial governments also pose enormous barriers to successful prosecutions. These see sexual violence as an offence against morality rather than a crime against a woman's person and they require women to prove their good character by providing evidence, which exposes them to further trauma.

In addition to the need for specific legal reforms on violence against women, many other areas of law severely limit women's ability to protect themselves. These include family laws relating to separation, divorce, custody of children, maintenance and marital property; inheritance laws governing land and property; protection against sexual harassment; minimum age at marriage; age of consent; abortion; and discriminatory laws against sex workers but not their clients. (Annex 1 summarises the status of relevant legislation for each country.)

The formal justice system

Wife-beating happens every day, but only the brave ones come to us (police officer, PNG).

International experience has shown that legal reform is only the first step to increasing women's access to justice. Translating laws into policies and systems and ensuring police, magistrates and other justice system personnel are aware of and implement laws appropriately is equally important but more difficult to achieve. The formal justice systems in the five countries studied are, for the most part, not effective in providing justice or protection for women because they are urban-based, complex, intimidating, under-resourced, time-consuming, unreliable and administered mostly by males. Solving this implementation problem, especially by extending the reach of the formal justice system into rural areas, remains a core challenge across the region.

Police are usually the first entry point for most women seeking access to formal justice. Sadly, women generally find police response to be unhelpful at best, and sometimes even harmful. According to those interviewed for this report, including survivors of violence and police officers, the police tend to see domestic violence as a 'family matter', and either send women away to 'settle it at home' or attempt to mediate between the woman and her abuser at the police station.

In real life, in the police station, when we have this kind of case, most times it's determined at the enquiry desk. If it's a minor case, they would send a car to bring in the man and give counselling to settle it at the station. There's no training, just what they pick up on the job (police focus group discussion, Vanuatu).

Typically, no record of complaints are made, and if a woman wants to file one and have her husband arrested, police often counsel her to think about how she and the children will survive if the breadwinner is jailed (e.g. *He'll lose his job and then where will you be?*). As a high-ranking police officer in Vanuatu explained:

We give the couple ample time, because three days later the wife usually comes back and wants to withdraw the statement. So we tell the wife we will keep her statement for a few days before proceeding, because we don't want to waste our time.

In the relatively rare cases presented to a magistrate, and where custodial sentencing occurs, a very high proportion of decisions are reversed on appeal. A recent study presented by the FWCC, for example, reports that 90 per cent of sexual assault cases in 2006 were reversed on appeal, compared to 20 to 40 per cent of cases of murder, robbery and other crimes. (Ali 2007).

Given that violence against women is generally condoned in the region, it should not come as a surprise that many officers in the justice system—including police, lawyers, magistrates, judges and court staff—share the values and views of their communities, which support men's use of violence to control women. One main reason for lack of responsiveness by police and magistrates to women reporting violence is the assumption that she must have done something to deserve the beating or sexual assault.



Sexual violence in marriage was explained by beliefs about men's greater sexual appetites and their rights to satisfy them at will with their wives. For rape outside marriage, men (and many women) often blame the rape on the behaviour of the victim. For example, rape is seen as a result of the 'chemistry' men feel when looking at a girl dressed in contemporary clothes.

Women are wearing short skirts. That is taboo and that is how rape happens (male magistrate, Solomon Islands).

Traditional justice systems

Formal justice systems are not within the reach of many women and so most are forced to rely on informal or custom-based systems run almost exclusively by men to resolve their problems. Many women expressed dissatisfaction with these traditional systems, which resolve disputes through compensation to male-kin groups, which women feel neither address their personal suffering nor guarantee protection.

Compensation makes the family feel happy about the money, but not the girl (young women's focus group discussion, Solomon Islands).

Views expressed by women in East Timor were typical:

Once a woman is married, the elders say she must obey her husband because of the cows [paid as bride-price]. All decisions are made by men. They don't listen to women, and the woman is always blamed (women's focus group discussion).

Knowledge of laws and rights

Low rates of education and literacy, and barriers of language and mobility, mean many women do not know about their rights or the laws intended for their protection.

When women come to our workshops, they talk about a lot of kinds of violence they've experienced, like emotional abuse, and sexual. They didn't know before that it was violence, but they've been experiencing it (woman activist, Solomon Islands).

Men, too, may not be aware when their behaviours are harmful or seen as crimes under national legal systems. Informants mentioned cases in which women tried to educate their husbands about their rights and were beaten for it.

5.3 Promising practices in increasing women's access to justice

Transforming justice systems so they are more responsive to women suffering violence has been a primary focus of women's rights activists in the region for many years. In some cases, as in PNG, substantial gains were made during the 1980s through the work of the Law Reform Commission (LRC), only to disappear during the 1990s after the Commission's mandate expired (PNG Law Reform Commission 1992). In other countries the fruits of years of activism are finally being seen, as in Vanuatu where the Family Protection Act was finally passed in 2008 after nearly ten years of consultation and advocacy.¹⁵

In all countries, it is clear that hard-earned gains in providing justice can be fragile and short-lived, and that vigilant monitoring is needed to make a real difference in the lives of women. The reporting processes for CEDAW-signatory countries can stimulate pressure for ongoing justice sector reforms. Women's NGOs and activists in Fiji and Vanuatu have made good use of CEDAW processes and reports, and the other three countries whose reports have not yet been formally presented should also plan to take full advantage of these opportunities.

Legal reforms on domestic violence and sexual violence

All countries have either passed legislation or have draft legislation in the pipeline recognising the special circumstances of domestic violence and allowing magistrates to make orders on the spot where there are grounds, including temporarily barring the husband from the home, ruling on maintenance and custody of children, and banning molestation or harassment by the partner. Breach of such orders would be an offence on which police would be required to act automatically.

The Government of Fiji, with considerable input from civil society organisations, passed a Family Law Act in 2003 (entry into force in 2005). This law created the Family Law Court (opened in 2005) which issues restraining orders that married women can access relatively easily through civil means. The orders now take two to three days to obtain, compared with two to three weeks before the law was enacted. The Act also puts women on a more equal footing with men in relation to divorce, separation, maintenance, custody, adoption and other matters subsumed under family law—this greatly assists women needing to leave abusive marriages.

With the injunctions in place, women can leave the home with their personal items as opposed to being chased off without the opportunity to take anything with them. Also, with the provisions of the Act, counsellors can 'negotiate' on behalf of their clients so they coordinate court proceedings, etc (FWCC counsellor).

¹⁵ At the time of writing, this Act had still not been formally signed into law and is being contested by opponents.



The RRRT, a well-known Fiji-based human rights organisation, has called Fiji's Family Law Act a model for the region. There is now interest in reviewing family law in Cook Islands, Kiribati, PNG, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Recognising that enacting new legislation is a lengthy process, Fiji has also pioneered a quicker route to legal reform through test cases which establish new legal precedents and give fairer treatment to women. In 2004, years of gender training provided by women's rights NGOs to lawyers and the judiciary paid off in the Appeal Court ruling which stated that corroboration of rape from other witnesses was discriminatory against women.

In Solomon Islands, the Law Reform Commission has prioritised the reform of the morality offences of the penal code. The offences cover rape, indecent assault, defilement, procurement, and incest, but shortage of technical expertise means that progress is slow. East Timor, Fiji and Vanuatu have made some piecemeal improvements to their sexual offence laws, but only PNG has succeeded in making a major overhaul (Box 5.1).

BOX 5.1: CHANGES TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S LEGISLATION ON SEXUAL OFFENCES

Using technical expertise provided by the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Department for Community Development prepared amendments to the Criminal Code and the Evidence Act, which were passed in March 2002 after lobbying and advocacy by organisations representing women and children. Main features include:

- > Creation of clearly defined sexual offences against children (under 16 years, 18 years in some cases), including sexual touching and sexual exploitation, with increased penalties for those in a position of trust, such as parents, teachers and the police.
- > Definition of incest expanded to cover more categories of relationships, in line with custom.
- > Improved court procedures to protect survivors' safety and dignity.
- > Definition of rape expanded to cover penetration of the mouth or anus and use of objects; requirement for medical corroboration removed; victim's previous sexual conduct not admissible as evidence.
- > Rape in marriage became illegal by the removal of the final three words from the existing definition of rape in the Criminal Code: 'unlawful sexual intercourse with a woman, *not his wife*'.

Building on beginnings made by the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the UNIFEM and the Department for Community Development are collaborating on a three-year project to educate communities, leaders, health service providers, legal aid organisations, the police and the judiciary about the amendments in two pilot provinces. Progress will be monitored and evaluated annually.

Improving the formal justice system's response to violence against women

Establishment of special police units for offences against women: Special units within police departments have been used in all countries to strengthen the response to offences against women, including domestic violence and sexual assault. All are under-staffed and under-resourced, lack training, and are given low priority (or actively undermined) by other police. Despite this, women report receiving better attention from special units than when they have to report to front desks, and want to see the system better supported and expanded (Box 5.2)

Lesson learned

Special units for offences against women are valuable in providing institutional recognition that violence against women is a specific problem requiring specific skills

BOX 5.2: ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF A SPECIAL POLICE UNIT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- > well-trained, staff (mainly females), available 24 hours a day
- > facilities that allow for privacy and confidentiality
- > communication and data collection equipment, and access to reliable transport
- > strong links with medical services and organisations which provide support to survivors
- > high-level champions in the police force
- > training on violence against women for all police

Police No-Drop Policy: Several countries have developed internal policies requiring police to prosecute domestic assaults and making domestic assault by police a disciplinary offence.

The most successful is Fiji's 'No-Drop Policy', introduced in 1995. Intended to protect women from being pressured by husbands and families to drop charges, the policy requires police to see every case through to court, where women stand a better chance of favourable outcomes from trained magistrates. As the only such policy in force in Melanesia and East Timor, the No-Drop Policy is a groundbreaking effort to strengthen sanctions for domestic and sexual violence and protect victims from pressure and retribution by other family or community members. By taking the decision out of the hands of women and police, the policy transfers the responsibility for resolution to the courts and reduces the number of cases resolved through 'reconciliation'. However, over the past 13 years, implementation has been inconsistent and has led to unintended negative effects (e.g. a reluctance of some police to register cases of domestic violence and of women to report violence to the police). Stories from survivors of violence, as well as police officers and magistrates, indicate that while some women want the violence to stop, they do not necessarily want the offenders, their husbands or partners to go to prison. In these cases, the No-Drop Policy may act as a deterrent to reporting incidents of domestic violence to the police. However, it is still considered a promising practice within the region and other countries (e.g. Solomon Islands) are currently developing their own no-drop policies.



Training of justice systems personnel: During the research team's consultations with police, it was always immediately obvious which participants had attended FWCC training and which had not. The benefits of training for justice-system personnel were most visible in Fiji. There, the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), the RRRT, and above all, the FWCC have for many years conducted sensitisation on gender, violence against women and human rights for magistrates, judges, police officers, public prosecutors and legal aid lawyers.

Lesson learned

Justice system personnel at all levels must be targeted with regular training and refreshers on violence against women and human rights

For years, magistrates have received gender training from the NGOs. Those have been effective. The NGOs have really educated people, even to the extent of criticising magistrates. That's good—it keeps us on our toes (magistrates' focus group discussion).

Domestic violence protection orders: Although specific domestic violence legislation is not yet in force in any country studied, women's rights activists and lawyers have found ways to provide survivors of violence with a minimal level of protection, at least in urban areas where police and magistrates are available. In 1992, Solomon Islands was the first jurisdiction in the region to introduce legislation on restraining orders for married women at risk of violence, though implementation and enforcement remain weak. In Fiji, the 2005 Family Law Act allows magistrates to make injunction orders in cases of violence. These can be made on urgent application in the absence of the defendant, and extended for up to one year once heard in court. Breach is automatically a criminal offence. Uptake of these orders is good, according to women's organisations.

Other countries awaiting their domestic violence legislation are using less-formal interim solutions. In PNG some magistrates are using ad hoc orders based on century-old 'keep-the-peace-provisions'. In Vanuatu, court rules and procedures were changed by a sympathetic Chief Justice to allow magistrates to issue short-term Domestic Violence Orders, and this system is still being used pending the coming into force of Vanuatu's Family Protection Act of 2008.

Although protection orders cannot completely solve the problem of women living with violence, they can provide women with breathing space to consider their options.

It reduces the violence and makes the man think. It makes him realise there's someone more powerful than him that is superior and can order him how to behave (public solicitor, Vanuatu).

Medico-legal protocols for sexual assault: PNG and East Timor are developing standard formats to guide the medical examination of sexual assault of women and children. These ensure that medical evidence for use in possible prosecution is collected and stored in ways that meet the evidentiary requirements of the legal system. Experience in PNG has shown that continued cooperation between these two sectors has been difficult to maintain, and protocols have been used and dropped over the last 20 years. A new format, developed through a joint working group, is being piloted and will be incorporated into training for doctors, lawyers, prosecutors and the judiciary. These procedures should ensure women receive the medical treatment they need, regardless of their intention to prosecute.

Lesson learned

The development and implementation of medico-legal protocols for sexual assault contribute to improved medical and legal outcomes for survivors.

Integrating gender equality and human rights principles into custom- and community-based systems

Recognising the extreme limitations of formal justice systems, all countries have explored ways of strengthening informal or community-based systems for restoring harmony and solving disputes generally. These systems are much more accessible to the majority of people, and if supported with capacity building in gender equality and human rights principles they offer important opportunities for reducing violence against women.

Community-based justice, community policing, restorative justice, peace mediation and conflict resolution are being enthusiastically promoted by governments, donors and civil society organisations. However, these approaches can work **against** gender justice unless they include specific measures to level the playing field. Although the language of ‘community-based initiatives’ is apparently gender-neutral, the reality is that communities are still largely controlled by men and custom still generally operates to men’s advantage. Unless women are included in planning and implementing, their needs and interests, including justice for victims of violence, are not likely to be addressed.

Lesson learned

Male gatekeepers of traditional justice systems are crucial entry points for change.

In Vanuatu, training through the Vanuatu Women’s Centre Male Advocates Program has targeted village chiefs and other male leaders, with encouraging results. Methods used are described in Chapter 7 (Box 7.1). The work is challenging, but many participants end their week of training by saying *‘faia itet the fire is dead’*, meaning they have overcome their anger and resistance (Tahi and Ali 2006). Chiefs who agree to abide by certain standards of personal conduct become part of the male advocacy



network, attend refresher sessions and work with their local Committees Against Violence Against Women (CAVAWs).

The chiefs and the church are now inviting the CAVAW into their problem-solving meetings. The women have suffered too much, but nowadays life is much better than in the past for the women in this area (Chief, Vanuatu).

As a chief, I can talk to other chiefs. I'm a member of the North Ambrym Council of Chiefs, and we make the decisions about everything on the islands ... I answer the questions in meetings because many of the questions are critical. Men always want to put women down. So I always do my best to explain the rights of women and children (Chief, Vanuatu).

Another example of community-based approaches to justice is the Nauro-Gor Community Laws in PNG (Box 5.3).

BOX 5.3: NAURO-GOR COMMUNITY LAWS, SIMBU PROVINCE, PNG

In 2005, nine clans came together to make peace after 32 years of devastating tribal fighting, mediated through the Catholic Church. Male leaders signed a peace agreement and formulated a list of community laws which they pledged to support. These were based on local custom and contained provisions which restricted women and trivialised domestic violence. Men were appointed to leadership positions in the new Nauro-Gor Association, and several were trained as community police.

During 2006, the communities participated in 'community conversations', a community development approach to HIV/AIDS prevention integrating principles of gender equality and human rights. Leadership positions were then created for females in the association. Two men (including the Chairman) and two women were selected to attend a week-long training course with UNIFEM in Port Moresby on gender and human rights. This led to the community laws being revised with the participation of women, and an equal number of female community police being trained. The association has since asked for gender equality and human rights to be taught in local schools.

The making of peace—itself a major achievement—has created an openness among communities, including male leaders, and a willingness to rebuild their lives with different principles. The initiative is in its early days, and women as well as men need time to change old habits of subservience and dominance. The ongoing process of community conversations, and commitments of continued support on gender equality and human rights from UNIFEM and Oxfam, is helping consolidate the present commitment and enthusiasm of the new leadership and prevent potential backlash.

Recent initiatives of the village courts system in PNG deserve mention, in that these courts apply custom but are part of the formal justice system (since 1973). Officials therefore receive training and some supervision, making it feasible (though challenging) to integrate new standards on human rights and fairness for women into local-level justice. Earlier efforts to improve local justice for women have been progressively stepped up since 2000, with slow but encouraging results. This model addresses the need expressed in other countries visited for greater harmonisation between custom-based and formal justice systems.

Monitoring outcomes for women

East Timor has the best example in the region of monitoring women's experiences with formal and informal justice systems, through the Judicial System Monitoring Program (JSMP). This program was established in 2001 by an East Timorese NGO. Its reports have been used to press for reforms, including measures to increase election of women to local decision-making bodies (the *suco* [local government] and *aldeia* [village] councils) and the 2004 Decree-Law on Domestic Violence. Under this law, chiefs of *suco* councils are given duties to prevent domestic violence, support and protect victims, and punish and rehabilitate perpetrators. Continued monitoring of implementation will be used to inform the training for *suco* councils.

Lesson learned

Ongoing monitoring of women's experiences with tradition-based and restorative justice systems is essential to ensure women's rights are being appropriately addressed.

Strong local women's rights organisations can be effective watchdogs of traditional and restorative justice systems. Some CAVAWs fulfill this role in Vanuatu, supported by their national organisation, the VWC. The experience of some women's community-based organisations in the Highlands of PNG (e.g. Kup Women for Peace) shows this can be difficult and even dangerous work. Participating in wider networks, capacity-building for leaders and providing resources increase the chances of sustainability and success. However, monitoring should not be delegated solely to NGOs. Justice systems should monitor and report on outcomes for women as a normal part of their operations.

Legal literacy for women and survivors

All countries lack adequate legal aid services, and so other ways have been found to help women understand and cope with legal processes. Self-help leaflets, produced by women's NGOs with donor assistance, have been successfully used by women to obtain support and protection orders, but uptake of legal options is much greater where women receive help from trained workers. All major support agencies attempt to help survivors, and some, such as the FWCC, the VWC, the Individual Community Rights Advocacy Forum (ICRAF) in PNG, and the RRRT at the regional level, also provide paralegal training for other organisations.

Lesson learned

In addition to awareness of their rights, women need in-depth knowledge and skills to exercise their rights effectively.

In East Timor, the JSMP's Victim Support Service has helped improve outcomes for women. It educates women and children survivors of physical and sexual violence about legal processes and provides one-on-one support throughout every case it takes on. Results are lower drop-out rates, higher sentences, and faster hearing of cases.¹⁶

TABLE 5.1 APPROACHES AND PITFALLS FOR IMPROVING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Potentially promising approaches	Typical pitfalls and problematic approaches
Enacting laws on violence against women.	Low technical capacity in legislative drafting, causing extreme delays; lack of sensitisation for members of legislatures; inadequate support for public advocacy.
Reforming family and property laws.	Family courts that pressure women to reconcile; lack of training for magistrates on violence issues.
Using CEDAW reporting processes to stimulate demand for legal reforms.	Failure to provide sustained technical expertise; lack of integration into justice-sector priorities.
Educating legal officers and the police about the new laws.	Insufficient resources allocated for in-depth training at all levels; training without follow-up refresher sessions; failure to monitor and evaluate implementation and impact of laws.
Policies requiring police to treat domestic assault as a crime.	Failure to allocate resources for implementation and monitoring; lack of police protocols for dealing with cases of domestic violence.
Disciplinary measures against police offenders.	Lack of commitment to implementation; under-funding of police-welfare sections.
Special police units for offences against women.	Use of male rather than female staff; poor training; failure to provide logistical support and address issues of resentment from general-duties police. Can absolve the rest of the police force from responsibility for addressing violence against women.
Implementing police no-drop policies.	May deter women from reporting, for fear of the consequences if their husbands are jailed; police may resist accepting reports.
Increasing, improving or providing training for police.	Training that focuses on new recruits or special units rather than all police, including the highest levels of command; training that is one-off, or not tailored to the target group.
Introducing short-term Domestic Violence Protection Orders.	May be too short in length for survivors to plan next steps; hard to enforce.
Introducing medico-legal protocols for rape.	Over-promotion of medical evidence; pressure on survivors to prosecute; inadequate training.
Strengthening custom-based justice systems.	Failure to recognise and address entrenched male bias; inadequate resources for sustained sensitisation on gender issues and reduction of potential backlash.
Introducing/expanding community-based policing.	Domestic violence often dealt with as a family matter; lack of accountability leads to power abuses; risk of vigilante behaviour and human rights abuses in enthusiastic but untrained communities.

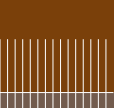
Monitoring of customary justice outcomes by women's organisations.	Short-term funding for capacity-building; perpetuates view of violence against women as a low-priority women's issue.
Involving women in custom-based justice bodies.	Tokenism; lack of sustained capacity-building for women and sensitisation for men.
Providing public education on laws and rights.	Framing violence against women as an issue of gender/women rather than human rights and development; failure to reach men as well as women; lack of integration into educational curricula; failure to partner with service providers.

5.4 Recommendations for increasing women's access to justice

1. **Support national legal reform efforts.** This should address specific legislation on domestic and sexual violence, including age of consent and age of marriage, and other areas of law limiting women's ability to obtain protection (such as laws relating to marriage breakdown, custody of children, maintenance, property rights, inheritance and sex work). Equally important is monitoring the legislation implementation and its impact on women.
2. **Commit long-term support to strengthening police response to violence against women.** Police are usually the first entry point for women seeking justice, and their response to cases of domestic and sexual violence is critical. Four concurrent approaches are recommended:
 - > ongoing targeted training for police at all levels, including introducing clear protocols for responding to domestic and sexual violence that emphasise women's legal rights to be protected from violence
 - > strengthening and monitoring the dedicated units for domestic and sexual violence that exist in all countries in the region
 - > applying consistent disciplinary action against police offenders
 - > monitoring women's experiences and case outcomes.
3. **Strengthen the response of the formal justice system to violence against women.** Ensure that laws and policies on violence against women are properly implemented by:
 - > transforming discriminatory attitudes through systematic targeted training of lawyers, magistrates, judges and other justice system personnel on gender and human rights issues
 - > promoting women's participation at all levels of the justice system.



4. **Strengthen the willingness and ability of community-based justice systems to respond to women's right to protection from violence.**
 - > Support dialogue between justice-sector personnel, women's NGOs and traditional leaders on how to honour women's human rights through traditional or restorative justice.
 - > Promote increased participation of women in justice-related decision-making bodies, and monitoring outcomes.
5. **Increase support for NGOs offering women legal literacy and human rights training.** Wherever possible, men should also be informed about women's legal and human rights.



CHAPTER 6: SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS

6.1 Why are support services important?

Improving women's access to support services is a pressing need around the world. The WHO's *Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women* found that in most countries more than half of the women who had experienced domestic violence had not told anyone about their experiences before the interview. Of those who had, the majority had spoken to immediate family or close friends, followed by local leaders. Only a very small percentage of women reported going to the police, a health centre, a women's centre or another formal service (WHO 2005).

The services that women and girls who have experienced violence require vary depending on their circumstance. While in a crisis, for example, they may require medical treatment, psychological and legal counselling, or urgent protection and safe haven for themselves and their children. Women who have been living in abusive relationships for a long time may need information about divorce, child custody and maintenance options. They may also need a sympathetic and knowledgeable advisor to help them decide what to do. Sexual assault victims need forensic documentation, prophylaxis for STIs, emergency contraception and police investigation. Starting the process of leaving a violent relationship is a particularly dangerous time for a woman, and this is when women are at greatest risk of homicide (Campbell, Webster et al. 2003). Whatever the need, it is important that a range of services be accessible and coordinated, and above all, that providers are respectful of a woman's right to decide what is the best and safest alternative for herself and her children.

Lesson learned

Women need support that is compassionate, timely, non-judgmental and, above all, respectful of their decisions.

One goal of the anti-violence movement in Melanesia and East Timor has been to increase the availability and quality of formal and informal support available to women. Many creative and innovative approaches have been used throughout the region, but there are still many gaps and challenges. Every country has at least one crisis centre to provide counselling and information to survivors of violence. Most of these centres are run by local NGOs, such as the FWCC, the VWC, Solomon Islands FSC, Psychosocial Recovery and Development in East Timor (PRADET), the East Timorese Women's Communication Forum (*Forum Komunikasi Untuk Perempuan Loro Sae*—FOKUPERS), and Family Voice in PNG's Eastern Highlands. The majority of centres visited by the team offer high-quality, compassionate services and coordinate as much as is feasible with hospitals, police and magistrates. Most also offer specialised counselling, legal advice and court accompaniment. Only a few organisations have trained lawyers on staff, and even fewer have medical staff, or



provide sexual or reproductive health services (with the exception of hospital-based centres in PNG). Only the centres in East Timor provide onsite emergency shelter, but the others coordinate with other agencies that do.

6.2 Barriers faced by women and girls seeking support services

Limited access

In most of Melanesia and East Timor, existing services are concentrated in urban areas, out of reach for rural women, who make up the majority of the population. In Solomon Islands, the country's only women's centre (the FSC) and women's shelter (the Christian Care Centre) are based in Honiara, the capital, even though 80 per cent of the population live in rural villages, spread out over many islands. In a few urban areas in PNG, there may be a women's or church NGO with some experience in supporting rape survivors, but generally there is no outreach in rural areas. One PNG policeman summarised the situation this way:

The ladies have rights, but in PNG they can't get the help they need. They have to live through the trauma.

Coordination amongst services is weak

In most countries, services are often far apart from each other, with little coordination among different offices. One woman in Vanuatu described having to go to five offices in one morning to obtain a Domestic Violence Protection Order, all the while trying to hide from her violent husband who was looking for her all over town. Navigating through this complex system can be expensive, demoralising and even dangerous. Because of the lack of coordination, a woman may have to repeat her story over and over. At the end of the journey, she is likely to be told by the police, judge, chief or whomever she turns to for help, that there is nothing to be done and she should simply return home. Not surprisingly, many women become discouraged and eventually give up. After her ordeal, the woman from Vanuatu commented:

I personally felt that it was too much for me to go through, especially when I was walking from one station to another in utter fear.

Quality of services is uneven

Another serious challenge is that, aside from the support provided by professional crisis centres, the quality of care many women receive from different institutions is uneven. Many support programs for abused women and girls do not have trained counsellors, for example. Staff tend to use their 'common sense' in dealing with women, which is often heavily influenced by traditional views of women's roles in society. Most police officers, teachers and traditional and Christian leaders interviewed said they 'counselled' women, although what this means in practice varies a great deal. In many cases, counselling appears to be a euphemism for encouraging forgiveness

and acceptance on the part of women, as well as exhortations to be a ‘better’ (more submissive) wife. For example, a pastor from Vanuatu who counsels battered women described his work this way: *“In 2007 I have counselled, prayed with and helped seven women whose marriage have been destroyed by acts of adultery and violence but are now living happily with their husbands who have also come to know the Lord.”*

Lesson learned

Counselling that reinforces traditional gender norms and blames women for violence is counterproductive.

Lack of resources

Many NGO-run centres survive on shoestring budgets, with sporadic donations from individuals or international organisations. Very few receive core funding or national government funds. This has a big impact on continuity of service, and on the ability to expand services beyond urban areas. Main exceptions are the VWC and the FWCC which have received core funding from international donors over a sustained period and have three branches each in rural areas. These branches are a testament to what can be achieved with long-term financial commitment from donors.

There is a huge unmet need for emergency and temporary shelter for abused women throughout the region. Although relief is temporary, having a safe place to go in the midst of a crisis can mean the difference between life and death for women living with violence. Many existing centres are led by faith-based organisations, such as Haus Ruth in PNG (City Mission) (Box 6.1); the Salvation Army in Fiji; and the Christian Care Centre, run by the Church of Melanesia in Solomon Islands. The Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) also provides shelter for women in many countries, although not specifically for survivors of violence. East Timor has the most extensive network of safe houses. In Dili, FOKUPERS runs a safe house and supports groups in other provinces that run safe houses and assist women who have experienced violence (Trembath and Grenfell 2007). Other women’s or church organisations provide temporary shelter in six other towns. While there is no shelter in Vanuatu, the VWC has a small fund to help women obtain emergency housing.

The philosophy of the centres varies. Some have an expectation that women will return to their husbands, whereas others, such as the Haus Ruth Hostel in PNG (Box 6.1), support any decision a woman takes, and provide counselling and legal support for divorces and custody disputes. In addition to providing safe haven, the Christian Care Centre in Solomon Islands has carried out broad community-education programs, as well as a landmark study exposing the widespread commercial sexual exploitation of children in logging camps.



BOX 6.1: HAUS RUTH HOSTEL, PAPAU NEW GUINEA

Since 2001, Haus Ruth has been providing short-term accommodation, counselling and other support services to abused women and children. The hostel can hold up to 30 women, of whom some are employed women paying rent, which helps sustain the service. The City Mission and donors make up the difference. Staff are full-time, well-trained, and have excellent links with other services. The hostel is always full, and has to turn many women away. Those lucky enough to be taken in express enormous gratitude for the service, and say they find strength in the support of the other women.

Women want peace of mind and rest. When we enter this place they are like friends to us. They are like family. They love us and feed us three times a day. We encourage each other, how to stand up and tackle our problems ... It's only when you can share your pain with others that you can feel some relief (Director, Haus Ruth, PNG).

Because they have so few options, women often have no choice but to return home after staying in an emergency shelter. However, the shelters contribute to women's empowerment, and therefore, to longer-term change. Indeed, many studies around the world have shown that once a woman decides to leave a violent situation, even for a few days, the likelihood of eventually being able to live a violence-free life is greatly increased.

6.3 Promising practices in supporting survivors of violence

Integrating service delivery

Ensuring survivors receive the multiple kinds of assistance they need in a timely fashion is an important aspect of high-quality, woman-friendly service provision. Ideally services should be available in one location, and there are several examples of this in the region.

Lesson learned

Integration of services with other actors increases sustainability and improves the quality of services for female survivors.

One approach, used in PNG, is to locate a range of services in FSCs in hospitals throughout the country. The FSCs (recently renamed 'Stop Violence Centres') are based on the international model of one-stop shops. Each is typically staffed with a counsellor or social worker, and offers short- and long-term counselling, legal advice, medical treatment, help with emergency accommodation and other practical needs, and referrals to local support organisations. The hope is to also achieve police presence so all needs are addressed in the same, safe location. The FSC in Lae's Angau Hospital, operating since 2003, is a successful example of how this model can work. With help from *Medicins sans Frontieres*, it is being developed as a Centre for Excellence and a model for other provinces.

PRADET provides mental health counselling and assistance to women and children who have experienced physical or sexual abuse under a memorandum of understanding with the East Timor Department of Health. PRADET runs a facility at Dili Hospital, where survivors receive medical treatment and other forms of assistance in a safe environment (Box 6.2).

BOX 6.2: PSYCHOSOCIAL RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT IN EAST TIMOR'S SAFE ROOM PROJECT (FATIN HAKMATEK)

In 2002, PRADET established a 'safe space' in an area of Dili Hospital to treat victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. In 2006, it transferred to a purpose-built facility on the hospital grounds, funded by multiple donors, where it operates on the one-stop shop model, offering medical treatment, counselling, legal advice, some practical assistance with food and transportation, overnight accommodation when needed and referrals to other resources.

Key features include:

- > a well-designed facility with strong security and a separate entrance to one of the interview rooms so police can take victim statements without entering the main building
- > a homey environment with space for staff and volunteers to work, relax and cook
- > private interview rooms and confidential recordkeeping
- > trained female staff who have received regular support since the outset of the project from one consistent international mentor, and others as required
- > opening hours (seven days a week, with after-hours service)
- > good connections with other agencies working on violence against women and ongoing support groups of survivors of different kinds of violence.
- > training opportunities for doctors and other health workers.

PRADET's work on creating a formal medico-legal protocol for violence against women also deserves mention. It has developed and is piloting a standard pro forma in East Timor's three languages to facilitate the collection during medical examinations of evidence for use in legal prosecutions, based on WHO guidelines.

Improving the quality of care and support services

The FWCC has developed a training module for counsellors incorporating a gender and human rights focus and putting women's safety and autonomy above all else. This outstanding program has been successfully adapted by professionals and community members (e.g. the CAVAWs in Vanuatu). The FWCC also has developed and implemented a well-designed system of supervision and reporting, with frequent site visits and in-service training for staff. They carry out a month-long regional training program every year and train in other regions on counselling and setting up women's crisis centres (Box 6.3).

Another example of how quality of service can be improved through multisectoral coordination is the gender-based violence Referral Partners Network in East Timor. The network routinely brings together all the major agencies, advocating on their behalf with government and donors for improvements (Box 6.4).



BOX 6.3: FIJI WOMEN'S CRISIS CENTRE

The FWCC is an autonomous, multiracial NGO established in 1984. It provides crisis counselling and legal, medical and other practical support services for women and children who are suffering from or who have survived violence.

The FWCC works to address all forms of violence against women, including rape, assault, sexual harassment and abuse of children. It is involved in public advocacy and community education on gender violence. The centre aims to influence public perceptions on violence against women and counter the culture of silence on the issue. The FWCC provides awareness programs and training on women's fundamental human rights and the contribution they make to development. It has three branches in provincial towns throughout Fiji.

A recent evaluation with former clients and stakeholders of the FWCC program concluded that service provision is consistently high quality and clients feel they are well supported.

The Australian Government has provided financial support to the FWCC since 1989. The New Zealand Government also has a long association with the centre, although support was initially channelled through the Fiji Government and Oxfam New Zealand. In 2000, the New Zealand Official Development Assistance (now the New Zealand Agency for International Development) began providing direct support to the Fiji branches.

BOX 6.4: THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE REFERRAL PARTNERS NETWORK, EAST TIMOR

Begun in 1999, the Referral Partners Network's current NGO members are FOKUPERS, PRADET, JSMP Victim Support Service, Oxfam Australia, the Alola Foundation, Rede Feto, and the Association of Men Against Violence. Government is represented by the national Victim Protection Unit and the Department of Social Services. Multilateral donors are represented by the UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNICEF, and the International Organization for Migration.

The Network has two approaches for improving collaboration and coordination of support services:

1. A working group that meets regularly to develop a shared approach to case management, with standardised protocols and data collection and training standards and materials.
2. A subgroup of the network, the Referral Pathways Group, that meets weekly to discuss difficult cases, and to help members logistically in contacting outlying areas, finding transportation for witnesses or safe accommodation for children being victimised at home, or keeping track of the movements of traffickers suspected of exploiting women and children in the internationally-displaced persons camps. Members (several of whom are male) attend consistently and value highly the moral and practical support they receive.

Strengthening community-level networks

We thought we were just housewives, but then we started doing this work. All the mothers realised they had a lot of power to change our lives (focus group discussions, Morata).

Although ideally there should be at least one women's crisis centre in each major city or province, there will never be enough to cover the needs of all women in the region. Therefore, a key strategy to ensure that women have the information and support they need is to strengthen informal support networks at village level. The CAVAWs in Vanuatu are an impressive example of what can be accomplished with relatively few resources. Set up under the leadership of the VWC, there are more than 30 spread

throughout the six provinces of Vanuatu. They have had great success in helping women resolve their problems through counselling, by accompanying them through police and judicial procedures, and by providing counsel to local chiefs in settling cases of domestic violence (Box 6.5).

BOX 6.5: COMMITTEES AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN VANUATU

The VWC has set up a network of community-level CAVAWs in all six provinces of Vanuatu. The volunteers receive basic training in legal literacy and counselling skills and provide support to community women suffering domestic abuse or sexual assault. There are now 33 CAVAWs in Vanuatu. They coordinate closely with the branch offices of the VWC, as well as local authorities, such as police, health providers and chiefs. They receive periodic visits and training from the VWC, and a small stipend to help with transporting survivors, paying court fees and meeting other needs. Another important part of the Committees' work is raising awareness in the communities around women's rights and violence against women.

As they have become increasingly skilled and respected, CAVAW members play critical roles in helping women obtain Domestic Violence Protection Orders, reporting and accompanying women to the police or magistrate courts, and even advising local chiefs in settling domestic disputes. Because community leadership tends to be heavily male-dominated, village women have appreciated receiving information and counselling from women who are willing to advocate on their behalf.

Before the establishment of the CAVAWs, lots of children and women died from bashing from husbands and fathers. Women now remind their husbands/partners that they can report them to the CAVAW, which has reduced fighting in the homes to a great extent. Men themselves now realise that women no longer have nowhere to go, but have the CAVAW to help them. Men are beginning to respect their wives because there is now a body [CAVAW] in place that will support the women and punish the men for mistreating them (female CAVAW member from Torba).

Other organisations, such as Family Voice in the Eastern Highlands of PNG, have initiated a program of community activists, both men and women, who work to promote mediation and violence prevention activities.

The women of the Morata Safe House in Port Moresby have developed an inspiring approach to violence prevention, based on community solidarity. In 2003, a group of women in the Morata settlement began acting on wife-beating, with the inspiration and support of a committed female police officer. One leader obtained her husband's permission to allow beaten wives to spend a few nights in their house, until they could safely go home. Under threat of arrest by the female police officer, the abusive men agreed to treat the house as a safe haven. Members of the safe house raise funds locally and contribute whatever food items they can spare to the sheltered women. More than 70 women have so far been helped. The group has now branched into other activities, with some donor funding.



6.4 New opportunities for increasing access to support

This section discusses approaches to increasing women's access to the types of support that have been used successfully in other parts of the world—particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America—but have not been adopted widely throughout the Pacific region. Although in most cases, there is not enough experience in the region to call these types of support 'promising approaches', during the consensus-building workshop in Port Moresby, promising opportunities for new approaches were considered that should be adapted and encouraged in Melanesia and East Timor.

Integrating care for survivors of violence into health services

Health services provide a unique opportunity to address the needs of survivors of violence, since most women come into contact with this system at some point in their lives. At the same time, since violence is the cause of so many common and serious problems, including injuries, unwanted pregnancy, pregnancy complications, emotional distress and depression, sexually transmitted diseases, and chronic pain. It is important for health providers to understand each client's history of abuse so they can provide appropriate treatment.

Lesson learned

The health sector has a key role to play in identifying and supporting women and girls living with violence.

Research indicates that while female victims of violence use primary and secondary health services more than non-abused women, only a very small percentage are identified by health workers. Health providers are often reluctant to ask women about violence, even when there are obvious signs, out of fear of offending the victim or opening up a Pandora's Box of issues they will not be able to deal with. On the other hand, women often hide the real cause of their injuries or distress, out of fear of reprisals or shame. Research has shown, however, that many will disclose violence to their health providers if asked in an empathetic, non-judgmental way, and in fact, welcome the opportunity to talk about their situations. This requires motivating and training providers and establishing systems to support their efforts.

Lesson learned

There is a need to improve documentation and information systems regarding services for survivors of violence.

To effectively integrate violence against women into health-sector programming, it is not enough to train providers to screen for violence. Experience has shown that a systems-approach is needed, and adjustments must be made to all aspects of services, including: policy development; protocols for screening and referrals; capacity-building for documenting, counselling and appropriate treatment; coordination with other sectors; and most importantly, monitoring and evaluation. There are several examples in other regions (particularly in Latin America and Asia) where violence has been

successfully integrated into health programs, especially sexual and reproductive health services, emergency service, and mental health programs (Velzeboer, Ellsberg et al. 2003; Ellsberg 2006).

The integration of efforts to address violence against women into health sector programming has been largely ignored in the region. PNG's Department of Health was the first to introduce a formal protocol for and training on domestic violence for health workers in primary health care in rural and urban areas (Box 6.6). The package of materials developed in 2004 has not been widely implemented. An urgent priority in PNG is removing the extra fees domestic violence victims are forced to pay in some provincial health care facilities, in a mistaken attempt to deter tribal violence.

BOX 6.6: PAPUA NEW GUINEA—DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S PROTOCOL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In 2003, the PNG Department of Health introduced a protocol on domestic violence based on a simple desktop checklist of six steps. The health worker asks about domestic violence with certain presenting conditions, ensures privacy, informs the client she has the right to be protected, provides treatment, plans with the client how to reduce future risk, and records injuries in the woman's health book. Each health worker is required to develop a local referral network, recorded on the inside of the checklist.

The checklist explains that the 'health worker's role is to prevent domestic violence by a) helping victims reduce their risk and b) encouraging community action. Please follow all the steps. If you only treat the injuries, it allows the violence to continue'.

Addressing violence against women and girls in the education sector

Sexual harassment and violence against women and girls is widespread in educational settings throughout the world. Although there has been little research in the Pacific, many respondents considered it to be a serious problem in Melanesia and East Timor. Perpetrators include schoolmates, teachers and other school staff.

Schools, and more broadly the educational system and communities, can help prevent violence against women by reforming education-sector laws and policies to improve the institutional response of schools to violence against women and mobilise communities to support girls' safety and rights. This requires training teachers and students, establishing codes of conduct that prohibit gender violence in schools and, most importantly, developing and implementing policies on teacher misconduct. In PNG, efforts to do so have failed and a teacher fired for misconduct was brought back after pressure from the teachers' associations.

Lesson learned

The education system should contribute to preventing violence by establishing codes of conduct for teachers and staff and sanctioning misconduct.



TABLE 6.1 APPROACHES AND PITFALLS FOR IMPROVING SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Potentially promising approaches	Typical pitfalls and problematic approaches
Women's crisis centres	Access is difficult for rural women; scarce funding means uneven care; services can be spread out and dispersed.
Integrated services (e.g. one-stop shops)	Difficult to coordinate services between the health sector, the justice sector and women's groups.
Training for service providers	Training not accompanied by institutional changes that make it possible to improve service delivery; lack of follow-up and ongoing monitoring; lack of buy-in from superiors, so training is not put into practice; training focused on awareness-building rather than increasing relevant skills; not enough people trained in one institution to create a critical mass for institutional change.
Community-level networks	Not enough funding; focus on awareness-raising and not on community action; not enough coordination between local groups and national or regional networks; content may justify violence or encourage patriarchal norms.
Safe havens	Only short stays provided; not all have trained counsellors; some encourage only reconciliation and do not provide information about other options.
Health-sector involvement in violence against women	Often connected only to emergency services or medical/legal systems, rather than to other related programs in primary care (STIs, sexual and reproductive health, mental health); no linkages with local networks for referrals; providers may treat survivors with victim-blaming attitudes if not properly trained; lack of training amongst health providers; lack of documentation of violence and care; fees for service (or punitive fees in PNG), making care inaccessible.

6.5 Recommendations for improving support services

- I. **Prioritise long-term support and resources for organisations providing support services.** Long-term commitment, especially in the form of core funding, enables promising programs to develop capacity, deepen human-rights perspectives, scale-up services, and expand the breadth of support for victims. This is especially important in this region where capacity is a challenge and where access is usually limited to urban areas.

2. **Encourage and invest in integrated models of service provision.** Integrated, multisectoral approaches facilitating women's access to critical services and resources are key to meeting the holistic needs of survivors of violence. Models for support and scale-up include:
 - > one-stop shops at health-care facilities that integrate medical care and counselling with access to police and legal services, shelter and longer-term support where available
 - > women's groups and NGOs that provide counselling, safe haven and other services aimed at empowering women, offering options and supporting their choices regarding leaving abusive relationships. Support should be prioritised for organisations demonstrating good levels of coordination and communication with other groups working in the area.
3. **Increase and extend access for women outside of urban areas.** In tandem with recommendation 2, aim to ensure that women living far from urban centres have access to safe havens, legal and psychosocial counselling, medical care and other services. Support should include strengthening health-sector initiatives on violence against women.
4. **Increase support for informal community-based networks, including safe havens.** Informal networks provide the only meaningful access to services at the village level for the vast majority of women in all five countries and, as such, need increased support. They are essential components of any strategic approach designed to strengthen overall reach and access.
5. **Strengthen and increase government engagement in support services, especially in the health and education sectors.** Engaging government agencies is essential for facilitating the integration and coordination of services across sectors, institutionalising protocols, ensuring consistency of service provision and sending the message that providing meaningful support for victims of violence against women is a top priority. Also place emphasis on the:
 - > Health sector—creating conditions in which primary health care providers have the skills and knowledge to identify women living with violence, to provide basic information, counselling and appropriate medical care and documentation; and refer women to services for follow-up.
 - > Education sector—developing national policies to prevent and sanction violence against girls in schools, and deal appropriately with misconduct.
6. **Support capacity-building to improve quality of service.** This should include providing standardised/accredited training on counselling for violence against women and standardised protocols for service delivery.



CHAPTER 7: PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

7.1 Why is prevention important?

One important lesson learnt over three decades of work around the world is that prevention must be a key part of any strategy to eliminate violence against women. This involves providing communities with information and the skills needed to take action around the harmful impact of violence against women on families and communities, *as well as* challenging attitudes that promote men's power over women and acceptance of violence as a legitimate way to resolve conflict. Transforming deeply-entrenched values and beliefs must be a long-term goal.

Efforts to reduce violence against women, therefore, are intrinsically linked to women's political, social and economic empowerment, and must be considered within the context of changing gender norms and increasing women's human rights. Programs attempting to address violence without addressing the root causes of the problem (e.g. those encouraging reconciliation and forgiveness, or anger management among men) are unlikely to reduce violence over time, because they do not challenge men who believe the violence is justified.

Globally, more attention has been paid to strengthening the law and justice systems and support services for victims of violence than to preventing violence. In this respect, Melanesia and East Timor are no exceptions. However, the review team found numerous examples of innovative programs that are breaking new ground in violence prevention by addressing the traditional norms that encourage violence against women, reaching out to men and youth to involve them as allies in prevention, and placing violence against women within a broader context of social change.

7.2 Barriers to prevention

The greatest obstacle to eliminating violence against women is the belief, commonly held throughout Melanesia and East Timor, that it is justified. A recurring theme that emerged throughout the interviews with government authorities and local leaders was the need to identify 'who is at fault' for the violence before finding a solution. The underlying belief is that women deserve to be beaten or raped under some circumstances, including when:

- > the wife talks too much
- > a woman dresses inappropriately (e.g. wears a mini-skirt or trousers)
- > a wife does not want to have sex with her husband
- > the wife does not have food prepared when her husband comes home from work.

Some traditional customs (e.g. bride-price, which is common in all countries except Fiji) tend to reinforce these patriarchal attitudes. Bride-price is commonly believed—even by many women—to give men the right to control their wives, with violence if necessary.

PNG men have this mentality that they've paid for our bride-price so they own us, without realising that we have our rights too (women's focus group discussion, Morata, PNG).

Because of paying bride-price in cows, when you talk to a lot of older men [about domestic violence], they say: "I don't hit my wife, I hit my cow" (male interpreter, East Timor).

The only time men's use of violence is questioned is if he beats his wife 'excessively', 'out of drunkenness' or for 'no good reason'. Some traditional violence prevention programs interpret addressing the roots of the problem to mean helping women become 'better' (more obedient) wives (e.g. by offering budgeting courses to help women avoid disputes over money with their husbands). Other programs encourage reconciliation and forgiveness without questioning men's right to beat their wives. Because they do not challenge the underlying premise that violence is sometimes appropriate, and that women should submit to their husbands' wishes in all respects, these programs tend to perpetuate and support men's use of violence against women.

A second obstacle to preventing violence against women is the perception that challenging the problem is for women only, and that others do not have a role to play. Violence is often seen as a private, family matter in which outsiders should not intervene.

People think that gender is an issue for women only. When we go out and run workshops for men, a lot of men have come up to us and said: "Why do you talk about this? This is women's stuff. Let the women talk about it" (Association of Men Against Violence, AMKV, East Timor).

A third obstacle to change is the common view that violence against women is an isolated and relatively unimportant issue that has little to do with community and national development.

These three obstacles are common throughout the region, but as more and more influential individuals and organisations take a stand on violence against women, the effects are slowly emerging.

7.3 Promising practices in violence prevention

Cultures have never been static except where arguments against women's rights are concerned. Cultures can change, and we should become the agents of that change (Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development 2006).

Our traditions put chains on women, but we can get rid of the things that oppress us (village woman, East Timor).



It is easy to wonder if it is possible to expect people to change attitudes and practices that are so deeply embedded.

Throughout Melanesia and East Timor, violence against women is justified as a part of *kastom*, or culture. However, women activists in the region, as elsewhere in the world, are pointing out that culture is dynamic and constantly changing, and that ‘custom’ is often misrepresented or exploited by dominant groups to protect their own interests.

Men use culture as an excuse—they just don't want to give up their authority (Vanuatu's Department of Women's Affairs).

Yet by engaging communities in respectful dialogue, many people, including traditional leaders, are willing to eliminate practices that are unfair to women.

Advocacy

Few of the gains made in the last 20 years would have been possible without the persistent lobbying and advocacy efforts of women's rights activists throughout the region. Women's organisations have used creative ways to raise public awareness and pressure legislators and authorities for policy change.

One of the most effective tools for raising awareness is the yearly campaign commemorating the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (November 25 to December 10). This campaign draws attention to the issue and advocates for new laws and policies to protect women and girls. Through radio and print media, the campaign has brought the subject of violence against women and children into the public domain and kept it on national and regional political agendas. In Vanuatu, for example, the CAVAWs carry out community-level celebrations for the 16 Days campaign, for International Women's Day and other related dates/events. In PNG, many men and women wear black to work on Thursdays to remind others about women who have died from violence. In 2007, while the review team was visiting, the PNG *Courier-Post*, Dame Carol Kidu, and others sponsored a petition drive and presented signatures to Parliament, demanding more attention be paid to curbing the apparent increase in horrific crimes of violence against women.

A range of prevention approaches are being used in East Timor, including awareness-raising with the general public through campaigns (especially around the 16 Days) and distributing printed materials; targeted awareness with men, women, youth and leaders; making the prevention of domestic violence a legal duty for local authorities; and linking awareness work to other types of activities.

Previously, we never heard about domestic violence. Now we hear about it all the time (male interpreter, review team).

Use of mass and alternative media

The team found numerous examples of how mainstream and alternative media have raised public awareness on violence against women throughout the region. Influencing mainstream mass media sources has, however, been challenging. Although they have enormous potential to draw attention to the situation of women suffering from violence, in practice these media sources often exacerbate the situation through their coverage—by sensationalising acts of brutality, violating the confidentiality of victims and promoting traditional stereotypes of women that justify violence. The FWCC and many other organisations in the region have, as a result, carried out training for journalists, to challenge their sensationalist, victim-blaming bias. In PNG, the editor of the *Courier-Post* has become an ally by reporting on and promoting activities of the women's movement, such as the petition to Parliament.

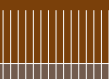
Lesson learned

Communication approaches are more effective in changing attitudes when they stimulate dialogue among participants, rather than simply giving information or prescribing new attitudes.

Other organisations, such as Fem'LINK Pacific, use alternative women's media channels to increase the visibility of women's rights initiatives throughout the region. Fem'LINK runs the program *Radio in a Suitcase* and a quarterly newsletter, which provide a medium for women to talk about their experiences and the key issues they face. In Solomon Islands, the organisation Vois Blong Mere Solomon Islands (VBMSI, or Voice of the Women in pidgin) uses radio media to document and disseminate women's stories and provide information to women about CEDAW and women's rights generally. In 2006, VBMSI entered into partnership with Fem'LINK to document cases related to peace and conflict, including violence against women and child abuse.

Entertainment education

Another pioneering approach to communication for social change uses entertainment to raise awareness on important social issues, including violence against women. Internationally, this type of work is known as 'education entertainment', or 'edutainment'. Evaluations of internationally-acclaimed edutainment programs such as *Soul City* in Africa, *Break Through* in India and *Sexto Sentido* in Nicaragua, have shown that multimedia programs can help transform attitudes toward gender by providing role models with which audiences can identify—role models who are dealing with everyday problems in new ways (Usdin, Christofides et al. 2000; Solorzano, Peña et al. 2005). Part of this strategy is to create an environment in which people start talking about new issues by saturating communities with mass media including television, radio, theatre, posters and leaflets, all focusing on the same messages. Mass media messages are reinforced with interpersonal-communication activities, such as workshops, town meetings and dialogue with cast members/entertainers.



The combination of this and local activities over a sustained period has proven to be an effective catalyst for individuals and communities to take action on important issues facing them.

The Vanuatu theatre group Wan Smol Bag (WSB) is an outstanding example of the powerful impact of edutainment programs at their best, and its influence can be seen throughout the region. WSB was established as an amateur theatre group in 1989. Since then it has developed a reputation for delivering high-quality, locally produced film, radio and theatre productions. WSB uses drama and creative materials drawing on contemporary issues to inform and encourage community discussion on issues, including HIV/AIDS, sexual health, domestic violence and citizens' rights and responsibilities.

With these activities, we are able to create an open and conducive atmosphere, whereby young people interact with peers, and many of whom are themselves offenders or victims of violence so that they can understand, accept, and change their behaviour to violence (group leader, WSB).

Part of what makes WSB so successful is the combination of multimedia and interpersonal-communication activities. Every year, WSB does outreach work on two different islands, for two weeks each. During the first week, they perform several times, then conduct workshops with chiefs, community leaders, CAVAWs and provincial councils.

Dialogue with the chiefs is very important because it's the men who have to change, and chiefs play such an important role in our society. It's their job to try and solve all the problems in the village, including marriage problems. Sometimes it's the church pastor, but mostly it's the chiefs, so we work with them to give them some suggestions on how to handle these cases with more respect for women.

We tell them about the laws to protect everyone, the fundamental rights and freedoms of the constitution, because people don't know about this and don't see how it affects their lives. It's a very big issue (WSB focus group discussion).

Men as allies in violence prevention

Most of the programs on reducing violence against women are targeted toward perpetrators, and it is like trying to deal with the symptom of violence but not the root of the violence (WSB focus group discussion).

Lesson learned

Men and boys can be powerful allies in violence prevention. The emphasis should be on positive benefits-based approaches with a clear gender and human rights perspective.

During the 1980s and 1990s, men were viewed primarily as perpetrators, rather than potential partners in violence prevention. Accordingly, most programs focused on teaching men how to deal with anger and conflict without resorting to violence. Most batterers' treatment programs are run in coordination with the criminal justice system, with attendance mandated by the court (as an alternative to a jail sentence). International research has found, however, that these programs are not effective in reducing male violence against women because they do not address underlying causes. This is particularly true in a setting where violence against women is culturally accepted (Morrison, Ellsberg et al. 2007).

Lesson learned

Violence is everyone's business

There is a need to reach out and build strong partnerships with key stakeholders, such as religious leaders, traditional leaders, local authorities, justice operators (particularly police and magistrates), teachers and health workers.

In the last decade, a new approach has emerged that engages men and boys in open dialogue about violence and masculinity, and focuses on the positive benefits of more gender-equitable values and practices. These programs encourage men and boys to develop new ways of relating with women and girls based on solidarity, cooperation and fairness rather than domination and control. This new approach is being promoted and supported by an international alliance of NGOs called MenEngage.¹⁷

Although international research in this area is scarce, a recent review by WHO of 58 interventions concluded that: 'Men and boys can and do change attitudes and behaviour related to sexual and reproductive health ... their use of violence against women, and questioning violence with other men ... as a result of relatively short-term programs.' The review found that programs rated as 'gender-transformative' had a higher rate of effectiveness.¹⁸ 'Programs with men and boys that include deliberate discussions of gender and masculinity and clear efforts to transform such gender norms seemed to be more effective than programs that merely acknowledge or mention gender norms and roles.' The review also pointed to the importance of integrated programs that '... reach beyond the individual level to the social context, including relationships, social institutions, gatekeepers, community leaders and the like.' The review noted that regrettably most programs are small in scale, and relatively few with men and boys go beyond the pilot stage or the short term (Barker, Ricardo et al. 2007; International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Instituto Promundo 2007).

Another reason engaging men and boys in dialogue around gender and power dynamics is important is that as women's organisations grow and public discourse begins to change matters, the potential for backlash increases, and with it, the

¹⁷ For more information: www.menengage.org

¹⁸ Programs were considered 'gender transformative' if they clearly discussed gender norms and the social construction of masculinity and made efforts to critically discuss, question, and/or transform such norms in the program.



potential for polarising the debate as a struggle between women and men. An example of this took place in Vanuatu, when the Violence against Men and Family Protection Centre opened in Lugaville, Vanuatu (Taylor). The Centre arose as a reaction to the work of the VWC and the increasing use of Domestic Violence Protection Orders, which, according to the Centre, was an effort to break up families and undermine the role of men as the head of the family.

Now, women provoke us constantly, and we're becoming no good because of them. They only think about one side (Presbyterian pastor and Centre member, quoted in Taylor).

The VWC has countered this backlash through its own work with male advocates, many of whom are also pastors, chiefs and community leaders who serve as positive role models for Vanuatu men.

Although several violence prevention programs target men and boys in Melanesia and East Timor, the majority are not 'gender transformative'. Much preventive work with men and young men, particularly programs implemented by faith-based organisations, present domestic violence as a 'family problem' that is the responsibility of both partners and can be prevented or solved through mutual understanding. Initiatives to reduce violence against women by appealing to men to be better husbands and fathers carry the risk of reinforcing the patriarchal attitudes and norms of male control which are the underlying causes of the problem.

As mentioned earlier, integrated violence prevention means engaging different sectors in dialogue around violence against women. Traditional leaders are enormously important, because they are, to a large degree, gatekeepers for support and/or justice women might seek. In most communities, traditional justice is based on reconciliation and community harmony rather than individual rights. Some groups have succeeded in 'negotiating' cultural change that is more supportive of women's right to live without violence. The Male Advocates Program, implemented in Fiji and Vanuatu, is an example (Box 7.1).

BOX 7.1: ENGAGING MALE ADVOCATES IN PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN FIJI AND VANUATU

The Male Advocates Program in Fiji was started in 2002 by the FWCC. The aim was to engage men as allies in challenging violence against women, and encourage them to take responsibility for the issue. The first program was carried out among Fijian military personnel, but since then many other influential male leaders and public figures have participated. Many have reported life-changing transformations. The program has since been adapted and replicated in some other countries in the region, including Vanuatu and Cook Islands.

The Male Advocates Program implemented in Vanuatu by the VWC is modelled after the training program set up in Suva by the FWCC. The first men recruited to the program were trained in Suva by the FWCC. Subsequent training courses have been held in Port Vila with the help of the FWCC.

The VWC strategy is to engage men in leadership positions in their communities, particularly police officers and village chiefs, to support violence prevention activities. In Vanuatu, male advocates have played a pivotal role in establishing the CAVAWs. This has allowed them to participate in a broader effort and play a leading role in violence prevention in their communities. In addition to police officers and other local authorities, many traditional chiefs have undergone male advocacy training, which has facilitated dialogue between women activists and local councils of chiefs.

East Timor is alone amongst countries visited in having an active organisation of men who base their work on analysis of their own personal practice. This informs their social activism on encouraging men's participation in the struggle against violence against women, and on gender equality more broadly. As the leaders of the Association of Men Against Violence or *Asosiasaun Mane Kontra Violensia* (AMKV) reported:

Transformation needs to start in the home, because that's where the patriarchal system starts. That's where discrimination comes from.

AMKV is an NGO that has maintained a high level of volunteer activism despite only sporadic, project-specific funding (from Oxfam, Caritas and UNFPA). It is a stellar example of 'south-to-south' capacity-building, having been formed following the trainings conducted in Dili in 2002 by the well-known Nicaraguan men's group, *Puntos de Encuentro*. It currently has 15 focal points in seven districts (six in Dili) and a fluctuating number of other volunteers.

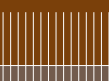
Wherever possible, AMKV begins its community engagement by helping groups of community men organise around their own priorities, which usually involve income generation (e.g. from community gardens, doing carpentry work, or selling snacks). Discussion of violence against women and gender equality arises naturally during these activities.

Faith-based approaches to violence prevention

The standard injunction of male clergy for victims of violence to respond with forgiveness and unconditional Christian love to their perpetrators only encourages more violence, thus avoiding dealing with the destructive consequences of violence behaviours. Churches that continue with this teaching have forgotten that Christian forgiveness must go hand in hand with justice (Felemoni-Tofaeono 2004).

Churches in Melanesia and East Timor are strong, and church leaders are key stakeholders in community development and social-change efforts. Although the first place many women experiencing violence go to seek help is to pastors and religious leaders, the most common advice they receive there is to reconcile with their husbands and 'forgive and forget'. Biblical teachings are frequently used to justify male domination and violence. This is beginning to change, however, and several churches and faith-based organisations have taken a strong stand against violence against women, and set up counselling services and shelters for abused women and girls. Examples are women's shelters such as Haus Ruth in PNG, run by City Mission; the Christian Care Centre in Solomon Islands, sponsored by the Church of Melanesia; and the Salvation Army safe houses in Fiji. Although these organisations play a much-appreciated role in providing support for abused women and children, few are critical of the patriarchal values that support violence against women.

The Weavers Program of the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools is a noteworthy example of the gender-transformative approach to violence prevention.



Weavers focus on domestic violence against women as part of its core program. They designed and developed a curriculum for working with theological schools and faith-based organisations on violence against women in the South Pacific. The curriculum includes readings on violence against women as a human-rights violation and social problem, and calls for reflection and action against violence against women within Christian communities and churches of the Pacific region. One of the program's strengths is that it directly faces difficult issues, such as '... the ways in which biblical interpretations and unsound theologies have contributed to the problem of violence against women ...', by encouraging women to be submissive to their husbands and forgive offenders. One program contributor called on communities and churches of Oceania '... to remember the untold, hidden, painful stories of women who have been victims of domestic violence ...' and '... to plead for a contribution to the call of worldwide Christian activists to overcome all forms of violence against women, as followers of the Christ of peace and love'.

7.4 New opportunities for violence prevention

Community mobilisation

Experience has shown it is much easier to change attitudes than behaviour. Therefore, raising awareness is only the first step in preventing violence at community level. Chapter 5 highlighted the important role community-based networks play in increasing women's access to support. But these networks also play a key role in preventing violence against women, by sending powerful messages that this is no longer a private matter, but a matter that affects everyone. This approach will likely encourage women to come forward with their stories, but also put men 'on notice' that their community will no longer tolerate mistreatment of women.

In addition to direct support, members of groups such as the CAVAWs in Vanuatu set an example by their own conduct, by carrying out awareness-raising activities and serving as a catalyst for community dialogue and action to prevent violence.

With the exception of the CAVAWs in Vanuatu, there has been relatively little systematic community mobilisation work in Melanesia and East Timor. Many groups carry out occasional awareness-raising activities in communities, but for the most part they conduct one-off visits without systematic follow-up. This does not lead to ongoing community activism.

Lesson learned

Violence prevention is more than raising awareness. It requires long-term, systematic engagement of communities, institutions and decision-makers. The most effective community mobilisation efforts use a positive, approach that emphasises the benefits of not using violence.

LeCommunity mobilisation refers to something more than awareness-raising—it is a process of social change that requires intimate knowledge of, and respect for, a community and the belief that communities can change. It is also a long-term process in which individuals, families and local leaders join together to encourage sustained action on the part of community members to change attitudes. The goal is to create a more supportive, nurturing environment for women and girls.

The Uganda-based Raising Voices organisation has developed a methodology for stimulating community engagement for violence prevention, which has been used throughout East and Southern Africa with great success.¹⁹ It is based on a theory of social change which is founded on the belief that individuals and communities make important changes in stages, rather than all at once. Understanding these stages helps activists initiate change in communities that lack awareness about violence against women as a problem, guide them through increasing their knowledge on the issue, prepare them to take action against violence in their own lives and in their communities, and sustain change. The emphasis is on transforming attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviour, in a way that involves the whole community (Michau and Naker 2003). Raising Voices has identified ‘power’ as a key concept for working with violence—not only the power of men over women, but also the power within individuals and in communities to take action. The organisation encourages communities and families to consider ‘balancing power’ between men and women as an alternative to patriarchal norms.

Working with youth

We need to target these programs at the young people who are the future of the country and who will either be victims of violence or perpetrators in the communities. They need to learn about violence today for tomorrow (focus group discussion, WSB).

As the members of a focus group of youth in Vanuatu expressed, young people are the future of the country, and reaching them with new messages about gender relations is crucial for preventing violence. Many groups, such as Save the Children in Solomon Islands, target youth in Melanesia and East Timor, particularly around life skills, livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention. Some programs already have an explicit gender focus. Very few, however, address violence against women and girls in a meaningful way. This lost opportunity should be addressed immediately because violence is a constant part of the lives of children and young people. Those not being physically, sexually or emotionally abused have witnessed such abuse within their families and communities. This is particularly true in areas that have experienced conflict. Research has shown that boys who witness or experience violence in the home are much more likely to become violent adults, and girls who witness or experience violence are more likely to be victimised as adults.

¹⁹ More information: www.raisingvoices.org and through the GBV Prevention Network of East and Southern Africa at: www.preventgbvafrica.org



Lesson learned

There is an urgent need to incorporate awareness-raising and skills on violence prevention and gender equality into programs for youth—in schools and in informal settings.

The impact of violence on a girl's future is devastating. She is less likely to finish school, more likely to have an early or unwanted pregnancy, more likely to suffer from a range of mental and physical ailments for the rest of her life, and more likely to be unable to participate as a fully functioning member of society. Therefore, violence prevention programs are urgent for youth, in schools and in informal settings. In Latin America, *Instituto Promundo* in Brazil and *PATH/Intercambios* in Nicaragua have developed tools for working with adolescent girls and boys, as well as pre-adolescents, to strengthen self-esteem and empowerment in the case of girls and more gender-equitable behaviours amongst boys.²⁰

Integrating violence prevention into health and education programs

As mentioned in the last chapter, the health and education sectors have a potentially important role to play, not only in detecting and supporting victims of violence, but in encouraging gender-equitable attitudes and non-violent behaviour. Because violence is such a major threat to the health and wellbeing of women and girls, it should be addressed in community education activities on sexual and reproductive health, including safe motherhood, HIV/AIDS prevention, mental health and family planning.

This project did not find a specific program in the region that integrates gender and violence into school-based curricula or into reproductive health education programs. This area needs to be substantially strengthened. The Safe Schools Project in Africa and the *InterCambios* Alliance in Latin America have developed tools that could be easily adapted to other settings.²¹

The increasing spread of HIV & AIDS, particularly in PNG, although devastating in its effects, has, paradoxically, opened the door for preventive work on violence against women. HIV & AIDS is having a disproportionate impact on the region's women. This reflects women's greater vulnerability to HIV and the fact that pervasive gender inequalities undermine women's ability to negotiate safe sexual practices. As a result, women often contract the virus from their male partner. This reality has created an environment in which many people are ready to recognise and address gender inequality, violence against women, and the need to empower women as a means of reversing the epidemic. In PNG, several important steps have been taken to integrate gender and violence prevention into national HIV/AIDS programs and policies (Box 7.2).

²⁰ More information: www.promundo.org.br, www.alianzaintercambios.org and www.path.org

²¹ More information on health education and violence against women: www.alianzaintercambios.org (in English and Spanish) and the Family Violence Prevention Fund: www.endabuse.org More information on the United States Agency for International Development-funded Safe Schools project: http://www.ungei.org/resources/1612_528.html

An innovative, community-based program called Stepping Stones was recently introduced in Fiji as part of an HIV/AIDS prevention strategy. Stepping Stones addresses sexual and reproductive health within the context of gender relations and engages women, men and youth in talks over several weeks of workshops, all facilitated by trained promoters. The program was originally implemented in Africa, and has been adapted for use in the Pacific region and piloted in Fiji. International research, as well as a recent evaluation on the efforts in Fiji, provides evidence that the intervention can be effective in reducing HIV risk behaviours and gender-inequitable norms (Jewkes, Nduna et al. 2006).

That HIV & AIDS is, in part, being fuelled by violence against women, does not mean that violence against women should be seen predominantly through the lens of HIV & AIDS. A comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to addressing violence against women is required; HIV & AIDS programming provides just one component of such a response.

BOX 7.2: HIV/AIDS AS AN ENTRY POINT FOR PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Through collaboration between the National AIDS Council and AusAID's HIV/AIDS support programs, several new initiatives have been introduced in PNG, including:

- > Required training for all paid and unpaid persons working on HIV/AIDS, with core modules on gender inequality, violence against women and human rights (since 2002).
- > The *National Gender Policy and Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS 2006–2010*, adopted in 2007, which asserts gender inequalities and violence against women as priority strategies. This is a first in the Asia-Pacific region.
- > A handbook distributed to all organisations working on HIV/AIDS, giving guidelines on how to integrate gender sensitivity and prevention of violence against women into activities on HIV/AIDS.
- > Community Conversations: a method for community mobilisation around HIV/AIDS that addresses gender power inequalities and is now being widely adopted by the government and NGOs.
- > Save the Children's work with young people in Goroka on sexual health, using participatory action research that links violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

Women as peacemakers

Women have played a crucial role in helping resolve the armed conflicts that have plagued the region, such as tribal fighting and the Bougainville conflict in PNG, tensions in Solomon Islands, and conflict in East Timor. In many settings, these courageous women have also started to take a stand on violence against women and speak up against violence of any kind (Box 7.3 is an example from PNG). Drawing attention to the links between violence against women and social violence is extremely important and should be encouraged.

Lesson learned

Women have played a crucial role in restoring and maintaining peace throughout the region. They can also play a crucial role in preventing violence against women.



BOX 7.3: WOMEN AS PEACEMAKERS: KUP WOMEN FOR PEACE, SIMBU PROVINCE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The organisation that became Kup Women for Peace (KWP) grew out of the activities of three women who were so driven by the atrocities they had experienced during 30 years of tribal fighting that they were willing to risk their lives by breaking custom and secretly meeting with women of enemy tribes to talk about peace. They formed a committee of women in each tribe and clan and, in 2002, peace was finally made. Since then, KWP volunteers have helped maintain peace by acting as polling officers during national elections, doing community awareness on good governance, helping arrange the public surrender of armed gangs, and obtaining water tanks for schools.

Despite peace, ‘wife-beating is still common’, so KWP volunteers carry out regular house-to-house awareness:

We move around and sleep in people’s houses with families. After we speak to people from that household, we move on to other houses and do awareness there. We also go to the men’s [meeting] house at night, and in the daytime, we go to the small markets in the community. People ask lots of questions and they learn so much this way.

This face-to-face method is highly effective because of the illiteracy barrier (most women’s schooling was disrupted by the fighting) and because whole families learn together.

Women’s economic and political empowerment

Because women’s status is so low throughout the region, increasing their participation in political leadership positions and economic and social status at all levels must be a priority. This means strengthening women’s participation and leadership in community development and economic programs, as well as increasing women’s representation in national-level leadership positions, including in Parliament.

East Timor is unique in the region for strongly promoting the political empowerment of women as a means of preventing violence against them. Remarkable progress has been made in increasing women’s participation in public decision-making and leadership. During the elections of 2001, for example, affirmative action measures resulted in a national Parliament with 26 per cent female membership. The Independent Electoral Commission, which oversees and monitors the three levels of elections, has 25 per cent female membership (Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 2007). Women are also increasingly represented in high positions in government (e.g. at ministerial and vice-ministerial levels in the ministries of state, administration, planning and finance, foreign affairs and education). The Participation and Enhancement of Rural Women’s Leadership are innovative approaches to grassroots empowerment of women that have beneficial effects on violence against women.

Lesson learned

Women’s economic and political empowerment is key to preventing violence. Therefore, increasing women’s participation in leadership positions and supporting economic livelihood programs are part of the strategy for violence prevention.

Economic development programs, particularly those targeting women, should also incorporate education around violence against women and gender relations. There is evidence from Bangladesh and other parts of the world that programs increasing a woman's access to economic resources can put her at risk of increased violence, if not carefully addressed in the program. This is particularly true in settings where a woman's status is low, because increasing her income can lead to greater conflict within the family (Koenig, Hossain et al. 1999). On the other hand, if such issues are addressed within the community and among women leaders, such programs can significantly contribute to reducing violence against women. A random control study in South Africa, for example, found that women who participated in a program of micro-lending that involved education about rights and violence against women, as well as in community mobilisation activities, reduced the levels of violence by 50 per cent over a two-year period. The researchers noted that repayment rates were also improved as a result (Pronyk, Hargreaves et al. 2006; Kim, Watts et al. 2007).

In East Timor, several initiatives address the links between violence against women and women's empowerment, such as the Alola Foundation, Oxfam and FOKUPERS, which use economic or community development opportunities as entry points for raising awareness (Box 7.4). The review team saw opportunities for integrating more education around violence and women's rights in other countries, such as the Vanuatu Women's Development Scheme micro-financing program, the AusAID-funded community-sector program in Solomon Islands, and the Rokotanikeni Association's economic empowerment program for women from West Areare, Malaita.

BOX 7.4: COMMUNITY-BASED INCOME GENERATION AND AWARENESS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN EAST TIMOR

The Alola Foundation was established in 2001 in response to the horrific abduction and gang rape by militia of Alola, a 14-year-old girl. It has increasingly moved toward providing practical support for the economic empowerment of women and has now teamed with Oxfam to enable rural women's groups (with most members younger than 30) to set up income-generating cooperatives.

Three-day village-based workshops are offered, which begin with interactive methods for stimulating discussion of the main forms of violence and discrimination experienced by women in their daily lives, such as discrimination in land- and property-inheritance patterns, male dominance in leadership, and cultural attitudes that disempower and blame women. The workshops then help women identify small, manageable steps they can take in their own lives to reduce violence and discrimination.

The workshops form income-generating cooperatives that help reduce women's economic dependence on men. Alola provides continuing training and support to the cooperatives, including marketing opportunities.



TABLE 7.1 APPROACHES AND PITFALLS FOR IMPROVING VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Potentially promising approaches	Typical pitfalls and problematic approaches
Encouraging media coverage of violence against women	Mainstream media sensationalises violence without good training and follow-up.
Working with men to prevent violence	Messages that reinforce male entitlement and patriarchal attitudes (e.g. the man is the head of the household and should not use violence to enforce his authority).
Working through faith-based organisations	Pressuring women to reconcile with abusers; messages that reinforce women's obligations to submit to their husbands and forgive violent behaviour without addressing the root causes of violence.
Working with youth	Victim-blaming messages that reinforce dominant patterns of masculinity and place responsibility for preventing violence on girls; approaches that do not address the need for changes in gender relations and attitudes.
Community mobilisation	Often carried out as one-off activities rather than ongoing processes; does not involve community members as leaders in the process; does not involve all members of the community, but focuses only on one sector (women, leaders etc.); does not use gender and human-rights approaches; focuses only on the harmful effects of violence and not the positive benefits to the family and the community of violence prevention; places responsibility for violence prevention on women, or conversely, on male-dominated leadership, without involving women; does not challenge normative gender attitudes.
Mass communication activities	Messages reinforce dominant gender norms; are not combined with local, interpersonal communication activities; are not based on formative research and audience surveys to identify the most effective messages.

7.5 Recommendations for strengthening violence prevention efforts

1. **Prioritise support for initiatives with strong emphasis on identifying and transforming gender norms.** Primary prevention of violence against women is based on fostering community norms of gender equality as well as non-violence. A number of innovative strategies have been adopted that address the norms, attitudes and behaviours (rooted in gender inequality) that underlie violence against women, but many require additional support. Priority should be given to:
 - > advocacy efforts aimed at raising community awareness around violence against women and calling for legislative and policy-level action to address the issue

- > mass and alternative media initiatives that increase the visibility of women's rights initiatives and offer a forum for women's voices to be heard
 - > multimedia edutainment activities that offer a safe and entertaining, community-wide forum for opening up discussion around violence against women and related issues
 - > community mobilisation that focuses on prevention as a process of social change and sustained action on the part of the entire community.
2. **Strengthen partnerships with a range of actors and sectors not traditionally involved in addressing violence against women.** Initiatives that show the most promise engage all sectors of the community, especially key decision-makers and opinion leaders. Churches, faith-based organisations and traditional chiefs are important partners in galvanising community-based transformation of gender norms and related behaviours. Men and male youth generally have not been engaged in efforts to prevent violence against women, yet they are critical partners in effecting long-lasting change.
3. **Identify strategic opportunities for integrating violence against women into different program areas and defining links between violence against women and related issues.** Areas include:
- > micro-finance or micro-grant initiatives targeting women living in poverty and offering women a measure of economic empowerment
 - > workplace initiatives and policies addressing sexual harassment and promoting gender parity and equity
 - > education-sector programs aimed at: (a) challenging stereotypes and gender norms in materials and curricula and promoting gender equality; (b) achieving gender parity in classroom representation of girls and boys at all educational levels; and (c) implementing policies to prevent violence against girls in schools and punish violent offenders.
 - > health-sector programs addressing the links between violence against women, HIV infection, safe motherhood, sexual rights and factors that increase women's vulnerability
 - > peace-building activities, especially where women are mobilising to end conflict and foster peace and reconciliation in their communities
 - > disaster preparedness and response programs.



CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt that much progress has been made in the last 15 years in addressing violence against women. Thanks largely to the tireless efforts of women's rights activists, the issue is now recognised by all governments in the region as a serious social and human-rights problem that must be addressed in the context of national development. All governments involved have ratified the CEDAW and made a public commitment to ending violence against women.

However, there remains an enormous gap between public discourse and reality. Although national policies and laws addressing violence against women have been put in place in most countries in the region, implementation has lagged for various reasons, including:

- > inadequate resources, both by national governments and international donors
- > government commitments that change with political tides
- > gains that are often fragile and short-lived
- > organisational capacity that is weak in most countries—in governments as well as civil society.

International donors have made important contributions to ongoing efforts, but support is poorly coordinated—between donors, and even among programs within the same agencies. To maximise the impact of international cooperation, it is crucial to develop broad strategies involving a greatly increased and sustained contribution of financial resources, but also a commitment to include gender equality and violence in the policy dialogue with partner governments. This should be carried out at sector-program level, and be a central theme in overall cooperation strategies. Monitoring progress with clear indicators is also key to ensuring that international cooperation results in a meaningful contribution to ending violence against women.

8.1 Recommendations

The recommendations of this report emerged from the participatory approach used in this evaluation and represent a proposed action plan for all actors. They have been included throughout the report in relevant sections. They are also presented together here as a proposed action plan for increasing women's access to justice, improving treatment services and preventing violence against women. It is important that these recommendations are seen as a starting point, rather than the end point.

Ownership of this action plan is vitally important to its ongoing success. The authors also recognise that each country in the study is at a different point in its efforts to address violence against women, and that each country will have different priorities and different levels of capacity to implement the recommendations. The authors have therefore refrained from assigning recommendations to particular actors, or strictly

sequencing them, believing that implementation should form part of the ongoing negotiations between Australia, partner governments, other donors and civil-society actors. This in itself is a recommendation to both Australia and other actors—use these recommendations to lobby for, negotiate and act on a concrete plan of action. Having said that, there are recommendations that, while not exclusive to Australia, can be implemented by AusAID, within its own programming in the immediate term. These are presented first.²²

8.2 Recommendations for Australia

There are no recommendations for Australia that cannot be implemented by other actors and there are no regional recommendations that Australia cannot incorporate into its day-to-day programming and activity identification and design processes. There are, however, recommendations Australia can act on *now*, either as part of its program management or in existing activities, without having to wait for others to come on board.

These represent an integrated approach and are intended to be implemented in entirety. They are not a menu from which options for addressing violence against women should be selected in isolation. In other words, these recommendations will not make much of an impact on treating and preventing violence against women if they are not implemented in an integrated way. Indeed, if they are implemented in isolation, they may cause more harm than good.

1. **Ensure all interventions are grounded in a human rights and gender-transformative approach.** While this is a recommendation for *all* actors, it provides Australia, in the immediate term, with a touchstone for helping to determine whether an activity or form of support is likely to be gender transformative and therefore effective in dealing with the root causes of violence against women. This means all programs at national, provincial and local levels should explicitly acknowledge that violence against women is based on unequal power relations between women and men and women and that gender inequality is reflected in community norms, institutional policies and practices and laws. Wherever possible, programs should adopt an integrated approach and aim to address the causes of violence and transform gender relations, rather than simply providing palliative care.
2. **Step up its high-level policy dialogue on violence against women with partner governments.** Significant and sustained progress in reducing violence against women is contingent on a demonstration of greater leadership on this issue from partner governments in each country. Australia can encourage partner governments to assume greater leadership. It should prioritise frank discussions about the problem of and solutions to violence against women in its policy dialogue with each partner government. (This needs to be handled with sensitivity, much like Australia's approach to corruption.)

²² Note that when these recommendations appear in the main report, they are directed at all actors, and the wording has been changed slightly to provide an AusAID focus here.



3. **Support efforts to strengthen the evidence base on violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor.** Australia is in a position to take the lead in the need for more research on violence against women, first with its own programs and then as a regional actor. Priority should be on:
 - > Research that documents the prevalence, characteristics and risk factors of all types of violence against women and girls—based on methodologies already in use internationally (to enhance the ability to compare findings across countries).
 - > Efforts to strengthen national statistics offices and incorporate indicators of violence against women into national information systems, such as HIV & AIDS surveillance.
 - > Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of promising practices, with a particular focus on identifying and reacting to any potential backlash that may arise.
 - > Support for broadly disseminating research findings and building regional capacity to carry out research in women's rights organisations and formal research institutions.
4. **Ensure that programs are coordinated.** Multisectoral coordination is key, particularly for partner governments; however, Australia can 'start at home' by
 - > **Ensuring large programs are coordinated with each other as well as internally:** AusAID should work across sectors within program areas to ensuring own sectoral programs are coordinated and working together to increase women's access to justice, improve support services and prevent violence against women.
 - > **Encourage coordination of aid among donors to maximise impact:** As much as possible, support should be provided to organisation working on violence against women as core funding with multiple year grants, rather than just project-focused or earmarked funding. AusAID should particularly seek to reduce the multi-donor reporting burden on CSOs working to address violence against women.
5. **Build capacity in project management, communication and gender analysis.** Australia has an opportunity to greatly improve its own capacity in gender analysis and gender sensitive programming. In supporting capacity building of local organisations more broadly, priority should be on building build a common body of knowledge and experience in the region, through:
 - > supporting regional initiatives for building the capacity of local groups in key areas such as monitoring and evaluation, program management, counselling skills, communication and advocacy

- > strengthening existing networks, including opportunities for shared learning with innovative programs inside and outside the region
 - > supporting joint initiatives in developing tools, program materials, etc., to improve the quality of work in the region
 - > supporting exchanges and mentoring opportunities for organisations in the region.
6. **Ensure that all training delivered or funded by AusAID is based on best practice.** Training, particularly in the law and justice sector, is a common approach for AusAID when the Agency is seeking to raise awareness of violence against women and build the capacity of key actors to respond. However, more effort is needed to incorporate lessons learnt on successful approaches to training. To maximise impact AusAID must ensure:
- > training is based on a human rights approach and is gender transformative
 - > training is appropriately targeted and ongoing (rather than one-off or ad hoc)
 - > appropriate follow up and support for those who have been trained
 - > monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to assess the impact of the training and monitor potential backlash.

The recommendations listed above are not exclusive to Australia, and should be viewed as a critical part of any plan for action.

8.3 Recommendations for all stakeholders

1. **Encourage coordination of aid among international donors, to maximise impact.** As much as possible, support should be provided to organisations working on violence against women as core funding, rather than project-focused or earmarked, with multiple-year grants.
2. **Support multisectoral coordination, including government and non-government actors, at both national and local levels.** Support could include:
 - > developing and implementing national, provincial, municipal and community plans of action for preventing violence against women
 - > supporting interagency task forces on violence against women (e.g. within the context of CEDAW reporting)
 - > conducting national coordinated campaigns and awareness-raising activities
 - > collaborating on training and capacity building of local stakeholders across sectors.
3. **Strengthen women's leadership and economic and political participation at all levels.** Priority should be given to providing women the necessary tools, skills and opportunities to participate fully in the social and economic development of their communities and nations.



8.4 Recommendations for increasing women's access to justice

4. **Support national legal reform efforts.** This should address specific new or reformed legislation on domestic and sexual violence, including the age of consent and marriage, and other areas of law limiting women's ability to obtain protection (such as laws relating to marriage breakdown, custody of children, maintenance, property rights, inheritance and sex work). Equally important is monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of any new or reformed legislation.
5. **Commit long-term support to strengthening police response to violence against women.** Four concurrent approaches are recommended:
 - > ongoing training for police at all levels, including introducing clear protocols for responding to domestic and sexual violence that emphasise women's legal right to be protected from violence
 - > strengthening and monitoring the dedicated units for domestic and sexual violence that exist in all countries in the region
 - > applying consistent disciplinary action against police offenders
 - > monitoring women's experiences and case outcomes.
6. **Strengthen the response of the formal justice system to violence against women.** Ensure that laws and policies on violence against women are properly implemented by:
 - > transforming discriminatory attitudes through systematic training of lawyers, magistrates, judges and other justice system personnel on gender and human rights issues
 - > promoting women's participation at all levels of the justice system.
7. **Strengthen the willingness and ability of community-based justice systems to respond to women's right to protection from violence.**
 - > Support dialogue between justice-sector personnel, women's NGOs and traditional leaders on how to honour women's human rights through traditional or restorative justice.
 - > Promote increased participation of women in justice-related decision-making bodies, and monitoring outcomes.
8. **Increase support for NGOs offering women legal literacy and human rights training.** Wherever possible, men should also be informed about women's legal and human rights.

8.5 Recommendations for improving support services

9. **Prioritise long-term support and resources for organisations providing support services.** Long-term commitment, especially in the form of core funding, enables promising programs to develop capacity, deepen human rights perspectives, scale up services and expand the breadth of support for victims. This is especially important where capacity is a challenge and access is usually limited to urban areas.
10. **Encourage and invest in integrated models of service provision.** Integrated, multisectoral approaches facilitating women's access to critical services and resources are key to meeting the holistic needs of survivors of violence. Models for support and scale-up include:
 - > one-stop shops at health-care facilities that integrate medical care and counselling with access to police and legal services, shelter and longer-term support where available
 - > women's groups and NGOs that provide counselling, safe haven and other services aimed at empowering women, offering options and supporting their choices regarding leaving abusive relationships—support should be prioritised for organisations demonstrating good levels of coordination and communication with other groups working in the area
11. **Increase and extend access for rural women.** In tandem with recommendation 13, aim to ensure that women living far from urban centres have meaningful access to services. Support should include strengthening health-sector initiatives on violence against women.
12. **Increase support for informal community-based networks, including safe havens.** Informal networks provide the only meaningful access to services at the village level for the vast majority of women in all five countries and, as such, need increased support. They are essential components of any strategic approach designed to strengthen overall reach and access.
13. **Strengthen and increase government engagement in support services, especially in the health and education sectors.** Place emphasis on:
 - > Health sector—creating conditions in which primary health care providers can gain the skills and knowledge to: identify women living with violence; provide basic information, counselling, and appropriate medical care and documentation; and refer women to services for follow up.
 - > Education sector—developing national policies to prevent and sanction violence against girls in schools, and deal appropriately with misconduct.

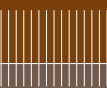


14. **Support capacity-building to improve the quality of services.** This should include providing standardised/accredited training on counselling for violence against women and standardised protocols for service delivery.

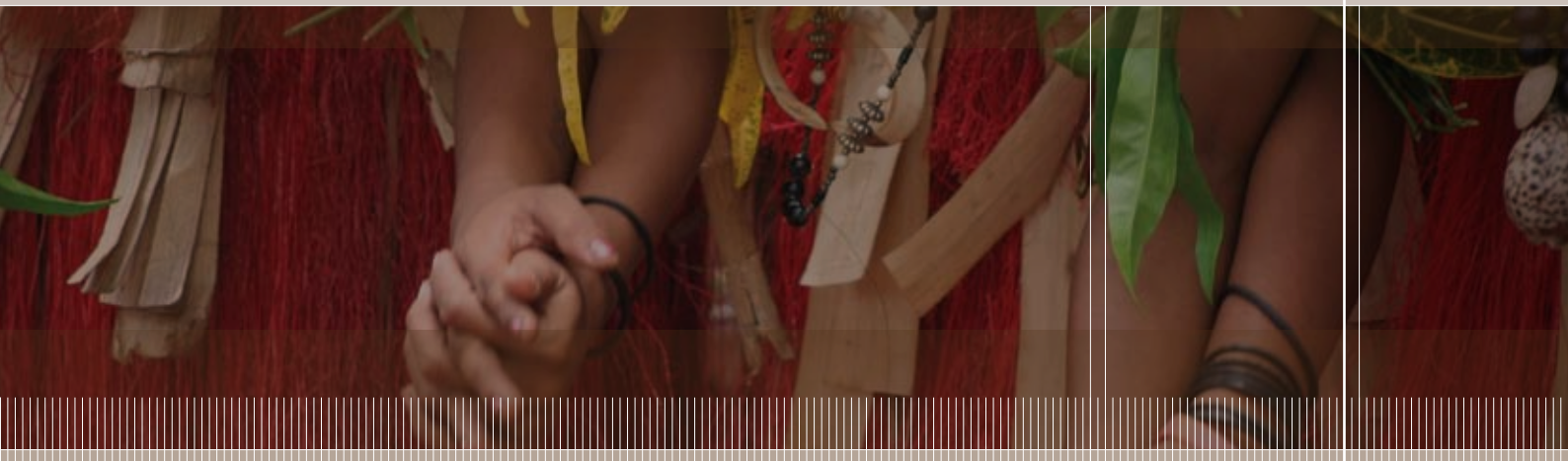
8.6 Recommendations for strengthening violence prevention efforts

15. **Prioritise support for initiatives with strong emphasis on identifying and transforming gender norms.** Primary prevention of violence against women is based on fostering community norms of gender equality as well as on non-violent behaviour. A number of innovative strategies have already been adopted that address the norms, attitudes and behaviours (rooted in gender equality) that underlie violence against women, but many require additional support. Priority should be given to:
- > advocacy efforts aimed at raising community awareness around violence against women and calling for legislative and policy-level action to address the issue
 - > mass and alternative media initiatives that increase the visibility of women's rights initiatives and offer a forum for women's voices to be heard
 - > multimedia 'edutainment' activities that offer a safe, entertaining and community-wide forum for opening dialogue around violence against women and related issues
 - > community mobilisation that focuses on prevention as a process of social change that requires sustained action on the part of the entire community.
16. **Strengthen partnerships with a range of actors and sectors not traditionally involved in addressing violence against women.** Initiatives that show the most promise engage all sectors of the community, especially key decision-makers and opinion leaders. Churches and faith-based organisations and traditional chiefs are important partners in galvanising community-based transformation of gender norms and related behaviours. Men and male youth generally have not been engaged in efforts to prevent violence against women, yet they are critical partners in effecting long-lasting change.
17. **Identify strategic opportunities for integrating interventions that address violence against women into different areas.** These include:
- > micro-finance or micro-grant initiatives targeting women living in poverty and offering women a measure of economic empowerment
 - > workplace initiatives and policies addressing sexual harassment and promoting gender parity and equity

- > education-sector programs aimed at: (a) challenging stereotypes and gender norms in materials and curricula, and promoting gender equality; (b) achieving gender parity in classroom representation of girls and boys at all educational levels; and (c) implementing policies to prevent violence against girls in schools, and punish violent offenders.
- > health-sector programs addressing the links between violence against women, HIV infection, safe motherhood, sexual rights and factors that increase women's vulnerability
- > peace-building activities, especially where women are mobilising to end conflict and foster peace and reconciliation in their communities
- > disaster preparedness and response programs.



ANNEXES



ANNEX 1: SITUATION OF WOMEN IN MELANESIA AND EAST TIMOR: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

		EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
POPULATION²³ (THOUSANDS)		1,108.8	931.7	5,931.8	581.3	215.4
	Female	545.6	464.4	2905.3	287.0	105.5
	Male	563.2	467.3	3026.5	294.4	110.0
	Ratio	103/100	101/100	104/100	107/100	104/100
Age 0–14	Population (thousands)	389.7 (35.1%)	284.9 (30.6%)	2,210.7 (37.3%)	233.1 (40.1%)	67.4 (31.3%)
	Female	191.7 (17.3%)	139.5 (15.0%)	1,086.5 (18.3)	114.2 (19.6%)	33.0 (15.3%)
Age 15–64	Population (thousands)	682.5 (61.6%)	603.8 (64.8%)	3,481.4 (58.7%)	328.3 (56.5%)	139.6 (64.8%)
	Female	334.9 (30.2%)	301.3 (32.3%)	1,690.1 (28.5%)	162.3 (27.9%)	68.4 (31.8%)
Age 65+	Population (thousands)	36.6 (3.3%)	43.0 (4.6%)	239.7 (4%)	20 (3.4%)	8.5 (3.9%)
	Female	19.0 (1.7%)	23.6 (2.5%)	128.7 (2.2%)	10.5 (1.8%)	4.1 (1.9%)
Rate of growth²⁴		2.05%	1.39%	2.12%	2.47%	1.43%
Rural %²⁵		73.5%	49.2%	86.6%	93.0%	76.5%

²³ The Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook 2008: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ The UNDP Human Development Report: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators> Latest figures are for 2005.

B. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER-RELATED DEVELOPMENT INDICES RANKINGS (OUT OF 177 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES)

	EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
Gender-Related Development Index ²⁶	-	82	124	-	-
Human Development Index ²⁷	150	92	145	129	120

C. HEALTH INDICATORS

	EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
Maternal mortality / 100,000 live births ²⁸	380*	210*	470*	220*	68
Infant mortality /1,000 Live births ²⁹	42.0	11.9	46.7	19.7	50.8
Adolescent fertility rate/1,000 live births (15–19 years old) ³⁰	177	37	60	47	49
Total fertility rate (live births/woman) ³¹	3.4	2.7	3.7	3.7	2.57
Prevalence of people living with HIV/AIDS	- ³² [<0.2]	600 [0.1 (0.1-0.4)]	0.6% -60,000 [1.8 (0.9-4.4)]	6 cases, 3 women	2 women
Women with access to skilled birth attendants ³³	18%	99%	41%	85%	88%

*Figures adjusted by UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA to account for misreporting and misclassification.

26 Human Development Report, 2007–2008: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/268.html> East Timor, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were not given gender-related development index rankings because of insufficient disaggregated data.

27 Human Development Report, 2007–2008: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/279.html>

28 Human Development Report, 2007–2008: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/98.html>

29 The Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook 2008.

30 Defined as the number of live births among women ages 15–19 per 1000 women in that age group. World Bank Group GenderStats Database, <http://devdata.worldbank.org/home.asp> Figures are for 2004.

31 The Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook 2008.

32 Human Development Report 2007–2008: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/79.html>

33 Human Development Report. Figures are for 2005.

D. EDUCATION INDICATORS

		EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
Literacy rate ³⁴	Female	52 (50.1)	95.9	50.9	N/A	N/A
	Male	65	95.9 ¹³	63.4	N/A	N/A
Gross primary enrolment ³⁶	Female rate	145%	105%	70%*	94%	116%
	Ratio of m/f rates	0.92	0.98	0.88*	0.95	0.97
Gross secondary enrolment ³⁷	Female rate	52%	91%	23%*	27%	38%*
	Ratio of m/f rates	1.0	1.07	0.79*	0.83	0.86*
Gross tertiary enrolment ³⁸	Female rate	12%*	17%	-	-	4%*
	Ratio of m/f rates	1.48*	1.20	-	-	0.58*

*Data refer to an earlier year.

E. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

	EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
National Parliament seats held by women ³⁹	25.3%*	N/A / 109:7 prior to coup	0.9% 109:1	0% 50:0	3.8% 52:2

*Proportion after 2001 elections (originally members of the Constituent Assembly).

F. CONFLICT SITUATION

PNG	Bougainville civil war (1990–1999); ongoing provincial inter-ethnic conflicts.
Fiji	There have been four coups in the last 20 years.
Solomon Islands	Ethnic and inter-island conflict or tensions, 1998–2003.
East Timor	Occupation from 1975–1999; conflicts post independence from Indonesia.

³⁴ Human Development Report. Figures are for 1995–2005.

³⁵ Data questionable according to report.

³⁶ Human Development Report. Figures are for 2005. Gross enrolment refers to the total number of pupils of any age in a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the total population of the age group appropriate to that level.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Human Development Report 2007–2008.

G. LEGAL PROTECTION AND JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

	EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
CEDAW					
Acceded	2003	1995	1995	2002	1995
Reported	NONE	2002	NONE	NONE	2007
CONSTITUTION	Guarantees women's equality before the law and includes an anti-discrimination clause.	Guarantees women's equality before the law and includes an anti-discrimination clause, but not equal benefits or outcomes.	Guarantees women's equality before the law but does not contain a definition of discrimination or a specific anti-discrimination clause.	Does not guarantee women's equality before the law, but includes a comprehensive anti-discrimination clause.	Guarantees women's equality before the law, but not equal benefits or outcomes. Does not include anti-discrimination clauses.
SEXUAL ASSAULT LAW		Fiji has legislated against sexual assault, but laws provide inadequate protection. All sexual offences (except indecent assault) require penile penetration. Different categories of defilement for girls younger than 13 and girls 13 to 15 impose different sentences (life imprisonment for the former, and 10 years for the latter).	PNG has legislated against sexual assault. The Criminal Code (Sexual Offences and Crimes against Children) Act of 2002 extended the definition of penetration for sexual assault to all orifices by the penis or any other object, and removed the marital immunity which prevented a woman from charging her husband with rape.	Solomon Islands has legislated against sexual assault, but laws provide inadequate protection. Most sexual offences, except indecent assault, require penile penetration. Different categories of rape for girls younger than 13 and girls 13 to 15 impose different sentences (life imprisonment for the former and five years for the latter).	Vanuatu has legislated against sexual assault, but laws provide inadequate protection. All sexual offences require penile penetration except indecent assault. The penalty for defiling a girl younger than 13 is 14 years imprisonment but for a girl between 13 and 15 it is five years.
Defences		The Fiji Penal Code provides a defence in sexual assault prosecutions for the accused to claim he did not know the girl was not of legal age in all offences except the defilement of a girl younger than 13. Consent is not available as a defence for sexual assaults on girls younger than 16.	The PNG Criminal Code provides a defence in sexual assault prosecutions for the accused to claim he did not know the girl was not of legal age in offences relating to girls older than 12. Consent is not available as a defence for sexual assaults on girls younger than 16.	Although there is generally no defence in sexual assault prosecutions in Solomon Islands for the accused to claim he did not know the girl was not of legal age, there is an exception in relation to a charge of defilement of a girl between the ages of 13 and 15.	The legislation in Vanuatu does not provide a defence in sexual assault prosecutions for the accused to claim he did not know the girl was not of legal age.



	EAST TIMOR	FIJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
Mandatory prosecution/ minimum sentences		No mandatory prosecution or minimum sentences for sexual assault offences. Legislation does not prohibit customary practices of forgiveness for reducing sentences.	No mandatory prosecution or minimum sentences for sexual assault offences. Legislation specifically provides for custom to affect criminal sentencing, which may reduce a sentence if compensation has been paid.	No mandatory prosecution or minimum sentences for sexual assault offences. Legislation specifically provides for custom to affect criminal sentencing, which may reduce a sentence if there has been forgiveness.	Vanuatu has introduced minimum sentences, but not mandatory prosecution for sexual assault offences. Legislation specifically provides for customary law to affect criminal sentencing, which may reduce a sentence further if there has been forgiveness.
Discriminatory common law rules on sexual assault (see note)		Fiji has not legislated against the use of prior sexual conduct, the necessity for corroboration in sexual offence prosecutions, or the requirement for proof of resistance, but a 2004 precedent ruled against the need for corroboration.	PNG has not legislated against the requirement for proof of resistance but has legislated against the use of prior sexual conduct and the necessity for corroboration in sexual offence prosecutions.	Solomon Islands has not legislated against the use of prior sexual conduct, the necessity for corroboration in sexual offence prosecutions or the requirement for proof of resistance.	Vanuatu has not legislated against the use of prior sexual conduct, the necessity for corroboration in sexual offence prosecutions or the requirement for proof of resistance.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAWS		Fiji's Penal Code does not contain offences for domestic violence. Women have to rely on general assault provisions. Fiji's Family Law Act of 2003 provides for protective injunctions for legally married women.	PNG has not incorporated domestic violence offences into its criminal laws.	Solomon Islands has <i>not</i> incorporated domestic violence offences into its criminal laws. Restraining orders are available to protect married women from the threat of violence, with powers of arrest if the order is breached.	The Family Protection Act of 2008 provides for victims of domestic violence to apply in court for a Family Protection Order (restraining order). It also provides definitions of domestic violence, family and spouses.
AGE OF MARRIAGE	18 for males, 15 for females. ⁴⁰ The consent of both parents is required for the marriage of minors.	16 for females and 18 for males. In the marriage of minors, the consent of the father is privileged over the mother.	18 for males and 16 for females. The consent of both parents in the marriage of minors.	15 for both males and females. Those between 15 and 18 must seek approval from their fathers.	16 for females and 18 for males. The consent of <i>both</i> parents in the marriage of minors.

40 Indonesian Civil Code, beginning at Article 290.

	EAST TIMOR	FUJI	PNG	SOLOMON ISLANDS	VANUATU
ABORTION	Abortion is criminalised in East Timor.	Abortion is criminalised in Fiji, with a penalty of seven years and life imprisonment if it is performed at 28 weeks or more of pregnancy. Although abortion can be lawfully carried out to save a mother's life, women do not have access to safe abortion facilities.	Abortion is criminalised in PNG with a penalty of seven years imprisonment. There is no exception to save a mother's life.	Abortion is criminalised in Solomon Islands, with a severe penalty of life imprisonment. Although abortion can be lawfully carried out to save a mother's life, women do not have access to safe abortion facilities as a right.	Abortion is criminalised in Vanuatu, although abortion can be lawfully carried out for 'good medical reasons', and the penalty of two years is low compared to other Pacific countries.
FAMILY LAW		The Family Law Act (2003) provides for the establishment of a family court and stronger laws for gender equity in relation to divorce, separation, maintenance, custody, adoption and other matters subsumed under family law. However, it only applies to married persons.	PNG provides for maintenance orders during separation and after divorce for both children and spouses. However, the basis on which maintenance is provided is left largely to the discretion of the court, with the broad criteria of the means, earning capacity and conduct of the parties.	Solomon Islands provide no legislative provision for the division of property after separation and divorce and, therefore, any determination is left to custom, which may discriminate against women.	Vanuatu provides no legislative provision for the division of property after separation and divorce and, therefore, any determination is left to custom, which may discriminate against women.
CUSTOMARY LAW		The Constitution gives constitutional status to custom in relation to land. However, other customary practices do not have constitutional status, and coupled with strong anti-discrimination provisions, give women partial protection against customary law that discriminates against them on the basis of sex/gender.	The Constitution recognises the legitimacy of customary law provided it is not repugnant to humanity, does not result in injustice, or is not contrary to the interests of a child younger than 16. Guarantee of equality takes precedence over custom, and traditional practices that discriminate against women may in theory be legally challenged.	The Constitution of Solomon Islands gives constitutional status to customary law in a range of situations including land, marriage, divorce and other personal laws. However, customary law cannot be inconsistent with the Constitution, and the presence of anti-discrimination provisions leaves women with some legal recourse against custom that discriminates against them.	The Constitution of Vanuatu recognises the legitimacy of customary law, provided it is not contrary to justice, morality and good order. However, the absence of a guarantee of equality and anti-discrimination provisions means traditional practices that discriminate against women may be lawful in some circumstances.



ANNEX 2: ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED²³

Fiji

Organisation

National Department for Women

Fiji Police Force

Prosecutors

Suva Police Academy (focus group involving 13 officers)

Nasova Police Academy (interviews with 5 officers)

Public prosecutors and legal aid counsellors (8 officials)

Magistrates (focus group involving 9 individuals)

Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (interviews and focus groups involving 15 staff)

Women's Action for Change (focus group involving 12 members)

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)

Fem'LINK Pacific

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

Fiji Association of Social Workers

Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International

National Council of Women

Salvation Army headquarters

Mahaffey Girls Home (focus group involving 8 girls)

AIDS Task Force

FJN+ (Fiji's HIV-positive peoples' network)

Equal Ground Pacifica

Pacific Counselling and Social Services

FRIEND (Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises 'N' Development)

Soqosoqo Vakamarama

Fiji College of Advanced Education

Fulton College

United Blind Peoples' Association

SPATS

AusAID Staff

AusAID Community Justice Program

Pacific Region Policing Initiative

Pacific Regional HIV/AIDS Project

International Labour Organization Programme Office

Men as Partners—United Nations Population Fund

UNIFEM

²³ To protect confidentiality, individuals consulted have not been named.

Papua New Guinea

Organisation

Port Moresby

Ministry for Community Development

Minister Dame Carol Kidu

Gender Division

Welfare Division

CEDAW taskforce

Child Protection

National Department of Health

National Department of Education

Port Moresby General Hospital, Family Support Centre

Royal PNG Constabulary

Sexual Offences Squad, Boroko

Victims Desk, Waigani

Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee (secretariat and member organisations)

Salvation Army

Anglicare

Papua Hahine Social Action Forum

World Vision PNG

Community Justice Liaison Unit

Porosapot (Save the Children)

Tingim Laip (HIV/AIDS prevention)

ICRAF

DCD Gender Division

Department of Education, Counselling and Guidance Branch

FSVAC Strategy Review team

National Council of Women (interviews with 10 members)

Haus Ruth (including interviews with staff and 16 current and former residents)

Individual Community Rights Advocacy Forum

PACSO (PNG AIDS civil society organisations) (interviews with 11 members)

National Research Institute

Morata Women's Safe House (interviews with 6 members)

Oil Palm Research Association

AusAID Law and Justice Sector Program (interviews with advisors)

Sanap Wantaim (AusAID's HIV/AIDS program)

AusAID's health program

AusAID's education program



Eastern Highlands Province

Royal PNG Constabulary, Goroka police
 (interviews/focus group with 26 police officers)
 Eastern Highlands, provincial village courts administrators
 Kainantu Police (focus group involving 7 officers)
 Kainantu Hospital, Family Support Centre

 Eastern Highlands Family Voice (interviews with staff and survivors)
 Goroka Base Hospital, Family Support Centre
 Eastern Highlands Province, FSVAC provincial branch
 Save the Children
 Sisters of Mercy, Goroka
 LJSP Eastern Highlands Province
 Kona-Bena (village focus group involving 14 individuals)
 Kainantu Save the Children's project for sex workers (focus group involving 15 individuals)
 Kainantu Gold, Women in Mining

Simbu Province

Kup Women for Peace (5 members)
 United Nauro-Gor Association (officials)
 Gor Community (focus group involving 19 adults)
 Gor Community (focus group involving 28 youth)
 Gor Community policewomen (focus group involving 26 officers)
 Gor Community policemen (involving 20 officers)

Solomon Islands

Organisation

Ministry of the Prime Minister
 Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs
 Government of the Western Province
 Social Welfare Division, Welfare Division Office, Gizo
 Gizo Hospital
 Government Law and Justice Sector officials
 Chief Justice of Solomon Islands
 Magistrates (9 interviewed)
 Police (20 interviewed in Honiara and Gizo)
 Public Solicitor's office
 Law Reform Commission

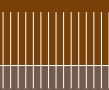
 National Council of Women
 Provincial Council of Women, Gizo
 Provincial Council of Women, Auki

Family Support Centre (including interviews with staff and clients)
 Christian Care Centre
 Vois Blong Mere Solomon Islands
 Solomon Islands Christian Association, Federation of Women (SICA FOW)
 Save the Children Youth Outreach Project (Honiara and Auki)
 (over 30 youth consulted)
 Caritas National Training Office
 Rokotanikeni Women's Association (Honiara and Auki)
 Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association
 Catholic Women's Group, Auki
 AusAID Community Support Program staff
 RAMSI Advisers (Law and Justice, Machinery of Government)
 RAMSI, Participating Police Force

Vanuatu

Organisation

Department of Women's Affairs
 Ministry for Justice and Social Welfare
 Vanuatu Police force
 Port Vila (focus group involving 11 officers)
 Port Vila Family Protection Unit
 Tanna (interviews with officers)
 Isangel (interviews and focus group involving 13 police officers)
 Department of Public Prosecutions
 Port Vila Courthouse (interviews with magistrates)
 Office of the Public Solicitor
 Office of the Ombudsman
 Port Vila Central Hospital
 Vanuatu Women' Centre
 interviews with Executive staff
 focus groups with 20 staff and volunteers
 interviews with 7 male advocates
 National Council of Women
 Vanuatu Association for NGOs
 Vanuatu Family Health Association
 Wan Smol Bag Managers
 Wan Smol Bag (focus group involving 12 youth)
 Sanma Counselling Centre (interviews with staff)
 University of South Pacific Legal Centre
 Christian Broadcasting Network
 Beach Comber Resort
 Tafea Women's Centre
 Tafea Counselling Centre



Committees Against Violence Against Women

Interviews and focus groups with CAVAW members from: West Vanualava; Gaua; South Santo; Big Bay; Pentecost; East Ambae; Huritahi; Gaiovo; Lonahli; Emae; Lamén Island; Ambrym; Midmaug

Malfatumaauri Council of Chiefs

Pango area (separate men's and women's focus groups)

Saratamata area, Ambae (focus groups)

Centreville Christian Fellowship youth (focus group)

AusAID Staff

including gender specialists and legal sector advisors

New Zealand Agency for International Development

East Timor

Organisation

OPE/SEPI

PNTL National Investigations Office

Police VPU, Liquiça

Police VPU national headquarters

Police VPU, Dili

IDP camp, Dili (camp organisers)

JSMP

GBV Referral Partners Network

(Members from UNICEF, IOM, JSMP, UNIFEM,

Oxfam, PRADET, FOKUPERS, national VPU, lawyers)

PRADET

Oxfam Australia

Alola Foundation

Participants of a joint Oxfam/Alola workshop on violence against women, gender, and financial management in Liquiça (involving 30 participants)

AMKV

Caritas Australia

UNFPA

UNIFEM

UN Human Rights Monitoring Unit

Asia-Pacific Support Collective

Irish Aid

AusAID

Australian Federal Police

ANNEX 3: ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS

Fiji

Shamima Ali, Coordinator, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
 Virisila Buadromo, Director, Fiji Women's Rights Movement
 Imrana Jalal, Human Rights Adviser, Regional Rights Resource Team
 Dr Tokasa Leweni, Director for Women
 Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, Howard's Law
 Professor Vijay Naidu, University of the South Pacific
 Dr Neil Sharma, University of the South Pacific
 Dr Lepani Waqatakiwewa, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Women, Social Welfare

Papua New Guinea

Ila Geno, Chief Ombudsman
 Sir Mari Kapi, PNG Chief Justice
 Dame Carol Kidu, parliamentarian and Minister for Community Development
 Biri Kimasopa, former Minister for Justice, currently businessman
 Avie Koison, President PNG-Alumni Association
 Iva Kola, former NCD Deputy City Manager
 Cecilia Nembou, , Vice-Chancellor, Divine Word University
 Oseah Philemon, Editor-in-Chief, Post Courier
 Margaret Thomas, former Minister Counsellor, AusAID, PNG
 Robert Titi, Co-ordinator of Men Against Violence
 Ume Wainetti, FSVAC National Co-ordinator
 Ruby Zarriga, Director, Department of National Planning

Solomon Islands

Ms Afu Billy, Regional Director, Common Wealth Youth Program
 Ms Stella Delaiverata, Office for the High Commission on Human Rights
 Mrs Judith Fangalasua, Director, SICA Commission
 Ms Josephine Kama, Gender Adviser, Community Sector Program
 Sir Albert Palmer, Chief Justice of Solomon Islands
 Mr Solomon Palusi, Undersecretary, Ministry Home and Ecclesiastical Affairs
 Mr George Pitakoe, Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association
 Mrs Ethel Sigimanu, Permanent Secretary, Ministry Youth, Women and Child Affairs
 Ms Josephine Teakeni, Director, Vois Blong Mere
 Mrs Janet Tuhaika, Acting Director, Women's Development Division



Vanuatu

Chief Joseph Dick, Male Advocate, Vanuatu Women's Centre

Morris Kaloran, Director, Department of Correctional Services

Merilyn Tahi, Coordinator, Vanuatu Women's Centre

Hilda Taleo, Director, Department of Women's Affairs

Kali Vatoko, National Coordinator, Pacific Children's Program

Delphine Vuti, Senior Lieutenant, Vanuatu Police Force

East Timor

Note: An advisory group was not established for East Timor.



ANNEX 4: MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

International research team members

Dr Mary Ellsberg

Dr Christine Bradley

AusAID research team members

Andrew Egan

Amy Haddad

Barbara O'Dwyer

Local research consultants

Fiji

Matelita Ragogo

Roshni Sami

Papua New Guinea

Kritoe Keleba

Barbara Kepa

Martha Kup

Agnes Mek

Dr Angela Kelly, Director of the Cadet Training Program, PNG Institute of Medical Research

Solomon Islands

Salote Austin

Caroline Laore

Vanuatu

Naomi Bolenga

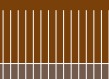
Emily Niras



ANNEX 5: REFERENCES

- Aitsi, L 2006, 'An Analysis of the Efficient Delivery, Effectiveness and Impact of Community Development Scheme Funded Gender and Equity Sector Activities'. AusAID report.
- Ali, S 2007, Personal Communication.
- Amnesty International 2006, Papua New Guinea: Violence Against Women: Not Inevitable, Never Acceptable!, Amnesty International: 100.
- Amnesty International 2004. Solomon Islands: Women Confronting Violence.
- Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development (APWLD) 2006, Negotiating culture: Intersections of culture and violence against women in Asia Pacific. Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, APWLD.
- AusAID Office of Development Effectiveness 2007, Violence Against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: A Review of International Lessons.
- AusAID 2006. Violence against Women: Stock-take of Initiatives in Solomon Islands.
- AusAID PNG 2006, 'Annual Program Performance Update'
- AusAID Vanuatu 2006, 'Annual Program Performance Update'
- AusAID Solomon Islands, 'Annual Program Performance Update'
- AusAID Gender Unit 2006. Gender Situational Analysis: Solomon Islands Programs, AusAID.
- AusAID PNG Law and Justice Sector Program, 2005, 'Revised Final Program Design Document Milestone 6'.
- AusAID PNG Law and Justice Sector Program (LJSP), 2003, background papers on Poverty and Gender.
- Barker, G, & C Ricardo, et al. 2007, Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality: Evidence from Programme Interventions. Geneva, World Health Organization: 70.
- Baron, N Conference On Conflict And Conflict Resolution In Asia And The Pacific, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
- Baron, N, Bories, JL et al. 2004,. Strategy for Psychosocial Interventions for the Solomon Islands. UNICEF.
- Bott, S, Morrison A, et al. 2004, Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries: A global review and analysis. Washington, DC, World Bank.
- Bradley, C 2007, 'Workshop on Hospital-Based 'One Stop Centres' for Family and Sexual Violence: Report and Recommendations'. Port Moresby, 28–29 August 2007, National Department of Health.
- Bradley, C 2007, 'Gender-based violence and the health sector – briefing and information session'. Report of a meeting organised by NDOH Disease Control Branch and Health Improvement Branch, Family Health Service.
- Bradley, C 2005, 'Strengthening a Gendered Approach to HIV & AIDS in PNG: Issues for donors and development partners.' AusAID's National HIV & AIDS Support Program.

- Bradley, C 2005, 'Backgrounder on Gender and HIV & AIDS in PNG'. AusAID's National HIV & AIDS Support Programme.
- Bradley, C 2000, 'Looking Back at the Law Reform Commission's Work on Domestic Violence in PNG'. In: Institute of National Affairs, 2001, Proceedings of the Family Violence Workshop September 13–14 2000. INA Discussion Paper no. 80.
- Bradley, C 1985, 'Attitudes and Practices Relating to Family Violence Among the Tolai of East New Britain', in Toft, ed. 1985, pp. 77–91.
- Bradley, C & Kesno J 2001, *Family and Sexual Violence in PNG: An Integrated Long-Term Strategy*. Port Moresby: Institute of National Affairs, Discussion paper no. 84.
- Bradley, C & Kesno J 2001, *Family and Sexual Violence In PNG: An Integrated Long-Term Strategy* Port Moresby, Institute of National Affairs.
- Campbell, JC & Webster D, et al. 2003, 'Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: results from a multisite case control study,' *American Journal of Public Health* 93(7): 1089–97.
- Catholic Family Life Apostolate PNG 2000, 'Rape Trauma Counselling: the rehabilitation and treatment of rape and incest victims.' Sr Hummes, ed.
- Christian Care Centre 2007, *Commercial Sexual Exploitation Of Children In The Solomon Islands: Brief to Canberra*.
- Christian Care Centre, Church of Melanesia 2004, *Situation Analysis Of The Commercial Exploitation Of Children And Child Sexual Abuse In The Solomon Islands*. Honiara.
- Counts D, Brown J and Campbell J, *To Have and to Hit: Cultural Perspectives on Wife Beating*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 2007, CEDAW Report: Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. *Initial Report on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women*.
- Eastern Highlands Family Voice, Public information leaflets, and activity reports.
- Ellsberg, M 2006, 'Violence against women and the Millennium Development Goals: facilitating and improving women's access to care', *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics* 94: 325–332.
- Ellsberg, M & Heise L 2005, 'Researching violence against women: A practical guide for researchers and activists'. Geneva, Switzerland, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health, World Health Organization.
- Ellsberg, M & Jansen HA, et al. 2008, 'Intimate partner violence and women's physical and mental health in the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence: an observational study', *Lancet* 371(9619): 1165–72.
- Eves, R 2007, 'Exploring the Role of Men and Masculinities in Papua New Guinea in the 21st century: How to address violence in ways that generate empowerment for both men and women.' Caritas Australia.
- Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee (FSVAC): 'Strategic Review 2007, Terms of Reference.'
- Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee 2006, 'A Life Free From Violence— It's Our Right: A Yearly Report of the FSVAC', May 2005–June 2006'
- Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee, 2004, 'Mid-Term Review of the Integrated Long-term Strategy (2001–2006)'.



- Felemoni-Tofaeono, J 2004, 'Cracking the silence: The churches' role in violence against women in Oceania', Ministerial Formation.
- Fiji Women's Crisis Centre 1999, *The Incidence, Prevalence and Nature of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Fiji*. Suva, Fiji.
- Fletcher, K 2005, 'Decriminalisation of Sex Work in Papua New Guinea', Report of the Legal and Policy Advisor to the National HIV & AIDS Support Project.
- Garcia-Moreno, C & Jansen HA, et al. 2006, 'Prevalence of intimate partner violence: findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence', *Lancet* 368: 1260–9.
- Government of Papua New Guinea, 2004, *UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children*.
- Government of PNG and UNICEF 1999, *Papua New Guinea's Initial Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*.
- Government of East Timor, Office of the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (2007). Project Agreement with UNFPA on 'Gender Based Violence Prevention Strategies.
- Guedes, A 2004, Addressing gender-based violence from the reproductive health/HIV sector: A literature review and analysis. Washington, DC, POPTECH.
- Heise, L & Ellsberg M et al. 1999, Ending Violence Against Women. *Population Reports*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health; Population Information Program. 27.
- HELP Resources and UNICEF PNG, 2005, *A Situational Analysis of Child Sexual Abuse and the Commercial Exploitation of children in PNG*.
- Herbert, T 2007, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Solomon Islands: A Report Focusing on the Presence of the Logging Industry in a Remote Region. Christian Care Centre, Church of Melanesia.
- Human Rights Watch, 2006, *Still Making Their Own Rules: Ongoing Impunity for Police Beatings, Rape and Torture in Papua New Guinea*.
- Human Rights Watch, 2005, *Making Their Own Rules: Police Beatings, Rape, and Torture of Children in Papua New Guinea*.
- Hynes, M & Ward J et al. 2003, A Determination of the Prevalence of Gender Based Violence Among Conflict-Affected Populations in East Timor, Report to the Reproductive Health for Refugees Consortium, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Reproductive Health and The International Rescue Committee.
- Institute of Pacific Studies, 1990, *Pacific Studies: Special Issue on Domestic Violence in Oceania*, Vol. 13 No. 3, July.
- International, A 2004, Solomon Islands: Women Confronting Violence. Solomon Islands, Amnesty International: 59.
- International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Instituto Promundo 2007, 'Engaging Men and Boys to Achieve Gender Equality. How can we build on what we have learned?' Washington, D.C.: 24.
- International Crisis Group 2008, Timor-Leste's Displacement Crisis. Asia Report No. 148.
- International Health Exchange 2002, Repairing the Wounds of War. *The Health Exchange*, International Health Exchange.

- Jewkes, R & Nduna M et al. 2006, 'A cluster randomized-controlled trial to determine the effectiveness of Stepping Stones in preventing HIV infections and promoting safer sexual behaviour amongst youth in the rural Eastern Cape, South Africa: trial design, methods and baseline findings', *Tropical Medicine and International Health* 11(1): 3–16.
- Judicial System Monitoring Programme (JSMP) (2005). Police Treatment of Women in Timor Leste.
- Kim, JC & Watts, CH et al. 2007, 'Understanding the impact of a microfinance-based intervention on women's empowerment and the reduction of intimate partner violence in South Africa', *American Journal of Public Health* 97(10): 1794–802.
- Koenig, M & Hossain MB et al. 1999, 'Individual and community-level determinants of domestic violence in rural Bangladesh'. *Hopkins Population Center Paper on Population*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins School Public Health, Department of Population and Family Health Sciences: 32.
- Lepani, K 2007, 'Mobility, violence, and the gendering of HIV in Papua New Guinea', Ph.D. thesis for the School of Pacific Gender Studies, ANU, Canberra.
- Lewis, I, Maruia B, Mills D and Walker S 2007, 'Final Report on the Links Between Violence Against Women and the Transmission of HIV in PNG.' National AIDS Council and AusAID.
- Lawrence, D 2007, Hem nao, SOLOMON ISLANDS, tis taem: Report of the Community Sector Program Community Snapshot. Honiara.
- Leslie, H 2000, Conceptualising and addressing the mental health impacts of gender roles in conflict and peacemaking. *Development Bulletin*, (53): 65–69.
- Leslie, H & Boso S 2003, Gender-related violence in the Solomon Islands: The work of local women's organisations. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 44(3): 325–333.
- Maman, S & Campbell J et al. 2000, 'The intersections of HIV and violence: Directions for future research and interventions', *Social Science and Medicine* 50(4): 459–78.
- McLeod A 2006, 'Gender Violence Evaluation for Papua New Guinea'. Brief for the Office of Development Effectiveness, AusAID.
- Mantovani, E 1999, *Male-female relationships in Melanesia—a pastoral reflection with particular reference to domestic violence*. Goroka: Melanesian Institute, Occasional Paper No. 8.
- Mathews, S & Abrahams N et al. 2004, Every Six Hours a Woman is Killed by her Intimate Partner: A National Study of Female Homicide in South Africa, Gender and Health Research Group, Medical Research Council, South Africa: 4.
- Men Against Violence 2005, 'Training report on 3rd MAV Training Course funded by the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee'.
- Michau, L & Naker D 2003, *Mobilising Communities to Prevent Domestic Violence*. Kampala, Uganda, Raising Voices.
- Morata 4 City Women's Group, 2007, 'Progressive Report of Morata Women's Safe House, 2003-7'.
- Morrison, A & Ellsberg M et al. 2007, 'Addressing Gender-Based Violence: A Critical Review of Interventions', *The World Bank Research Observer* 22(1): 25–51.
- Morrison, A & Orlando M 2004, The Costs and Impacts of Gender-based Violence in Developing Countries: Methodological Considerations and New Evidence. Washington, DC, World Bank.
- PNG Community Courts Advisory Unit 2003, *Village Courts Manual*, 2nd edition.



- PNG Department of Community Development, 2008, 'Being the best that we can be—Say No to Sexual Violence Against Women, 2008–2010'. Project document, financed by UNIFEM's Trust Fund.
- PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General, 2007, *A Just, Safe and Secure Society: White Paper on Law and Justice in Papua New Guinea*. Department for Justice and the Attorney General.
- PNG Institute of Medical Research (1994). National Study of Sex and Reproductive Behaviour in Papua New Guinea. Boroko, PNG Institute of Medical Research.
- PNG Law Reform Commission (1992). Final Report on Domestic Violence. Boroko. LRC Report No. 14.
- PNG National AIDS Council, 2006a, *National Gender Policy and Plan on HIV and AIDS 2006-2010*.
- PNG National AIDS Council, 2006b, *Integrating Gender into HIV and AIDS Activities: A Guide for Implementers*.
- PNG National Department of Health, 2003, Domestic Violence Protocol and training materials for community health workers and nurses, and health promotion materials.
- PNG National HIV & AIDS Support Programme, 2005, 'Social Mapping of 19 Provinces in Papua New Guinea, Summary Report'.
- PNG National Sex and Reproduction Research Team and Carol Jenkins, 1994, *National Study of Sexual and Reproductive Behaviour in PNG*. Goroka: PNG Institute of Medical Research, Monograph No. 10.
- PNG Law Reform Commission, 1992, *Final Report on Domestic Violence*. Boroko, LRC Report No. 14.
- Pollard, AA (2000). Resolving conflict in Solomon Islands: The Women for Peace approach. *Development Bulletin*, (53).
- Pronyk, PM & Hargreaves JR, et al. 2006, 'Effect of a structural intervention for the prevention of intimate-partner violence and HIV in rural South Africa: a cluster randomised trial', *Lancet* 368(9551): 1973–83.
- Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands and Machinery of Government Program 2007, Strategy for Advancing the Position of Women in Government.
- Reid, E 2008, 'Note on Approaches to gender in the PNG SDP Initiative on Engaging Communities in the response the HIV epidemic and its driving forces (Community Conversations)'
- Relationships Australia (2005). Report on Relationships Australia Domestic Violence Scoping Visit to Timor-Leste, Prepared for the Chief Minister of the ACT. Canberra.
- Riley, L & Wohlfahrt D et al. 1985, The Management of Rape and Other Sexual Offences in Port Moresby: Report of a Workshop on June 5 1985.
- Robertson, K 2005-, Case Study on Gender-Based Violence in Timor-Leste. UNFPA Women Peace and Security Project and PRADET: 18.
- Save the Children Australia. Solomon Islands Children in Conflict with the Law (CiCL) Project: Project Design Proposal.
- Save the Children (PNG) 2007, 'Youth Outreach Project - Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey among Youth in the Eastern Highlands and Madang Provinces of PNG.' AusAID, NZAID and UNICEF

- Save the Children (PNG) Poro Sapot Project 2005, 'Report on risk exposures of female and male sex workers in Goroka.'
- Schoeffel, P (2004). *Pacific Strategy 2005–2010: Gender Strategy for the Pacific*, Asian Development Bank.
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community 2006, Socio-Cultural Research on Gender-Based Violence and Child Abuse in Melanesia and Micronesia.
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community 2006, Update on SPC activities in Kiribati. *Socio-Cultural Research on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Child Abuse in Melanesia and Micronesia*.
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community 2006, Update on SPC Gender-Based Violence and Child Abuse Study in Solomon Islands. *Socio-Cultural Research on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Child Abuse in Melanesia and Micronesia*.
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community and AusAID 2007, Briefing on the Gender Based Violence Study for Kiribati and Solomon Islands. Tenth Triennial Conference of Pacific Women in Noumea.
- Shanahan, T 2007, Final Report for SSA UNICEF/United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Research Assistant Consultancy. UNICEF, UNIFEM.
- Solomon Islands Police Force Family Violence Policy, National Family Violence Unit, Community Policing Department, Solomon Islands Police Force Police Headquarters, Rove.
- Solorzano, I & Peña R, et al. 2005, Informe de los Primeros Resultados de la Evaluación del Programa Juvenil, Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales. Managua, Nicaragua, Fundación Puntos de Encuentro, Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo en Salud, HORIZONS, PATH.
- Swaine, A 2003, Traditional Justice and Gender Base Violence: Research Report 2003. Dili, International Rescue Committee.
- Tahi, M & Ali S 2006, *Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women Newsletter*. Vol. 10: 1.
- Taylor, JP 2007, The Social Life of Rights: 'Gender Antagonism', Modernity, and Raet in Vanuatu. Vanuatu, Department of Social Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, The University of Manchester, UK: 29.
- Toft S ed., 1986, *Domestic Violence in Urban PNG*. Law Reform Commission Occasional Paper No. 19.
- Toft S ed, *Domestic Violence in PNG*. Law Reform Commission Monograph No. 3.
- Toft S and Bonnell, S eds, 1985, *Domestic Violence in Rural PNG*. Law Reform Commission Occasional Paper No. 18.
- Tor, R & Toka A 2004. Gender, Kastom & Domestic Violence: A research paper on the historical trend, extent and impact of domestic violence in Vanuatu. Vanuatu, Department of Women's Affairs.
- Trembath, A & Grenfell D 2007, Mapping the Pursuit of Gender Equality: Non-Government and Internal Agency Activity in Timor-Leste. Dili, The Globalism Institute, RMIT University Melbourne, and Irish Aid.
- UNDP 2007/2008 Report: Gender empowerment measure. Human Development Reports, from <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/279.html>.
- UNICEF and H Resources 2005, A Situational Analysis of Child Sexual Abuse and the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Papua New Guinea, UNICEF.

- UNICEF, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), et al. 2006, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in the Pacific: A Regional Report. UNICEF, UNESCAP, ECPAT.
- UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office 2005, Handbook on Psychosocial Assessment of Children and Communities in Emergencies.
- UNICEF Pacific Office 2005, Solomon Islands: A Situation Analysis of Children, Women & Youth.
- UNICEF 2005, *Families and Children Affected by HIV & AIDS and other Vulnerable Children in PNG: A National Situation Analysis*.
- UNIFEM 2005, Monitoring Peace and Conflict in the Solomon Islands: Gendered Early Warning Report no. 1.
- UNIFEM 2005, Monitoring Peace and Conflict in the Solomon Islands: Gendered Early Warning Report no. 2.
- UNMISSET Gender Affairs Office 2004, 'Gender Briefing Kit: Who's Who on Gender Mainstreaming within the UN Country Team in Timor Leste.
- United Nations 2003, Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women to the Commission on Human Rights. Geneva, Switzerland, United Nations.
- United Nations 2006, Secretary General's In-depth Study on Violence against Women. New York, United Nations.
- United Nauro Gor 2006, 'Gor Community Base Laws and Policing: Striving for a Lasting Peace and Unity.'
- Usdin, S & Christofides N et al. 2000, 'The value of advocacy in promoting social change: Implementing the new Domestic Violence Act in South Africa', *Reproductive Health Matters* 8(16): 55-65.
- Velzeboer, M & Ellsberg M et al. 2003, *Violence against Women: The Health Sector Responds*. Washington, DC, Pan American Health Organization, PATH.
- Vois Blong Mere Solomon Islands. Proposed Project.
- Vois Blong Mere Solomon Islands 2007,. Vois Blong Mere Solomon Islands Evaluation Report.
- Vrkic, E 2006, UNICEF Report, AusAID: Media Talking Points.
- Welsh Women's Aid 1988, *Worldwide Action on Violence Against Women: A Report on the International Women's Aid Conference, Cardiff, U.K.*
- Women and Law Committee, 1986-90, Legal literacy leaflets on domestic violence, sexual offences and family law; Stap Isi video.
- World Health Organization 2002, *World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva, Switzerland, World Health Organization.
- World Health Organization (2002). 'The Clinical Management of Survivors of Rape: A Guide to the Development of Protocols.'
- World Health Organization (2005). WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women's Responses. Geneva, Switzerland, WHO.

