



**RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:  
A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR  
UN PERSONNEL IN NEPAL**



**“ Domestic violence is the most prevalent type of violence in every society, in every class. It is very complex, as it is intimate, and it is difficult for people who endure that type of violence to speak out.**

**Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**  
United Nations Under-Secretary-General  
and Executive Director of UN Women

# FOREWORD

Domestic violence is one of the most common and least visible forms of violence. It has devastating consequences not only for the lives of those abused but also for their families, communities and societies more broadly. It is one of the most pressing human rights issues across the world; and yet it remains hidden, the shame and stigma making it difficult for survivors to talk about their suffering and to seek help.

According to Nepal's National Demographic Health Survey (2016), 84 per cent of ever-married women who have experienced physical violence report their current husbands as the perpetrators, while for 11 per cent of women it is their former husband. However, while intimate partner violence accounts for a high proportion of domestic violence cases, it is important to remember that it can also be perpetrated by other family members or those living in the same household.

The findings from the 2017 UN Personnel Survey on Domestic Violence in Nepal show that the issue also affects many of our personnel here. Indeed, the Survey indicates that UN personnel in Nepal experience domestic violence at rates very similar to Nepali women at large. We have a duty to ensure that the UN is both a safe and supportive workplace for all its personnel - irrespective of gender, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability. This extends to addressing domestic violence as a workplace issue.

This resource guide serves as a reference for UN personnel and their family members to better understand domestic violence and how we as individuals can support ourselves and our colleagues to address this issue in our

families or workplaces. It provides a broad range of information and resources for those seeking assistance or wanting to learn more about domestic violence, including options for how to respond. It will be an important addition to UN agencies' induction packages for new personnel and it complements existing resources available on the topic for UN personnel in Nepal.

This publication is an outcome of collaboration between the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN Women (Nepal) Personnel Association, and of the UN Country Team's Gender Theme Group. However, it is also a 'living document' that will benefit from your inputs as UN personnel. I thus like to invite all of you to read the resource book with this in mind, and to provide any comments or feedback directly to the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN Women (Nepal) Staff Association, or the UN Gender Theme Group.

Addressing domestic violence is possible but requires concerted efforts from all of us. It is our responsibility to be better equipped to help those amongst us affected by domestic violence, and help build families, workplaces and communities where violence is not acceptable. Breaking the silence around the issue at our workplace can help to break the cycle of violence.



**Valerie Julliard,**  
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This report was inspired by the Resource Book on Domestic Violence for UN Staff in the Pacific.

Resource book adapted for UNCT Nepal

This resource book is based on 'A Resource Book About Domestic Violence for UN Staff in the Pacific' [2017], and its UNICEF source document 'Caring for Us: Dealing with Domestic Violence' [2006]. It is adapted to the context of Nepal and provides resources and information targeted to UN staff in Nepal.

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# INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence occurs in every country and every culture of the world and affects people across the whole society. It is estimated that 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives.<sup>1</sup> However, the figure for intimate partner violence can be as high as 70 per cent in some countries.<sup>2</sup>

Nepal is no exception – domestic violence also remains a pervasive human rights and public health issue here. The National Demographic and Health Survey of 2016 (the NDHS 2016) shows that more than one-quarter of ever-married women (26 per cent) have experienced spousal violence, whether physical, sexual or emotional.<sup>3</sup>

**The 2017 UN Staff Survey on Domestic Violence [the Staff Survey] in Nepal reveals that UN staff members experience domestic violence at very similar rates to this: some 24 per cent of the respondents stated that they had experienced domestic violence, 46 per cent had witnessed domestic violence, while about 11 per cent of respondents had both experienced and witnessed domestic violence – whether in relation to family, neighbours, friends, work colleagues or others in their communities.<sup>4</sup>**

The NDHS 2016 does not cover violence perpetrated by family members beyond an intimate partner. However, domestic violence is not limited to intimate partner violence – perpetrators can and often do include other family members. The extended family structure may leave especially daughters-in-law particularly vulnerable to such violence.<sup>5</sup>

Domestic violence in Nepal, as in other countries, is fuelled by deeply entrenched gender inequality and discrimination. This is reflected in the concerning attitudes toward domestic violence in the NDHS 2016: 29 per cent of women and 23 per cent of men agreed that a husband is justified in beating his wife under specific circumstances, which could include her burning the food, arguing with him, neglecting the children, or refusing to have sex with him.<sup>6</sup> Another study on gender-based violence in Nepal found that 28 per cent of respondents considered that women did not have a right to refuse sex with their husbands, even if he is drunk or in some way mistreats his wife, and for 55 per cent of the respondents a husband has the right to beat his wife if she has been unfaithful.<sup>7</sup>

Nepal has taken significant steps towards addressing gender-based violence, including domestic violence committed in a private setting, in close collaboration with women's rights organisations, UN agencies and other partners. It has made strong normative and legal commitments in this area, including enacting the Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2066 (2009) (the Domestic Violence Act). The right to equality as well as

the rights of women, children and victims of justice have also been enshrined in Nepal's Constitution of 2015 as fundamental rights.

Yet, more can be done to ensure that victims/survivors of domestic violence receive the support they need. The enforcement of laws is at times challenging, and victims/survivors can face diverse barriers to pursuing domestic violence cases. Further, many service providers are not yet adequately trained, skilled or experienced in addressing the needs of victims/survivors of violence and abuse. Those who turn to the health services in fact mainly do so to have their injuries taken care of, but seldom report the cause of the injuries to the attending health workers.

One of the key barriers to addressing domestic violence in Nepal remains the prevailing social norms around the issue, which contribute to a view that such violence, especially by an intimate partner, is normal. A strong stigma related to reporting incidents to the police means that victims/survivors of domestic violence often continue to suffer alone in silence. According to the NDHS 2016, two thirds (66 per cent) of victims/survivors in effect never sought help or told anyone.<sup>8</sup> Contributing to this low level of reporting by victims/survivors are concerns that no one will believe or help them, as well as fear of divorce, further physical and mental abuse or worse. This situation can be even more complex for women living outside their country of origin with more limited support networks and additional barriers to

accessing services.

This resource book hopes to contribute to addressing this barrier so that those who are experiencing or witnessing domestic violence would no longer need to suffer alone in silence. Domestic violence, similarly to other forms of gender-based violence, can be addressed. Our aim should be to prevent such violence by addressing underlying gender inequality – a goal that evidence of various prevention efforts worldwide shows can be feasible – because societies with less gender inequality also have lower incidents of gender-based violence.

### **A note to readers**

It is important to recognise that domestic violence is a global phenomenon and that UN personnel at all levels, whether international or national, can be victims/survivors or perpetrators of domestic violence.

As UN personnel, we need to have a better understanding of domestic violence in order to be able to assist those within our families, communities and workplaces who may be victims/survivors of such violence. This resource book explains what domestic violence is, the forms it takes, reasons behind it, and how it affects people irrespective of their gender or age. Also, it offers basic information on how and where to seek help in Nepal.

**Domestic violence can be experienced by anyone at any point in their life. Maybe you are living with abuse or know a colleague, friend, neighbour or relative that is a victim/survivor of violence or abuse.**

**If you are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence, please remember as you read this resource book that:**

**Any form of violence is unacceptable**

**You are not alone**

**It is not your fault**

**Help is available**

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**If you are a manager or involved with staff welfare issues,** this resource book will provide information on how to recognise domestic violence and some tools for assisting a victim/survivor of violence or abuse. This resource book does not replace any existing UN guidelines, staff welfare policies or procedures on domestic violence.





**Chart 1: % of UN personnel members in Nepal who have experienced and/or witnessed domestic violence in their communities**

- Yes [witnessed] 46%
- Yes [experienced] 24%
- Yes [experienced and witnessed] 11%
- None of the two 19%

**If you are witnessing domestic violence, please remember as you read this resource book that:**

**Violence in the home is not a private affair**

**You need to speak up against any form of violence in the home or in public [as long it is safe for you to do so]**

**You need to intervene in an act of violence if you are a bystander [as long as it is safe for you to do so]**

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**If you are or suspect that you may be a perpetrator of violence**, this resource book will help you to recognise abusive behaviours and to understand their impacts. It aims to provide you with information on where to seek help to change your behaviour. Remember that domestic violence is a crime under Nepalese law and a breach of the UN Staff Code of Conduct.

## CHAPTER 1

# WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Nepal’s Domestic Violence Act defines domestic violence as “any form of physical, mental, sexual and economic harm perpetrated by person to a person with whom he/she has a family relationship.”<sup>9</sup>

Text box 1 gives a detailed description of domestic violence as understood in this resource book. As it notes, domestic violence is not limited to physical violence nor to intimate partner violence. Rather, it includes all forms of violence between individuals perpetrated by a family member or within the domestic setting, including violence against a domestic worker by an employer. Violence can occur irrespective of one’s age – and can thus include violence towards children, parents or the elderly.

It is also important to note that domestic violence does not only occur in heterosexual relationships. A person can be a victim/survivor of domestic violence irrespective of their sexual orientation. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) persons may also be vulnerable to violence in their home and communities, whether within or outside of a relationship with an intimate partner.

**Respondents in the Staff Survey recognised that certain categories of people could be seen to face a particular risk of violence. According to the respondents, women [89 per cent], children [69 per cent], sexual and gender minorities [59 per cent], people**

**living with disabilities [58 per cent] and the elderly [36 per cent] were most likely to be at risk of domestic violence.**<sup>10</sup>

Domestic violence occurs when one person exerts power and control over another person. The perpetrator uses the bonds of closeness and intimacy to treat the other person in an intentionally violent or controlling way. These bonds of closeness can be ones of love, kinship, or friendship. Also, knowledge and information the abuser has over the other person can be used to exercise power and control.

**Many respondents in the Staff Survey indicated that parents-in-law as well as siblings-in-law were amongst the most likely perpetrators of domestic violence after spouses. Notably, 57 per cent of the respondents felt that mothers-in-law were likely to be the main perpetrators of domestic violence, followed by fathers-in-law [38 per cent].**<sup>11</sup>

Abuse can be infrequent, escalating at particular times or increasing over time. Patterns of abuse can vary and can be related to substance abuse. What is known, however, is that abuse normally escalates and the situation becomes more dangerous for the victim/survivor once they attempt to leave the violent relationship.

**IN THIS RESOURCE BOOK DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS DEFINED AS VIOLENCE PERPETRATED BY INTIMATE PARTNERS AND OTHER FAMILY OR HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS AND MANIFESTED THROUGH:**

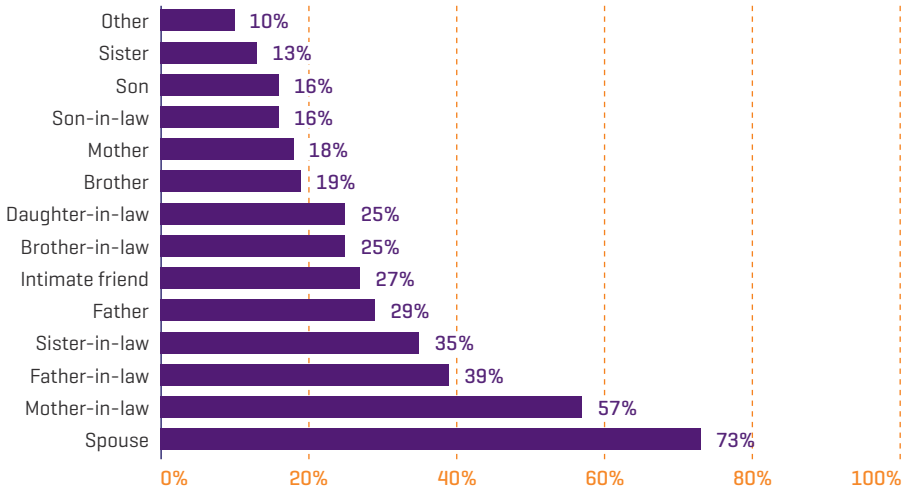
**Physical abuse such as slapping, beating, arm twisting, stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, threatening with an object or weapon, holding a person captive, and murder.**

**Sexual abuse such as coerced sex through threats, intimidation or physical force, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing to have sex with others.**

**Psychological abuse includes behaviour that is intended to intimidate, and takes the form of threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the home, surveillance, threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation.**

**Economic abuse such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment.**

**Chart 2: Staff Survey - main perpetrators of domestic violence**



**Domestic violence knows no boundaries and it:**

- Happens everywhere: large cities, rural communities, all countries, cultures and societies
- Happens across all social classes and income groups
- Happens regardless of education levels, social status, mental or physical ability
- Happens across all age groups; from children to the elderly
- Happens across all ethnic, religious, racial or cultural backgrounds
- Happens at any point in a relationship

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**  
General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women

23. Family violence is one of the most insidious forms of violence against women. It is prevalent in all societies. Within family relationships, women of all ages are subjected to violence of all kinds, including battering, rape, other forms of sexual assault, mental and other forms of violence, which are perpetuated by traditional attitudes. Lack of economic independence forces many women to stay in violent relationships. The abrogation of their family responsibilities by men can be a form of violence, and coercion. These forms of violence put women’s health at risk and impair their ability to participate in family life and public life on a basis of equality.

Source: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm)

## **Forms of domestic violence and experiences in Nepal**

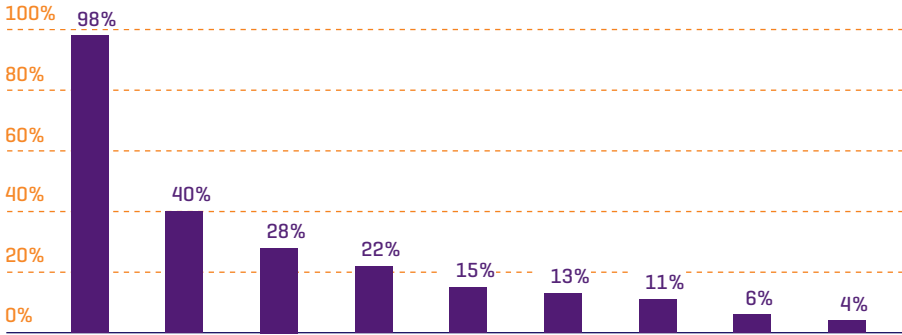
As recognised in Nepal's Domestic Violence Act, domestic violence is not limited to physical violence but can take many different forms, even concurrently. For example, a person experiencing physical violence is frequently also subject to psychological, emotional or verbal abuse. According to the NDHS 2016, the most common type of spousal violence for ever-married women is physical violence (23 per cent), followed by emotional violence (12 per cent) and sexual violence (7 per cent).<sup>12</sup>

**That domestic violence can include physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, and economic abuse was broadly recognised in the Staff Survey, with 83 per cent of the respondents stating that they were aware of all of the above forms of domestic violence.<sup>13</sup> Asked about the types of domestic violence that the respondents experienced or witnessed, 62 per cent of the respondents stated emotional or psychological violence, 61 per cent physical violence, 36 per cent economic violence, 20 per cent sexual violence, and 27 per cent all of the above forms of violence.<sup>14</sup>**

This section discusses the different forms of domestic violence in some more detail with reference to experiences of domestic violence in Nepal.

Physical abuse is characterised by the infliction of physical harm or injury. It is often the most visible type of abuse – as well as the most lethal. Sometimes referred to as battering, physical assaults typically start with small physically aggressive gestures, maybe a small shove during an argument or forcefully grabbing a wrist, but over time, physical abuse often becomes more severe, more frequent, and can result in severe injury or death. Examples include: punching, hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing, throwing, pinching, biting, stabbing, breaking bones, cutting, threatening with weapons, using weapons, tying up, holding a person captive, and murder.

**Chart 3: Types of physical violence experienced by victims/survivors of domestic violence in Nepal [% of respondents]<sup>15</sup>**



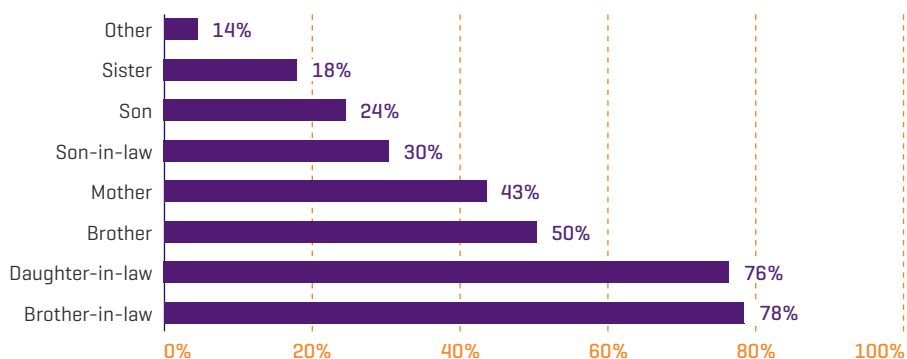
**SEXUAL ABUSE** is any conduct of a sexual nature that violates, humiliates or degrades the dignity of a person without their consent. This can take the form of: any unwanted touching, petting or fondling; unsafe, painful, degrading or coerced sexual activity (oral, anal or vaginal); forced sex when the partner refuses or is sick or tired; manipulating for sexual purposes; forced stripping; taking sexual photos or videos without consent; showing sexual pictures, signs or creating sound with sexual intent; trying to control a person’s sexuality or reproductive choices; knowingly exposing the partner to sexually transmitted disease; and sexual assault.

**EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE** is when someone routinely makes unreasonable demands or intentionally inflicts anxiety, hurt, guilt or fear through verbal or non-verbal acts. Emotional abuse serves to degrade and undermine an individual’s sense of self-worth and self-esteem while rejecting their opinions and

needs. It is designed to further control the victim/survivor by instilling fear and ensuring compliance. It may include: yelling or swearing; constant or extreme criticism; humiliation in private or public; manipulation with lies and contradictions; using religious beliefs as a pressure tactic; isolating the victim/survivor from family, friends or regular activities; denying the abuse ever happened, shifting responsibility for abuse to the victim/survivor; controlling behaviour, such as forcing one to ask permission to undertake normal activities; stalking, including harassing phone calls to place of employment; threats and intimidation; and jealousy.

**ECONOMIC ABUSE** is the control of a person’s financial resources, educational and employment opportunities. Economic abuse can take many forms including: controlling access to money; making a person solely responsible for all finances; stopping a partner from getting or keeping a job; making major

**Chart 4: Types of emotional violence experienced by victims/survivors of domestic violence in Nepal [%of respondents]<sup>16</sup>**



financial decisions without consultation; controlling all access to money earned; undermining a person’s attempts to improve education, training or employment; or withholding physical resources such as food, clothes, health care and medication, or shelter.

**CHILD ABUSE** or violence towards children is often common within families where abusers target another adult. Abuse of children can include:

- Physical abuse: beating a child with a belt, shoe, hose pipe, broom or other object; hitting; kicking; shaking
- Sexual abuse: fondling, touching or kissing a child’s genitals; oral sex; intercourse
- Emotional or psychological abuse: threatening, intimidating, criticising, humiliating and frightening a child
- Physical neglect: inadequate provision of food, housing, or clothing; lack of supervision; denial or delay of medical

care; inadequate hygiene

- Emotional or psychological neglect: refusal or failure to provide psychological care; lack of any emotional support and love; restricted movement
- Depriving a child from resources or educational opportunities
- Depriving a child from accessing any civil and vital registration documents.

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**  
**General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women**  
**General comments**

6. The Convention in article 1 defines discrimination against women. The definition of discrimination includes gender-based violence, that is, violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. Gender-based violence may breach specific provisions of the Convention, regardless of whether those provisions expressly mention violence.

7. Gender-based violence, which impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international law or under human rights conventions, is discrimination within the meaning of article 1 of the Convention. These rights and freedoms include:

- [a] The right to life;
- [b] The right not to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- [c] The right to equal protection according to humanitarian norms in time of international or internal armed conflict;
- [d] The right to liberty and security of person;
- [e] The right to equal protection under the law;
- [f] The right to equality in the family;
- [g] The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health;
- [h] The right to just and favourable conditions of work.

Source: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>



## CHAPTER 2

# WHAT CAUSES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

The root causes of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, lie in gender inequality and discrimination, grounded in the historical and structural power imbalances between women and men around the world. Domestic violence is related to social norms that prescribe certain roles to persons in society based on their gender and condone abuse and restrictions on freedoms, choices and opportunities. Gender inequality increases the risk of women and girls to abuse, violent relationships and exploitation, for example, due to economic dependency and limited income-earning options, or discrimination under the law as it relates to marriage, divorce, and child custody rights.<sup>17</sup>

In many societies, women's subordinate position within the home is deeply entrenched in aspects of traditional, legal, religious and social structures. Gender inequality fuels both a sense of entitlement for men as "heads of household" as well as the fundamental need for an abuser to exert power and control. There may be an emphasis on a women's obligation to submit to their father, brother, husband, father-in-law or the rest of the extended family. Women and men may be taught that violence is an inevitable part of a relationship, or in some way sanctioned by cultural norms. A woman who protests the abuse may face being blamed for "causing" the problem or be pressured into returning to a dangerous situation for fear of shaming her family. People often hold a perception that they "deserve" to be mistreated.

**"IT'S A TABOO – WE CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT"**

**Secrecy, social norms, and beliefs that women and girls are inferior to men (gender inequality) perpetuate violence against women.**

The majority of respondents in the Staff Survey recognised the role that traditional gender roles (80 per cent) and harmful religious or cultural practices, values and beliefs (73 per cent) play in fuelling domestic violence. Respondents also indicated that alcohol and other substances (59 per cent), lack of support systems (37 per cent), lack of power (32 per cent), and lack of awareness or resources (19 per cent) could be seen to cause or contribute to domestic violence in Nepal.<sup>18</sup>

An “ecological framework” is often used to understand how personal, situational and socio-cultural factors interact to produce violent behaviour. The “ecological framework” posits that violent behaviour, rather than caused by one single factor, should instead be understood as the outcome of the interaction of many different factors – including at the level of individual, relationship and society.

### **INDIVIDUAL**

- The fact that one is a male and has a sense of entitlement or privilege.
- Witnessing and/or experiencing domestic violence as a child – learned behaviour.
- The above factors can be exacerbated by drug or alcohol abuse.

### **RELATIONSHIP**

- Poor communication skills – no learned negotiation skills
- Male control of wealth and decision-making in the family
- Influence of the extended family
- Economic problems

### **SOCIETY**

- Norms granting male control over female behaviour and decisions
- A culture of “top-down” hierarchical decision-making in family, community, religious institutions/leaders
- Acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict
- Notion of masculinity linked to dominance, honour or aggression

## **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women

11. Traditional attitudes by which women are regarded as subordinate to men or as having stereotyped roles perpetuate widespread practices involving violence or coercion, such as family violence and abuse, forced marriage, dowry deaths, acid attacks and female circumcision. Such prejudices and practices may justify gender-based violence as a form of protection or control of women. The effect of such violence on the physical and mental integrity of women is to deprive them the equal enjoyment, exercise and knowledge of human rights and fundamental freedoms. While this comment addresses mainly actual or threatened violence the underlying consequences of these forms of gender-based violence help to maintain women in subordinate roles and contribute to the low level of political participation and to their lower level of education, skills and work opportunities.

Source: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations\\_recomm.html](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations_recomm.html)

## Why does the victim/survivor stay?

**“When I am asked why a woman doesn’t leave her abuser I say: They stay because the fear of leaving is greater than the fear of staying. They will leave when the fear of staying is greater than the fear of leaving.”**

- Rebecca J. Burns

People often ask “why don’t they just leave?” without understanding that the question inadvertently places blame on the victim/survivor. In reality, many make heroic efforts to leave, but may be unsuccessful. A person may not leave due to a number of reasons including:

**FEAR:** The number one reason for not leaving is fear. A person may have been told repeatedly that if they were to leave the relationship, terrible things will happen to them or their children. The abuser may have convinced victim/survivor that no matter where they go, the abuser will find them and never leave them alone. The abuser may threaten the safety of the victim/survivor’s children, livelihood or possessions.

**GENDER ROLES:** In our societies, women are often taught to be passive and subservient to men. Men are socialised to have a sense of entitlement and power over women, and women to respect and obey their husbands or partners, brothers, fathers or in-laws. In effect, preference for male children remains common in many parts of the world, including Nepal.

**RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL VALUES AND BELIEFS:** These may reinforce hierarchies in households and commitments to the family and marriage. Interpretations

of some faiths hold that the husband is the head of the family, and it is the wife’s duty to submit to his wishes. This rationale can be so powerful that a woman will refuse to leave an abusive relationship. In Nepal, harmful practices, such as dowry, may contribute to domestic violence.

**CHILDREN:** Fear for the welfare of one’s children as well as the responsibility of raising children alone can be overwhelming. The abuser may also threaten to take the children away or harm them if the partner attempts to leave.

**LACK OF A SUPPORT SYSTEM:** A major component of abuse can be isolation, even in extended family households. The victim/survivor may have no support system because the abuser has undermined family ties and friendships, leaving the victim/survivor psychologically and financially dependent. Poor economic conditions and long distances between the victim/survivor and friends or family can feed into the isolation.

**LACK OF RESOURCES:** A victim/survivor may simply not have the financial resources to leave, or the means of obtaining money, shelter, transportation or a livelihood. In Nepal, women’s economic dependence on men aggravates domestic violence, making it difficult for a woman to leave an abusive relationship.

**FEELINGS OF GUILT:** The victim/survivor may believe that the abuser is “sick and/or in need of help”. The abuser may fuel this idea, making the victim/survivor believe that they are in need of the victim/survivor’s help. The idea of leaving can produce feelings of guilt.

**PROMISES OF REFORM:** Often the abuser promises it will never happen again; the survivor wants to believe this is true.

**RESPONSES FROM FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES:** The survivor may not be believed or taken seriously. They may also be blamed or judged as a bad wife, husband or partner, parent, daughter, son, daughter-in-law or son-in-law and encouraged to endure the abuse.

**LOVE FOR PARTNER:** Many people enter a relationship for love and this does not necessarily disappear when a person faces domestic violence. Because a victim/survivor's self-esteem is often low following violence they may perceive the apologies and promises of reform as the end of the abuse.

### **Why does someone abuse?**

A victim/survivor in an abusive relationship may have a strong desire to understand “why” and spend a great deal of time trying to answer this question. If you are a survivor, it is more important to understand that the first thing you must do is to protect yourself and not to blame yourself for the violence.

As the “ecological framework” on the previous page highlighted, the interplay of factors behind an individual's violent behaviour can be very complex and it is likely that there are multiple contributing factors. For example, a person who has experienced or witnessed domestic violence growing up is more likely to use violence as an adult than those who didn't experience or witness such abuse in their childhood. However, not all those who experienced or witnessed domestic violence as children grow up to be perpetrators – some may, in fact, become victims/

survivors themselves. Domestic violence may also be linked with mental illness or other psychological issues; however, mental health issues are again not in themselves necessary or determinative causes behind such violence. At times, a perpetrator may claim to be ill as an excuse to justify their violent behaviour – along with the other reasons or excuses listed below.

The most common element behind domestic violence is often the abuser's need for power and control over another person(s). Many will continue to repeat patterns of abuse in their present or future relationships. Research in the context of Nepal suggests that there are a number of factors that can contribute to abusive behaviour, including addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling, illiteracy, poverty or unemployment, conservative notions of culture and tradition, and religious superstition.<sup>19</sup>

**However, it is important to remember that domestic violence occurs across all socio-economic and cultural groups and cannot simply be explained by the abuser's level of education, profession, religion or social status.**

## **SOME COMMON REASONS OR EXCUSES ABUSERS OFTEN GIVE FOR THEIR VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR INCLUDE:**

**As the head of the household, it is their right /  
It is their way of showing how much they love  
you / You need to be disciplined / It is the only  
way to express their feelings / They were hurt by  
a previous partner / They are afraid of intimacy  
and abandonment / They are ill / They have an  
aggressive personality / They have low self-  
esteem / They are jealous / They grew up with  
abuse in their family**

**NONE OF THESE REASONS JUSTIFY HURTING  
ANOTHER PERSON.**

**THERE IS NEVER A  
JUSTIFICATION FOR VIOLENCE.**

## CHAPTER 3.

# THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence has serious and long-lasting impacts on an individual, their family as well as the society at large. According to global figures, women physically or sexually abused by their intimate partners are more than twice as likely to have an abortion, almost twice as likely to experience depression, and in some areas, 1.5 times more likely to acquire Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), compared to women who have not experienced domestic violence.<sup>20</sup> Further, of all women victims of homicide globally in 2012, almost half were killed by their intimate partners or family members, the respective percentage for men in the same year being less than six per cent.<sup>21</sup>

Research also indicates that children who have experienced violence during their childhood are more likely to be either perpetrators or victims/survivors of violence as adults.<sup>22</sup> Domestic violence is often cyclical with a strong link between children's exposure to violence and experiencing intimate partner violence as adults.

Domestic violence also has effects on workplaces and significant costs on society more broadly, resulting in significant losses and costs to workplaces and governments alike.

This was widely recognised by the respondents in the Staff Survey. According to the survey findings, 88 per

cent felt that domestic violence led to difficulties in focusing at work, 87 per cent thought that domestic violence led to low self-esteem at the workplace, 86 per cent indicated that it was likely to lead to lower productivity, 81 per cent stated that it led to a change in behavior towards colleagues, while 76 per cent thought that it led to absenteeism from the office.

This section outlines some of the possible effects of domestic violence on individuals, their families, workplaces and societies.

### Effects on victims/survivors

Impacts on victims/survivors vary by individual. A person may experience a multiplicity of impacts, each building on the previous, often making the victim/survivor feel trapped. Violence can also become more serious and frequent over time leading to serious injury or even the death of the victim or abuser.<sup>23</sup> In Nepal, the single leading cause of death among women aged 15-49 is suicide, and it is believed that mental health, relationship, marriage and family issues, including domestic violence, are among the key explanatory factors behind this sad statistic.<sup>24</sup>

### Effects on children and adolescents

Even when abuse is not targeted at children, studies have shown that children witnessing

## **THE MOST COMMON EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON VICTIMS/SURVIVORS INCLUDE:**

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPACTS:**

**Chronic depression and other mental health concerns / Chronic fear and uncertainty / Low self-esteem / Sleep disorders / Sexual dysfunction / Suicide attempts**

### **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS:**

**Isolation / Absenteeism and poor work performance / Inability to adequately respond to the needs of others, including children / Gender-biased sex selection / Discontinuation of education / Neglect of self and child care / Reluctancy to seek services and opportunities for advancement**

### **PHYSICAL AND HEALTH IMPACTS:**

**Physical injuries, including disability / Health problems, including Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS / Unwanted pregnancy / Lack of care during pregnancy, delivery and post-partum period / Death**

## **In Kathmandu, one-third of pregnant women admitted to Paropakar Maternity and Women’s Hospital had experienced gender-based violence. This figure was 91 per cent in Primary Healthcare Centre of Syangja District.**

violence also suffer from the effects of the abuse.

Research worldwide shows that children exposed to violence in the home are more likely to be physically and/or sexually assaulted, to suffer from significant harm to their physical, emotional and social development, as well as being more likely to become part of a continuing intergenerational cycle of violence either as perpetrators or victims/survivors.<sup>25</sup> According to one study in Nepal, adolescent men who had experienced or witnessed domestic violence were more likely to suffer from depression and suicidal thoughts, substance abuse, low academic performance as well as be more sexually active than their peers who did not have such experiences.<sup>26</sup>

### **CHILDREN WHO WITNESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MAY:**

Develop social, emotional, psychological, physical or behavioural problems that affect their development and can continue into adulthood

- Grow up believing violence is a normal part of family life
- Be more likely to be abusive as adults if they are male, and more passive and withdrawn if they are female, increasing the risk that they too will enter an

abusive relationship

- Live in daily fear of what to expect at home, experiencing confusion, chaos, anger and tension that can lead to lifelong fear and an inability to trust others
- Be isolated by an abusive parent who shuts off the family from outside help or support
- Feel responsible for the abuse and powerless to stop it
- As they develop, be more likely to use violence, commit crimes and be abusers of alcohol and drugs.

### **Effects during pregnancy**

As the above figures demonstrate, the rates of women experiencing violence during pregnancy in Nepal are very high, although they vary greatly between districts. A survey on domestic violence in nine developing countries around the world<sup>27</sup> found that women in abusive relationships are more likely to have unwanted pregnancies, and suffer miscarriages, stillbirths and premature deliveries. Often abuse increases during pregnancy. Children born to abused women were also more likely to die before the age of five.



**Remember! The central reason for addressing domestic violence at the workplace should be to address a violation of a person's right to live free from violence and fear. It is the ethical obligation of the UN as an employer to promote the safety and security of its staff.**

### **Effects on workplaces**

Domestic violence can have significant costs for workplaces linked to reduced productivity, absenteeism, high staff turnover and decreased team harmony. Persons experiencing domestic violence may also suffer reduced self-esteem in relation to work and find themselves isolated at the workplace, feeling that they are not getting support from the colleagues – or even facing discrimination from colleagues.

A study carried out in China found that self-identified victims/survivors of domestic violence reported a variety of physical and emotional effects that had negative impacts on employee safety and productivity at the workplace. These impacted not just the victim/survivor, but also their coworkers. Furthermore, employers pay extensive domestic violence-related costs due to reduced productivity, missed work hours or work days, and staff turnover.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, a study carried out in Papua New Guinea found that on average staff members who were victims/survivors of gender-based violence lose 11.1 days of work per year as a result of the impacts of gender violence: 2.0 days lost to “presenteeism”, 5.0 days to absenteeism and 4.1 days helping other victims of gender-based violence. For one of the firms in this survey, this meant an estimated 26,200

staff days lost per year.<sup>29</sup>

### **Costs to society**

Accurate calculations of the costs of domestic violence on society are difficult due to the fact that most incidences of violence continue to go unreported. It is also extremely difficult to assess the cost of the impacts of violence on victims/survivors in the long-term as well as their children – noting the evidence that domestic violence witnessed as a child is often repeated in adulthood.

Nonetheless, studies conducted in a number of countries have tried to quantify the economic costs of domestic violence. Studies in the US have found that domestic violence cost the economy between USD 5.8-12.6 billion a year.<sup>30</sup> Similar studies in the UK have estimated the cost to be GBP 23 billion for individuals, the state and businesses.<sup>31</sup> These costs are made up of direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are those based on services used such as social, health, legal, and police services. Indirect costs usually relate to the impact of domestic violence on labour force participation and productivity.

Domestic violence has been shown to also adversely affect women's participation in paid labour as fear of continued violence may prevent women from seeking paid employment outside of the home.<sup>32</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

# STOPPING ABUSE STARTS WITH RECOGNISING THE SIGNS

The first step in ending a violent relationship is to recognise what is happening. This may seem obvious, but for many victims/survivors this can be overwhelmingly difficult – especially when violence is seen as culturally acceptable and normalised by society.

A victim/survivor often has very confused thoughts and feelings about their situation due to fear and uncertainty. Even when a victim/survivor knows that something is very wrong, acknowledging this may be extremely difficult. They will often deny, play down or rationalise the situation, all of which are common psychological defences. Unfortunately, an abuser is often skilled at using these same techniques to convince them that the abuse is not wrong or out of the ordinary.

Abusive relationships often develop gradually over time, drawing on one person's need for control, and the slow breakdown of another person's sense-of-self. Recognising the early signs of domestic violence is not always easy. These may involve hard-to-define forms of emotional or psychological abuse, such as the occasional use of a demeaning nickname. However, this kind of behaviour can reflect certain underlying feelings or attitudes. Unchecked, it may eventually escalate into more severe emotional, psychological or physical violence. The questions on page 28 can help you recognise if you or someone you know is being abused.

**If you are in an abusive relationship, you may recognise the cycle of violence depicted here. It can take anywhere from a few hours to a year or more to complete. Typically, each time the abuse occurs, it becomes worse and the cycle shortens. Breaking the pattern without help can be difficult and you may need to seek outside support from professionals.**

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO SEEK HELP.**

## THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

```
graph TD; CALM --> TENSION_BUILDING[TENSION BUILDING]; TENSION_BUILDING --> VIOLENCE; VIOLENCE --> MAKING_UP[MAKING UP]; MAKING_UP --> CALM;
```

### CALM

Abuser acts like the abuse never happened. Promises made during “making up” may be met. Survivor may hope that the abuse is over.

### TENSION BUILDING

Abuser starts to get angry. Communication breaks down. Survivor tries to keep abuser calm. Tension becomes too much. Survivor feels like they are “walking on eggshells”.



### MAKING UP

Abuser may apologize for abuse. Abuser may promise it will never happen again. Abuser may give gifts to survivor.



### VIOLENCE

Any type of abuse occurs: Physical, Sexual, Emotional/ Psychological, Economic.



## These questions may help you decide if you or someone you know is being abused.

### DOES A MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD:

- Call you names, yell, put you down, or constantly criticise or undermine you and your abilities as a wife or husband, partner, parent, son, daughter, daughter-in-law or son-in-law?
- Behave in an overprotective way or become extremely jealous?
- Accuse you of having an affair for no reason?
- Always insist that they are right, even when clearly wrong?
- Blame you for their own violent behaviour, saying that your behaviour or attitudes cause them to be violent?
- Externalise the causes of their behaviour by blaming their violence on stress, alcohol or a “bad day”?
- Threaten to commit suicide, especially as a way of keeping you from leaving?
- Threaten to hurt you, your children, family members or friends?
- Make it difficult for you to see family or friends, or “badmouth” your family or friends?
- Prevent you from going where you want to, when you want to, and with whomever you want to? Or insist on following you or coming with you?
- Humiliate or embarrass you in front of other people?
- Destroy personal property or throw things around?
- Control all of the finances, force you to account for what you spend, or take your money?
- Prevent you from getting or keeping a job?
- Use intimidation or manipulation to control you and your children?
- Threaten to expose any personal aspect of your life – such as sexuality, your HIV or other health or personal status?
- Prevent you from taking medications or getting medical care?
- Deny you mobility or access, to resources, shelter, food and drink or sleep?
- Hit, punch, slap, kick, shove, choke or bite you – or physically harm you intentionally in any way?
- Force you to engage in sexual acts or have unprotected sex against your will?

**These are some of the common tactics used by abusers to control their victims but are certainly not the only ones. If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may be a victim/survivor of domestic violence.**

**REMEMBER, YOU ARE NOT ALONE. EVERY PERSON HAS THE RIGHT TO LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE. HELP AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE [SEE P. 40].**

As you begin to confront your situation, it can help to start defining what forms of behaviour are acceptable to you. You may or may not be able to convey these limits to your abuser, who may or may not respect them. Regardless, this exercise will help you to clarify your own rights and expectations, and to build the determination to say “no” to additional harm. In the end, leaving the abusive relationship, temporarily or permanently, may be the only way to stop the cycle of violence.

You can get the support you need. In Nepal, domestic violence is a criminal offence, punishable by law. The Constitution of Nepal also provides that no acts of physical, mental, sexual or any other violence can be justified on religious, social, cultural or customary grounds, or on any other basis.

## CHAPTER 5

# GETTING HELP

If you are a survivor of domestic violence, or any other kind of gender-based violence, you have more than one way to get help. It can sometimes be hard to ask for help but remember that everyone has the right to a life free from violence and fear. Risks involved in staying in your situation could be life-threatening to you or your children.

In Nepal, victims/survivors have a range of support services available, including physical and mental health services, social services, police and legal services. The availability and standard of these services can vary depending on your location in Nepal.

Remember that your personal and community contacts as well as various civil society organisations can offer you assistance as well.

**As the Staff Survey shows, the majority of respondents felt most comfortable seeking support from a close friend [60 per cent], followed by parents [52 per cent], and the police [32 per cent], women’s organisations [27 per cent], and other relatives [22 per cent].<sup>33</sup>**

Various service providers and other support organisations can assist you in navigating the process of getting help.

**While the Staff Survey indicated that around half of the respondents were**

**aware of the various legal instruments dealing with domestic violence in Nepal, including the Domestic Violence Act,<sup>34</sup> almost half of the respondents [47 per cent] were not aware of the documents required to access various services, care and support in instances of domestic violence.<sup>35</sup>**

A victim/survivor of domestic violence can contact most services without any particular documentation. Evidence of being a victim may be required when pursuing certain legal avenues.

This section outlines some options for seeking support and assistance. Please refer to the Resources section on page 46 for details of available services.

### **Some places to seek support**

Relatives, friends, neighbours or colleagues: Identify all the possible people who might be willing and able to help you. Turn to people at your agency who may be able to help, including through the provision of basic information, an ombudsperson, staff association officers, senior managers or trusted colleagues.<sup>36</sup>

Health services are among the most common services sought by victims/survivors of physical or sexual violence. If you or someone you know has experienced physical violence, seek assistance for injuries from the health services. If you or someone

you know has experienced sexual violence, urgently seek health services in order to address your injuries, to avoid an unwanted pregnancy (using emergency contraceptives), to get tested and to receive medication for potential sexually transmitted diseases as well as to have forensic evidence collected. Across the country, more and more medical staff are being trained to provide quality care to survivors of physical and sexual violence.

In Nepal, victims/survivors of domestic and other gender-based violence can report their cases to any Government Health Service Providers including:

- Health Posts
- Primary Health Care Centres
- District Hospitals and other regional hospitals
- One Stop Crisis Management Centres

The cases can then be referred to other service providers, including the police for criminal investigation and prosecution. In districts where One Stop Crisis Management Centres are operational, victims/survivors can receive one-door services, including immediate protection, medical, shelter, legal aid and psychosocial counselling support.

**Police and legal services:** In Nepal, domestic violence is a crime, and you can report it to the police. Recognising the sensitivities around this issue, the police now offer special services within police stations to

help victims/survivors.

The Domestic Violence Act provides that domestic violence can be reported to:

- Local Police Post
- Area Police Office
- District Police Offices
- District Court
- National Women Commission
- Local Government Office [the Judicial Committee in the new federal structure]

**Note that District Police Offices and Area Police Offices have Women and Children Service Centres where victims/survivors can report their cases directly.**

You may also be able to seek help from District Legal Aid Committees, Nepal Bar Association's district units and private lawyers to discuss your legal options. The level of services that they are able to provide can depend and vary on the basis of your location.

**WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS AND SHELTER HOMES:** In Nepal, women's organisations have taken the lead in providing support and services for victims/survivors of domestic violence, including shelter home services. In addition to their active role in advocating for legal reform and change in

societal attitudes on domestic violence and running shelter homes, they provide services such as counselling, legal advice and medical referrals from trained professionals. Even where they don't directly offer services, some of these organisations will be among the most supportive and sympathetic and will often know where women can go to find assistance.

**COUNSELLING** with a therapist or psychologist can help survivors of abuse regain their self-esteem and self-confidence, clarify their options and make decisions with regard to the abusive relationship. Counselling and support should be provided by those who understand the nature of domestic and gender-based violence and have had experience and training supporting those going through domestic violence situations.

**RELIGIOUS LEADERS:** If you follow a religion, you may consider approaching people that you trust affiliated with your religious institution. Where a family attends religious activities together, there may be a chance of getting help for the whole family. However, this will only be successful if both parties respect religious authority, and where the religion supports and recognises the need for interventions in domestic violence situations. As noted above, it is always preferable that counselling and support is provided by those that understand the nature of domestic and gender-based violence and have had experience and training supporting those going through domestic violence situations.

**SEEKING HELP IF YOU ARE A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY:** It is known that

persons with disabilities suffer higher rates of domestic violence and are often forced to tolerate violence at the hands of their family members who are their caregivers. Disability support groups can provide support, counselling and assistance.

Seek the help you need – the resources on page 46 may offer some starting points.

### **Making a safety plan**

If you feel you are in danger, you may want to develop a plan to leave the house and take some or all of the following precautions:

- Have important phone numbers nearby (neighbours, relatives, friends, police, women's organisations, shelters etc.).
- Think about how to get out of the house safely. Practice ways to go out during an emergency.
- Prepare an emergency bag that includes items you will need when you leave, such as extra clothes, important papers, money and prescription medications. Hide the bag in the home or leave it with a trusted neighbour, friend or relative. Do not do this if it may put you at further risk – just leave if that is the best option. Remember that your safety, and that of your children, is the most important consideration.
- Know exactly where you will go and how to get there, even if you have to leave in the middle of the night.

Keep in mind that abusers may become more violent when “challenged” by a victim/survivor's decision to leave. Remember that the time of leaving is the most dangerous time for a victim/survivor in an abusive relationship. Even the discovery of reading



material on domestic violence or a contact by support services may trigger an aggressive reaction. It may be necessary to take extra precautions to prevent the abuser from knowing your plans in advance, or to ensure that you have the support of other people who can intervene to control the abuser's behaviour – such as supportive family members or the police.

If you decide to leave, even for a very short time, take your children with you, if that is possible and you can do so without exposing them to harm or risk of harm.

### **Legal solutions**

If you want to explore legal solutions to your situation, there are a range of legal services that offer support to victims/survivors of domestic violence. You can seek assistance from the police, Women and Children's Service Centers, which provide free legal aid, psycho-social counselling and economic support, the National Women Commission, and various NGOs that are able to provide legal services and support to victims/survivors. For a list of available services, please see the Resources section on page 46.

### **Some typical legal means to address domestic violence include:**

**A RESTRAINING OR PROTECTION ORDER:** Restraining or protection orders are issued by courts, as provided for by the Domestic Violence Act. The Local Government Operation Act of 2017 also provides jurisdiction for Local Judicial Committees to issue protection orders.

You may need to explain that, based on the past experiences, you fear that serious

**The Domestic Violence Act provides for the following possible orders:**

- Allowing the victim/survivor to continue to live in the shared house, to provide her/him with food and clothes, to not cause any physical injury and behave in a civilised and dignified manner;
- Making necessary arrangements to treat the victim/survivor's physical or mental injuries;
- Making necessary arrangements for separate stay and maintenance of the victim/survivor;
- Prohibiting insults, threats or uncivilised behaviour;
- Prohibiting the harassment of the victim/survivor at their place of residence, public roads or place of employment, or any communication with the victim/survivor;
- Mandating necessary and relevant actions for the protection and welfare of the victim/survivor.

physical, psychological, sexual or economic injury will result from the abuse. It can help to provide evidence that you have been abused, including photos of injuries, and any past medical or police reports. If the abuser violates the order, they may be arrested. Unfortunately, some abusers will not be deterred by this. Restraining or protection orders can be very helpful but are not a guarantee against continued violence.

**CRIMINAL CHARGES:** The Domestic Violence Act provides for the criminal punishment of perpetrators, with fines ranging from NRs 3,000.00 (USD 30) to NRs 25,000.00 (USD 250) and imprisonment up

to six months. Filing a case takes a minimum of 45 days, as the local authorities may conduct reconciliation within 30 days from the date of registration of the complaint. If the perpetrator fails to appear in the procedure with the local authorities, or if the reconciliation fails, the case will be filed to the court within 15 days from the date of the failure of the reconciliation. The court can start a hearing when the perpetrator receives a formal notice as a defendant for defense. The Domestic Violence Act provides that a complaint about an offence be filed within 90 days of the commission of the crime. Note that Nepal's Criminal Code also criminalises certain acts of domestic violence, including marital rape, and provides penalties for these.

**SEPARATION:** For married couples, a legal separation filed in court is usually a temporary measure that may allow orders to be made for maintenance and residence as well as contact when children are involved. Parties often choose separation orders when they are not yet ready to divorce. This is called a “cooling-off” period. During this time, the couple can decide if it would be better to live apart permanently or perhaps seek counselling. Although counselling is not mandatory, in practice a court will first refer the parties to mediation in order to determine the issues and seek a solution.

**DIVORCE:** This permanently dissolves a marriage. If children are involved, apart from the divorce order, there may be orders for residence, contact, maintenance and distribution of matrimonial property. Divorce will usually include a legal decision

about custody and maintenance as well as property and financial settlements.

**CIVIL DAMAGES:** In Nepal, victims/survivors of violence may be able to sue the perpetrator for compensation for medical expenses, damaged property, income loss, and/or pain and suffering. The court may then order the perpetrator to pay financial compensation to the survivor.

No matter how caring a parent you are, domestic violence will hinder your ability to do your best for your children. And in this situation, your children are likely to need your care and attention more than ever. Until you can get the help you need to make yourself safe, your children cannot feel safe or happy knowing that their parent is being hurt. Remember that you and your children's safety are connected – and violence has lasting impacts on your children's health and well-being.

The following suggestions may assist you in caring for your children and making choices about your situation. Please note that in Nepal many women's crisis centres, women's organisation and groups can provide care for children. Please see the Resources section on page 46 for more information.

Even if your children have not been present when the violence has occurred, they can nonetheless be affected; so, if you can, explain to them what is happening. If you have children do or consider the following:

- Tell them the violence is not their fault.  
Everyone has the right to a life free of violence.
- Try not to make promises that you

cannot keep, such as “This will never happen again,” or “I promise no one will ever hurt you.”

- Let them know it is not their role to protect you. Tell them it is not their job to protect anyone in this situation. However, discuss with them “safety measures” that may be of assistance in looking after themselves in situations of violence.
- Respect and accept that children may have conflicting feelings about their parents. A child may love the abusive parent, resent the survivor for “being weak” or for not protecting them, or feel guilty for not protecting the survivor.
- Help children make safety plans. Discuss possible exit routes, safe places to seek shelter and emergency phone numbers.
- Give children the opportunity to talk about their feelings with a trustworthy, sympathetic adult, such as a professional counsellor, relative or friend.
- Seek counselling and other support for yourself and your children.
- If you plan on separating or divorcing, tell your children of your plans for the future – if it is safe to do so.
- If you leave your home, try and take some favourite toys and some of your children’s other treasured belongings – but only if it is safe to do so.
- Seek legal advice about the custody of your children.
- Teach conflict resolution skills. Show

your children that violence is not the way to solve problems. Encourage your children to interact with other children.

### **Help for the abuser**

A perpetrator of abuse can step outside the cycle of violence. This requires the perpetrator to engage in a process of self-examination to understand why they react in such a way, and to acknowledge how devastating their actions are. The perpetrator needs to change patterns of behaviour and ways of relating to others through the exertion of power and control or violence. Further, the perpetrator needs to let go of their sense of entitlement.

Some perpetrators can benefit from counselling, which can help them to understand why they are violent and teach them how to control their anger. Change does not come quickly or easily, however. Even when abusers say that they want to stop and they get help, it does not guarantee that they will stop abusing. Remember, the proof must be in actions, not just words.

In Nepal, NGOs working to provide support for victims/survivors of violence also provide counselling services for perpetrators of violence. Ending violence requires positive actions from members of the family, community and society.

**Please see the Resources and Information sections on pages 46 and 59 respectively for services and information resources.**

## CHAPTER 6

# I THINK SOMEONE IS BEING ABUSED – HOW CAN I HELP?

Many victims/survivors either do not know whom to turn to or have had bad experiences when they have reached out for help. Be the support a person facing abuse needs.

### How can you know if someone is being abused?

One of the common myths about an abused person is that they do not want to talk about their experience. While many make efforts to hide the abuse, they often do so because they may be embarrassed, fear their abuser finding out, being blamed, not being believed, or being pressured to do something they are not ready or able to do.

### THE FOLLOWING FACTORS CAN BE SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MIGHT BE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR ABUSE<sup>37</sup>:

#### WORK PRODUCTIVITY SIGNS:

- Change in the person's working patterns: for example, frequent absence, lateness or needing to leave work early.
- Reduced quality and quantity of work: missing deadlines, a drop in usual performance standards.
- Change in the use of the phone/email: for example, a large number of personal calls/texts, avoiding calls or a strong reaction to calls/texts/emails.

- Spending an increased number of hours at work for no reason.

#### CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR OR Demeanour:

- Conduct out of character with previous employment history.
- Changes in behaviour: for example, becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, depressed etc.
- Isolating themselves from colleagues.
- Obsession with timekeeping.
- Secretive regarding home life.
- Worried about leaving children at home with abuser.

#### PHYSICAL SIGNS:

- Visible bruising or single or repeated injury with unlikely explanations.
- Change in the pattern or amount of make-up used.
- Change in the manner of dress: for example, clothes that do not suit the climate which may be used to hide injuries.
- Substance use/misuse.
- Fatigue/sleep disorders

#### OTHER SIGNS:

- Partner or ex-partner stalking employee in or around the workplace.

- Partner or ex-partner exerting unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule.
- Flowers/gifts sent to employee for no apparent reason.
- Isolation from family/friends.

If you are concerned about a friend or colleague, find a private space to talk, in a non-judgemental manner and without pressure, about whether they are in danger and need help. However, you must keep in mind that you have to be very careful in approaching colleagues regarding this matter at the workplace. Domestic violence is an extremely sensitive issue that many will not want to discuss with colleagues, as they might also fear that this information will be shared with others at the workplace. In many cultural contexts, women may only feel comfortable being approached about this issue by another woman.

Please be mindful that in Nepal, a society where relationships are critical but also influenced by patriarchal traditions, this “closeness” may be an additional barrier to disclosing abuse. Fear of gossip, disclosure to relatives and members of the extended family, and fear of judgement inhibit women from seeking help.

The employer can also assist by providing leaflets with information about available

services, including counselling for victims/survivors of violence, or have experienced women’s organisations come to the office to provide training about domestic violence to the staff.

**If there are specific observations that are the source of your concern, such as visible bruises or frequent absenteeism, you might say something like:**

**“I noticed that...”**

**“I’m concerned about you, and wonder if there is something I can do to help...”**

**“It seems like you’re stressed out and unhappy. If you want to talk about it now or some other time, I’ll keep it between us...”**

## Be prepared to respond supportively if someone discloses

### IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE PREPARED IN CASE SOMEONE DOES CONFIDE IN YOU. DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Educate yourself about domestic and other forms of violence. Read this resource book with care to understand what domestic violence is, how you can recognise it, and what its impacts are. Find out about what services are available to help victims/survivors.
- Let go of any expectations you have that there is a quick fix to domestic violence or to the obstacles a victim/survivor faces. Understand that inaction may very well be her best safety strategy at a given time.
- Challenge and change any inaccurate attitudes and beliefs that you may have about victims/survivors. They are not abused because there is something wrong with them. Instead, they may be trapped in a situation of manipulation and coercion. The better able you are to recognise and build on the resilience, courage, resourcefulness and decision-making abilities of those abused, the better you will be able to help them.

**Remember!** On average a victim/survivor of domestic violence will attempt to leave a relationship seven times before they are finally able to leave.

### Some important do's when providing help

- **Believe them** – and let the victim/survivor know that you believe them. If you know the partner, remember that

abusers most often behave differently in public than they do in private.

- **Listen to what they tell you.** If you listen actively, ask clarifying questions, and avoid making judgements, you will most likely learn directly from them what they need.
- **Help to build strengths.** Based on the information provided and your own observations, identify the ways in which the victim/survivor has developed coping strategies, solved problems, and exhibited courage and determination, even if the efforts have not been completely successful. Help to build on these strengths.
- **Validate the feelings.** It is common for the victim/survivor to have conflicting feelings – love and fear, guilt and anger, hope and sadness. Let them know that their feelings are normal and reasonable.
- **Avoid victim/survivor-blaming.** Tell them that the abuse is not their fault. Emphasise that the abuse is their partner's problem and it is the perpetrator's responsibility to refrain from blaming the victim/survivor.
- **Take their fears seriously.** If you are concerned about their safety, express your concern without judgement by simply saying, "Your situation sounds dangerous, and I'm concerned about your safety." As appropriate, offer specific forms of help and information. If they ask you to do something you're willing and able to do, do it. If you can't or don't want to, say so and help them identify other ways to meet their needs. Then look for other ways that you can help.

- **Support their decisions.** Remember there are risks attached to every decision an abused person makes. If you truly want to be helpful, be patient and respectful of a victim/survivor's decisions.

### **What can a UN office do?**

UN offices should be prepared to provide appropriate guidance and support to personnel facing domestic violence situations. Senior managers, operations (including human resources) staff, and officers involved with the staff associations should understand their organisations' policies and guidelines on domestic violence and familiarise their staff members with the existence of such provisions.

#### **A UN OFFICE MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE THE VICTIM/SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE WITH ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

**Legal support.** The office may be able to help personnel members with access to legal support through referral advice or support to access a known lawyer who works in this area.

**Financial support.** The cost of dealing with domestic abuse can be high for an individual. Expenses can include legal advice, counselling, a possible change in residence, and so on. Flexible salary advances or local staff association loan programmes may act as sources of extra funds.

**Flexible leave and flexitime arrangements.** Staff may be called suddenly to their home, court, lawyer or another appointment. They may need personal time off to spend with family and friends to cope with their

situation. Flexitime arrangements might suit personnel who have had to relocate and need to be home for a short time. Working out a plan with personnel for flexible working arrangements or leave where there is a mutual understanding of responsibilities is very useful in these situations.

**Health and sick leave.** A person going through domestic abuse may need support with sick leave arrangements. Sick leave needs to also be considered for members of personnel going through emotional or psychological stress in order to address mental health issues. Domestic abuse is a health and safety issue and should be treated as such when considering leave arrangements.

**Workload.** A person suffering from domestic abuse will carry a huge burden of stress, may be distracted or depressed, and may not sleep or eat adequately. They will probably not be able to cope as effectively as usual in their work. This is especially true if the person becomes embroiled in a protracted legal battle or the relationship is particularly violent. The member of personnel may need to explore with their supervisor whether it is possible to lighten their workload or reassign them temporarily.

**Personal and office security.** If a relationship has turned unpredictable and violent for either the member of personnel or one of their registered dependents, it may be possible for the office to advise on personal security until the threat diminishes.

**Office security plans.** For all offices, there should be a security plan which ensures

that all personnel are safe. In cases of domestic violence harassment at the office, such as constant telephone calls, visits and interruptions at work, can be part of the abuse cycle. The office can put in place a security plan to deal with this form of harassment and to ensure that all personnel are kept safe.

**Counselling.** Most offices have established referral systems for basic counselling. Counselling options that focus specifically on domestic violence should be added, including those services that have links to legal advice and law enforcement.

**Access to transport.** Mobility can be an important component of dealing with domestic violence. Survivors may need transport to seek counselling or legal support, or to move to another location temporarily or permanently. Since transportation systems can be unreliable, costly and time consuming for the staff member (and the organisation), the office may consider offering transport when it does not affect programme activities.

**Information.** A referral list of resources for victims/survivors of domestic violence can be made available and possibly posted on a staff bulletin board or in a common area. (Refer to resources page of this resource book on page 46). Other documents in the office, including this resource book, may also assist personnel to better understand domestic violence. These should be part of personnel orientation programmes, and publicly pointed out so that all staff are aware of them.

### **What can I do as a manager?<sup>38</sup>**

First and foremost, make the person feel safe.

### **UNDERSTAND THAT IT CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR EMPLOYEES TO MAKE A DISCLOSURE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE, AND YOUR SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT:**

- DO be sensitive/non-judgmental/practical/supportive/discrete.
- DO prioritise safety over work efficiency.
- DO allocate some private time and space to listen.
- DO NOT seek proof of abuse.
- DO NOT contact the abuser.
- DO NOT compel a victim to accept support.
- DO NOT adopt the role of being a support worker yourself.

All disclosures of domestic abuse and reported concerns should be treated as strictly confidential.

If the employee is uncomfortable discussing the situation with you, consider offering an appropriate point of contact, possibly of the same gender, to advise the employee directly and on a confidential basis. This might be a colleague from human resources. The contact could also advise the manager on how to manage sensitive disclosures and proceed safely.

The recommended option for anyone experiencing domestic abuse is to be referred to specialist practitioners trained to assess risk and advise on safety. Refer or signpost the employee to a domestic abuse helpline, web resource or external specialist domestic abuse service.

If you have concerns about the risk to any employee, you can confidentially seek advice from any of the organisations listed in the resource section of this book. Do so without disclosing the name of the employee.



**Risk in domestic abuse situations is dynamic and can change very quickly. In a small number of cases, victims may be at high risk of serious harm or murder from domestic abuse. Named disclosure without consent may be made in the following exceptional circumstances:**

- If it is believed that the employee or colleague are at risk of serious injury or death.**
- If it is believed that there is a substantial risk of harm to any children involved in, or witnessing, the violence or abuse.**

**If an employee or any colleagues are in immediate danger, call UNDSS at 01-5523989.**

## How to deal with an employee who you suspect uses or may use violence and abuse?

Responding to employees who use or may use violence and abuse needs to be handled appropriately and sensitively. Holding employees accountable for their behaviour is fundamental in a variety of contexts, and misbehaviour in the workplace has direct consequences.

Each situation involving an employee who uses violence (convicted/disclosed) or may use violence and abuse (alleged/undisclosed) requires a tailored response that takes into consideration the individual situation, the organisation's policies, procedures and processes, and relevant workplace legislation. It is therefore important to consult your supervisor and relevant human resources manager to ensure compliance with relevant policies and legislation. While ensuring the safety of the victim/survivor should be a core priority, along with maintaining a safe workplace, an employee who uses or may use violence and abuse also has the right to natural justice ("a right to fair hearing").<sup>39</sup>

Remember, domestic violence is a criminal offence in Nepal as well as a breach of UN Staff codes of conduct. It is a serious work health and safety issue, and it also carries significant reputational impacts for an organisation

## SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE<sup>40</sup>:

- **Are all of your employees safe (emotionally and physically)? This includes:**
  - the person experiencing or at risk of experiencing violence or abuse
  - others who may be impacted (e.g., other employees, beneficiaries or other stakeholders)
  - the person who uses or may use violence and abuse (e.g., note the risk of suicide, self-harm or other mental health crises)
  - the person responding directly to the situation (e.g., note the need for adequate awareness and self-care)
- **Do any immediate steps need to be taken?**
  - Is there a need to re/move the employee to ensure safety?
  - Does the employee have direct contact with vulnerable beneficiaries/partners?
  - Have you been made aware of a serious criminal offence?
  - Are there children who could potentially face a risk?
  - Are the above risks such that you would need to inform the police or other authorities?
- **Are you taking other appropriate measures based on available information and evidence (e.g.,**

**management, discipline, refer, report)?**

- Is the employee in question in a position of authority and influence?
  - Is there evidence of workplace resources and time being used inappropriately?
  - Are there impacts on workplace performance?
  - Has a reasonable opportunity been given to the employee to respond to allegations of violence or abuse?
- **Are you complying with your legal obligations? (e.g., workplace health and safety, duty of care)?**
  - **Are you ensuring that you maintain confidentiality as a priority, whilst also making clear to the employee that there are limits to confidentiality?**

Broadly speaking, a distinction could be drawn between a situation where an employee personally discloses violence, and a situation where no disclosure has been made but there is reasonable evidence of violence or abuse being used.

If an employee comes to you disclosing violent behaviour, you should inform your supervisor and human resources manager about the disclosure. The person should be counselled and made aware of the possible legal and social consequences of their behaviour. It should be made clear that “It is never acceptable to use the workplace to be abusive to those within or outside the workplace”<sup>41</sup>. This includes using workplace resources and time to be abusive, including emailing, phoning or texting the victim/

survivor while at work.

If they are willing and ready to seek assistance to address their violent behaviour, they should be supported by the organisation – whether through enrolment in anger management programmes or other support groups, or through a referral to a psychiatrist. Granting them leave and temporarily decreasing their workload may also be required. The object of the assistance should be to help them socially and mentally to “get back on the right track”. The situation should then be monitored on an ongoing basis.

If you are a colleague or supervisor of a person that you reasonably suspect of using violence or abuse, you should bring the matter to the attention of your supervisor and the relevant human resources manager. If there is reasonable evidence that domestic violence or abuse is taking place, the matter should be escalated within the relevant managerial and human resources channels to determine the appropriate response to the situation, which may include referral to the police for investigation and possible prosecution. In instances where the victim/survivor, their children or others are at risk, the case should be referred immediately to the police and other relevant (e.g., child protection) authorities.

## UN Staff Regulation 1.2 Basic rights and obligations of staff

### CORE VALUES

- (a) Staff members shall uphold and respect the principles set out in the Charter, including faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women. Consequently, staff members shall exhibit respect for all cultures; they shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals or otherwise abuse the power and authority vested in them.

### STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE

- Freedom from discrimination is a basic human right. International civil servants are expected to respect the dignity, worth and equality of all people without any distinction whatsoever. Assumptions based on stereotypes must be assiduously avoided. One of the main tenets of the Charter is the equality of men and women, and organizations should therefore do their utmost to promote gender equality.
- Harassment in any shape or form is an affront to human dignity and international civil servants must not engage in any form of harassment. International civil servants have the right to a workplace environment free of harassment or abuse. All organizations must prohibit any kind of harassment. Organizations have a duty to establish rules and provide guidance on what constitutes harassment and abuse of authority and how unacceptable behaviour will be addressed.
- International civil servants must not abuse their authority or use their power or position in a manner that is offensive, humiliating, embarrassing or intimidating to another person.

Please visit the UN Ethics website for relevant documentation on Staff Regulations, Rules, Standards of Conduct and other policies and guidance: <http://www.un.org/en/ethics/relevantdocs.shtml>

UNDSS has increased its efforts to mainstream gender into all its policies and programmes.

The UN Security Management System (UNSMS) has a “Policy on Gender Consideration in Security Management”: <http://webtv.un.org/watch/unsms-policy-on-gender-considerations-in-security-management/4930590970001>

The UNSMS Policy is supported by “Guidelines on Gender-Based Security Incidents”. These Guidelines provide practical advice to security personnel on the preparation and response to gender-based incidents.

The Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN) Working Group on Gender Inclusion has been developing a “Manual on Gender Inclusion in Security Risk Management”, and updating the 2006 “Security Guidelines for Women”.

For details, please visit: <https://www.un.org/undss/content/gender-security-0>

## CHAPTER 7

# RECOVERY

If you are a survivor of domestic violence who has begun to take steps to address the situation or cycle of abuse, you are on the road to recovery.

The process of reorientation to life without abuse takes a different course for each individual. Most survivors can expect to go through a period of not only concrete and practical changes, such as moving to a new home, but of strong psychological, emotional and economic challenges as well. Some survivors experience flashbacks to traumatic events that they were not able to mentally integrate when they took place. There may be waves of anger, grief, shame and fear. These are normal reactions. As long as they diminish over time, they are signs that healing is taking place and that you are leaving the past behind you.

As you pass through this period, you can do many things to support yourself. Start or continue counselling, if that is appropriate, and especially if you are feeling “stuck” and unable to move on. Look for a support group of other people who have had similar experiences or read materials on domestic violence so that you can begin to understand the phenomenon and know you are not alone. Many resources are now available on the Internet.

Try to maintain routines and structures in your daily life, including through regular hours for eating, sleeping and working.

Set achievable personal goals and work towards them, in the process rebuilding your confidence and self-esteem. Nurture and care for yourself and give yourself time to process the confusing and damaging messages your abuser may have left with you.

### **Cultivating new ways of thinking<sup>42</sup>**

#### **THE FOLLOWING LIST OF REMINDERS MAY HELP IN CULTIVATING NEW WAYS OF THINKING TO HELP YOUR RECOVERY:**

- I am not to blame for being abused.
- I am not the cause of another’s irritation, anger or rage.
- I have the right to live free from violence, fear and pain.
- I can say no to what I do not like or want.
- I do not have to take abuse. I have a right to a life of security and dignity.
- I am an important and strong human being.
- I am a worthwhile person.
- I deserve to be treated with respect.
- I have power over my own life.
- I can use my power to take good care of myself.
- I can decide for myself what is best for me.
- I can make changes in my life if I want to.
- I am not alone; I can ask others to help me.
- I am worth working for and changing for.
- I deserve to make my own life safe and happy.
- I can count on my creativity and resourcefulness.

**RESOURCES – This section lists available services in Nepal and provides resources for information, learning and training on domestic violence.**

**SERVICES IN NEPAL**

Type of Service	Name of Organisation /Department
Immediate help (security, safety)	UNDSS Nepal
Immediate help (shelter, psychosocial support, child support and legal aid)	National Women Commission
Health and medical services	One Stop Crisis Management Centre, Paropakar Maternity and Women’s Hospital
Providing security	Nepal Police Women & Children Service Centres

Details	Remarks
<p>UN House, Kathmandu, Nepal  UN Radio Room (24h)  Tel: +977-1-5523989  Email: unradioroom.kathmandu@undp.org</p>	<p>UN staff members can contact UNDSS for immediate assistance with any security and safety concerns.</p> <p>UNDSS DV Focal Person: Sashi Sijapati, LSA UNDSS  Tel: 9801115003  Email: sashi.sijapati@undss.org</p>
<p>Bhadrakali Plaza, Kathmandu, Nepal  Tel: +977-1-4256701  Toll Free Helpline (24h): 1145  Fax: +977-1-4250246  Email: info@nwc.gov.np ; sambodhan@nwc.gov.np  Web: nwchelpine.gov.np  Web: www.nwc.gov.np</p>	
<p>Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal  Tel: +977-1-4253276   4253277  4212568   4260231   4260405  Fax: +977-1-4260274  Contact Person: Suku Maya Lama  Mobile : 9841323725  Email: info@prasutigriha.org.np  Web: www.facebook.com/Paropakar-Maternity-and-Womens-Hospital</p>	<p>The Government of Nepal has established One Stop Crisis Management Centres in 45 districts to provide free services to GBV victims/survivors. Please contact the One Stop Crisis Management Centre in Kathmandu for current information about their locations and services available.</p>
<p>Tel: +977- 1- 4414745  Email: nepolwcsd@gmail.com</p> <p>Police Control  Metropolitan Police Range (Kathmandu) 4261945   4261790  Metropolitan Police Range (Lalitpur) 5521207  Metropolitan Police Range (Bhaktapur) 6614821  Email: info@nepalpolice.gov.np  Web: www.nepalpolice.gov.np</p>	<p>There are 240 Women and Children Centres (Police) across Nepal. Survivors/victims can access help through these centres.</p>

Type of Service	Name of Organisation /Department
Legal support/ legal aid	Forum for Women, Law and Development FWLD are providing pro bono services to victims/survivors of GBV
Legal support/ legal aid	Legal Aid and Consultancy Center
Legal support/ legal aid	Nepal Bar Association (NEBA)
Legal support/ legal aid	District Legal Aid Committees
Psychosocial support services	Centre for Mental Health and Counselling- Nepal (CMC-Nepal)
Psychosocial support services	Center for Victims of Torture (CVICT)



Details	Remarks
<p>72 Adarsha Marg, Thapathali Kathmandu, Nepal            Tel: +977-1-4233524   4233525   4242683   4266415            Fax: +977-1-4240627            Email: fwld@fwld.wlink.com.np   fwld2013@gmail.com</p>	
<p>Man Bhawan, Lalitpur            PO Box: 3216 (KTM)            Tel: +977-1-554-3111   554-2999            Email : laccnepal@gmail.com            Web: www.laccnepal.org</p>	
<p>Ramshah Path, Kathmandu, Nepal            Tel: +977-1-4200831   4200837            Fax: +977-1-4200836            Email: neba@nepalbar.org            Web: http://www.nepalbar.org/</p>	<p>NEBA has 89 units in accordance with the courts of Nepal through which legal aid is provided.</p>
<p>Please contact your respective Nepal Bar Association units in the District Court. District Legal Aid Committees have been providing free legal services in their respective districts.</p>	<p>Local District Legal Aid Committees may be able to provide legal services in particular locations.</p>
<p>Jitjung Marg, Thapathali, Kathmandu            P.O.Box No. 5295            Tel: +977-1-4102037   4226041            Fax: +977-1-4102038            Email: cmcnepal@mos.com.np            Web: www.cmcnepal.org.np</p>	<p>UNDSS has an ongoing contract with CMC for counselling for UN staff. Please contact Ms Karuna Kunwar at 9851087366 They have system of billing to the recipients for its service.</p>
<p>71 Reyukai Marg, Bansbari Kathmandu            Tel : +977- 1- 4373900   4373902            Email: cvict@cvict.org.np            Web: cvict.org.np</p>	<p>CVICT provides psychosocial counseling and case management across Nepal. Please contact Ms Jamuna Poudyal at 9851096219 for further details.</p>

Type of Service	Name of Organisation /Department
Psychosocial support services	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Nepal (TPO Nepal)
Shelter homes	SAATHI
Shelter homes	Women’s Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC Nepal)
Shelter homes	Alleviate Poverty Empowering Women in Rural Areas of Nepal (APEIRON)
Shelter homes	Women for Human Rights, Single Women Group (WHR)

Details	Remarks
<p>94/13, Anek Marge, Baluwatar, Kathmandu            GPO BOX 8974 CPC 612            Tel: +977-1-4431717   4437124   4424082            Toll free helpline: 1660 010 2005            Web: www.tponepal.org</p>	<p>TPO has field offices in Chitwan, Jhapa, Morang, Jumla, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchowk and Ramechhap. Please see their website for details</p>
<p>Dhobighat, Patan, Lalitpur            Tel: +977- 1-5537103   5537104            Fax: +977-1-5535912            Web : www.saathi.org.np</p>	<p>SAATHI operates shelter homes in Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Kanchanpur, Kapilvastu and Sindhupalchok</p>
<p>Balkumari, Lalitpur            Tel: +977-1-5186073   5186374            Fax: +977-1-5006271            Hotline: 16600178910            Email: ics@worecnepal.org            Web: www.worecnepal.org</p>	<p>WOREC works on GBV prevention and response in 19 districts. It operates shelter homes (Safehouses) in Kathmandu, Morang, Udayapur, Dhanusha, Dang and Kailali; Women Psychosocial Counselling Centre (21 centres) in Morang, Udayapur, Siraha, Sunsari, Dhanusha, Dang and Salyan; Women Health Counselling and Resource Centre (35 centres) in Udayapur, Siraha, Dang, Salyan and Rukum</p>
<p>Uccha Marg 48, Tudaldevi Mandir, Baluwatar, Kathmandu            Tel: +977 4443520   4444596            Email: project@apeironglobal.org Web: www.apeironglobal.org</p>	<p>APEIRON operates shelters in eight districts including Kathmandu and is open to women from across the country.</p>
<p>Baluwatar, Kathmandu            PO Box: 8973 NPC 427            Tel: +977-1- 444 6020   441 3868            Fax : +977 -1- 441 3868            Email: mail@whr.org.np</p>	<p>WHR operates shelter homes in 16 districts exclusively for single women.</p>

Type of Service	Name of Organisation /Department
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Support to LGBTI persons

Blue Diamond Society (BDS)

Support to persons with disabilities

Nepal Disabled Women Association (NDWA)

Details	Remarks
<p>Dhumbarahi Marga, Dhumbarahi Height, Kathmandu GPO Box : 4375, EPC: 5119 Tel: +977-1-4443350   4007647 Fax: +977-1-4007726</p> <p>Toll Free Hotline: 1660-01-20140 Email : <a href="mailto:bluediamondsociety.movement@gmail.com">bluediamondsociety.movement@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:bdsboard@gmail.com">bdsboard@gmail.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.bds.org.np">www.bds.org.np</a></p>	<p>BDS has broad geographical coverage across Nepal. Please contact the organisation for further details of its local level offices or contact persons.</p>
<p>House 37, Kalopul Marga, Kalopul, Kathmandu PO Box 1775 Tel: +977-1-4435131   4438342 Email: <a href="mailto:info@ndwa.org.np">info@ndwa.org.np</a> <a href="mailto:ndwa.2009@gmail.com">ndwa.2009@gmail.com</a> Web: <a href="http://www.ndwa.org.np">www.ndwa.org.np</a></p>	<p>NDWA can assist with a range of issues, including legal aid and referrals. Please contact the organisation for more details.</p>

# FOCAL PERSONS OF THE UN AGENCIES

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1	FAO Nepal Country Office United Nations House Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Nepal Tel: +977-1-5523200 Fax: +977-1-5526358	<b>Mala Lakhe (F)</b> Mobile: 9802330508 Email: mala.lakhe@fao.org  Dhan Bahadur Shrestha (M) Mobile: 9802330506 Email: dhan.shrestha@fao.org
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3	ILO Nepal Country Office Dhobighat, Nayabato, Lalitpur, Nepal Tel: + 977-1-5555777, 5550691 Fax: + 977-1-5550714	<b>Marina Rai (F)</b> Mobile: 9851022729 Email: marina@ilo.org
4	IOM Nepal Country Office 768/12 Thirbam Sadak Baluwatar - 5, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: +977-1-4426250 Fax: +977-1-4434223	<b>Ruchi Thapa (F)</b> Mobile: 9841365316 Email: ruthapa@iom.int
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|----|---|--|
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| 13 | <p>UNHCR<br/>Dhara Marga-1, Anil Kuti, Maharajgunj<br/>P.O Box 2374, Kathmandu, Nepal<br/>Tel : +977-1-4414989<br/>FAX : +977-1-4412853</p>                   | <p><b>Bhagi Maya Dhungel (F)</b><br/>Mobile: 985-1101015<br/>Email: dhungel@unhcr.org</p> <p><b>Sushila Sharma (F)</b><br/>Mobile: 985-2676120<br/>Email: sharma@unhcr.org</p>                         |

14	<p>UNICEF Nepal Country Office P.O. Box 1187 United Nations House Pulchowk Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 977-1-5523200 Fax: 977-1-5527280</p>	<p><b>Upama Mala (F)</b> Mobile: 9841956183 Email: umala@unicef.org</p>
15	<p>UNCRPD KSK Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Ward No. 5, Lagankhel, P.O. Box 107 Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel.: +977 1 554 8561 Ext. 209</p>	<p><b>Sudan Rai (M)</b> Mobile: +977 980 8614 098 Email: sudan.rai@un.org</p>
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19	<p>WHO Nepal Country Office United Nations House Pulchowk, Lalitpur Post Box No. 108, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: +977-1-5523200 Fax : +977-1-5523993</p>	<p><b>Kedar Marahatta (M)</b> Mobile: 980-1195794 Email: marahattak@who.int</p> <p><b>Prava Sanjel (F)</b> Mobile: 980-1246678 Email: sanjelP@who.int</p>



**To ensure support to victims/survivors of violence, including domestic violence, during the lockdown period, the following services are available:**

Police	100
Police - GBV section	9851289111
Police Anti-trafficking Bureau	9851280111
Child-related cases	104
National Women Commission (NWC) open 24/7	1145
National Women Commission Legal Consultation: 10.00 am – 5.00 pm	Advocate: Punyshila Dawadi:- 9841437949 Advocate: Shakuntala Basnet:- 9841644515 Advocate: Chandeswori Tandukar:- 9841202275 Advocate; Anjana Neupane:- 9860489403
Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen	1133
Khabar Garau – GBV	11 77
NFCC Asha Crisis Center	9801193088, 5904789, 5904790
WOREC	1660-0178910
Saathi	9801038482 9849544950 01511567
Transcultural Psychosocial (TPO)	1660-01-02005
LACC – Free Legal Support for GBV survivors during lockdown period (10am-5pm)	9841437949, 9841644515, 9841202275, 9860489403
Children issues-CWIN	1098

# LIST OF REFERENCES

## INTRODUCTION

- <sup>1)</sup> World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, South African Medical Research Council (2013), *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*, p.2, , cited at UN Women, 'Facts and figures: Ending violence against women' website, available at: [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures)
- <sup>2)</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UN Women (2015), *Global Database on Violence against Women*, ch.6, cited at UN Women, *ibid*.
- <sup>3)</sup> Ministry of Health, Nepal, New ERA, and ICF (2017), *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016*, p.337, available at: <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR336/FR336.pdf>
- <sup>4)</sup> The total number of respondents in the Staff Survey was 389. All respondents answered this question (Q7) in the Staff Survey.
- <sup>5)</sup> Pun, K.D., Infanti, J., Koju R., Schei B., Darj, E. (2016), 'Community perceptions of domestic violence against pregnant women in Nepal: a qualitative study', *Global Health Action*, Vol 9, Issue 1
- <sup>6)</sup> Ministry of Health, Nepal, New ERA, and ICF (2017), *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016*, p.307
- <sup>7)</sup> Government of Nepal (2012), *A Study on Gender-Based Violence Conducted in Selected Rural Districts of Nepal*, p. 77, available at: <https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/OPMCMGECUGBVResearchFinal.pdf>
- <sup>8)</sup> Ministry of Health, Nepal, New ERA, and ICF (2017), *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016*, p.346

## CHAPTER 1

- <sup>9)</sup> Section 2(a) of the Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2066 (2009), full text of the Act available at: <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/-/media/files/un%20women/vaw/full%20text/asia/domestic%20violence%20offense%20and%20punishment%20act%202006/dv%20crime%20and%20punishment%20act%202009.pdf?vs=22>
- <sup>10)</sup> A total of 357 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q13).
- <sup>11)</sup> A total of 349 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q9).
- <sup>12)</sup> Ministry of Health, Nepal, New ERA, and ICF (2017), *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2016*, p.337
- <sup>13)</sup> A total of 389 respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q6).
- <sup>14)</sup> A total of 225 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q8).
- <sup>15)</sup> UNFPA, SW Nepal (2017) Situational Assessment for Improved Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response in Selected Districts of Nepal, p.60, available at: [www.ndri.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/1\\_Revised-Final-Report\\_2017001\\_Situational-Assessment-for-Improved-GBV-Prevention-and-Response-in-Selected-Districts-of-Neapl.pdf](http://www.ndri.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/1_Revised-Final-Report_2017001_Situational-Assessment-for-Improved-GBV-Prevention-and-Response-in-Selected-Districts-of-Neapl.pdf)
- <sup>16)</sup> UNFPA, SW Nepal (2017), Situational Assessment for Improved Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response in Selected Districts of Nepal, p.61

## CHAPTER 2

- <sup>17)</sup> UN Women, 'Causes, Protective and Risk Factors', Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls website, available at: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/300-causes-protective-and-risk-factors-.html?next=301>
- <sup>18)</sup> A total of 277 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q14).
- <sup>19)</sup> Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (1998), *Domestic Violence in Nepal*, available at: [www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/nepal\\_domestic\\_violence\\_1998\\_2.PDF](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/nepal_domestic_violence_1998_2.PDF)

## CHAPTER 3

- <sup>20)</sup> World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, South African Medical Research Council (2013), *Global and regional estimates of violence*

- against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, p.2, cited at UN Women, 'Facts and figures: Ending violence against women' website, available at: [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures)
- <sup>21)</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2014), Global Study on Homicide 2013, p. 14, cited at UN Women, 'Facts and figures: Ending violence against women' website
- <sup>22)</sup> UNICEF, UNFPA (2015), Harmful Connections: Examining the relationship between violence against women and violence against children in the South Pacific, p.5, available at: [https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/Harmful\\_Connections\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/Harmful_Connections(1).pdf)
- <sup>23)</sup> WOREC (2016), Status and Dimensions of Violence Against Women. Reality Revealed, p.30, available at: [http://www.worecnepal.org/uploads/doc/WOREC-Nepal\\_\\_1525677522Complete\\_Anbeshi\\_Sujata\\_BA\\_01\\_No\\_track\\_2015.pdf](http://www.worecnepal.org/uploads/doc/WOREC-Nepal__1525677522Complete_Anbeshi_Sujata_BA_01_No_track_2015.pdf)
- <sup>24)</sup> Ministry of Health, Government of Nepal (2011) Nepal Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Study 2008/09: Summary of Preliminary Findings, p. 8, available at: [http://www.dpiap.org/resources/pdf/nepal\\_maternal\\_mortality\\_2011\\_04\\_22.pdf](http://www.dpiap.org/resources/pdf/nepal_maternal_mortality_2011_04_22.pdf)
- <sup>25)</sup> UNICEF (2006), Behind Closed Doors: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children, p.6, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/media/files/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>
- <sup>26)</sup> Chhabra, GS, and Sodhi, MK (2012), 'Impact of Family Conflict on the Psychosocial Behaviour in Male Adolescents', Journal of Nepal Paediatric Society, Vol 32, Issue 2, p.130
- <sup>27)</sup> Kirshor, S and Johnson, K (2004), Profiling Domestic Violence – A Multi-Country Study, Measure DHS+ ORC Macro, p. 76-96, available at: <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/od31/od31.pdf>
- <sup>28)</sup> The Asia Foundation (2017), Impact of Domestic Violence on the Workplace in China, p.7, available at: <https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Impact-of-Domestic-Violence-on-the-Workplace-in-China.pdf>
- <sup>29)</sup> Overseas Development Institute (2015), Gender Violence in Papua New Guinea: The Cost to Business, available at: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9886.pdf>
- <sup>30)</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2003), Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States, 2, p. 30-32, and World Health Organization, The Economic Dimensions of Interpersonal Violence: Summary, p. x, cited in The Advocates for Human Rights (2011), 'Community Costs of Domestic Violence', available at: [http://www.stopvaw.org/community\\_costs\\_of\\_domestic\\_violence](http://www.stopvaw.org/community_costs_of_domestic_violence)
- <sup>31)</sup> Walby, S (2004), The Cost of Domestic Violence: Research Summary, United Kingdom Department of Trade, cited in The Advocates for Human Rights (2011), 'Community Costs of Domestic Violence', ibid.
- <sup>32)</sup> Unicef Innocenti Research Centre, Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls (Innocenti Digest, No. 6, June 2000) cited in The Advocates for Human Rights (2011), 'Community Costs of Domestic Violence', ibid.

## CHAPTER 4

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## CHAPTER 5

- <sup>33)</sup> A total of 356 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q10).
- <sup>34)</sup> A total of 350 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q19). The awareness of respondents of the various legal instruments varied from 41 per cent (Civil and Criminal Code) to 57 per cent (Constitution). Around 53 per cent of respondents were aware of the Domestic Violence Act and Rules, respectively.
- <sup>35)</sup> A total of 354 (out of 389) respondents in the Staff Survey answered this question (Q11).
- <sup>36)</sup> Some agencies may have more specialised support. Check with your agency for specific information.

## CHAPTER 6

- <sup>37)</sup> The below guidance is adopted from the UK Department of Health, Responding to Colleagues Experiencing Domestic Abuse: Practical Guidance for Line Managers, Human Resources and Employee Assistance Programmes, available at: <http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/DV%20Employer%27s%20guidance%20FINAL%20Update%203%20-%20SafeLives%20rebranded.pdf>
- <sup>38)</sup> The below guidance is adopted from the UK Department of Health, Responding to Colleagues Experiencing Domestic Abuse: Practical Guidance for Line Managers, Human Resources and Employee Assistance Programmes, available at: <http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/DV%20Employer%27s%20guidance%20FINAL%20Update%203%20-%20SafeLives%20rebranded.pdf>

<sup>39)</sup> Ibid, p.10

<sup>40)</sup> These questions are from derived the above-cited publication Domestic and Family Violence: A Workplace Approach to Employees who Use or May Use Violence and Abuse, p.11

<sup>41)</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>41)</sup> Ibid, p.10

<sup>41)</sup> Ibid, p.5

## **CHAPTER 7**

<sup>42)</sup> Adapted from Baker Fleming, J (1979), Stopping Wife Abuse; A Guide to the Emotional, Psychological, and Legal Implications for the Abused Woman and Those Helping Her (Anchor Press)

# INFORMATION RESOURCES

## NEPALI RESOURCES

The Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2066 (2009), full text of the Act available at:

Nepali version: <http://www.lawcommission.gov.np/documents/2017/08/%e0%a4%98%e0%a4%b0%e0%a5%87%e0%a4%b2%e0%a5%81-%e0%a4%b9%e0%a4%bf%e0%a4%82%e0%a4%b8%e0%a4%be-%e0%a4%95%e0%a4%b8%e0%a5%82%e0%a4%b0-%e0%a4%b0%e0%a4%b8%e0%a4%9c%e0%a4%be%e0%a4%af-%e0%a4%8f%e0%a5%87.pdf>

English version: <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/-/media/files/un%20women/vaw/full%20text/asia/domestic%20violence%20offense%20and%20punishment%20act%202066/dv%20crime%20and%20punishment%20act%202009.pdf?vs=22>

CREHPA and UCL, Tracking Cases of Gender-based Violence in Nepal: Individual, Institutional, Legal and Policy Analyses, available at: [http://www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/GBV-tracking-study\\_0.pdf](http://www.un.org.np/sites/default/files/GBV-tracking-study_0.pdf)

Center for Victims of Torture (CVICT), a range of resources on violence, the effects of violence and access to justice, available at: <http://cvict.org.np/resources/publications/>

Center for Mental Health and Counselling-Nepal (CMC-Nepal), a broad range of publications on mental health issues in Nepali and English, available at: <http://www.cmcnepal.org.np/publications/>

Forum for Women, Law and Development, a wide range of resources on access to justice issues in Nepali and English, available at: <http://fwld.org/publications/>, including the following:

- Concept Paper on Gender-Based Violence - <http://fwld.org/publications/concept-paper-gender-based-violence/>
- Information Paper on Women's Reproductive Health Rights - <http://fwld.org/publications/information-paper-womens-reproductive-health-right/>
- Women and Sexuality in Nepal: A Study Report - <http://fwld.org/publications/women-sexuality-nepal-study-report-2/>
- Information Booklet on Justice, Gender and Human Rights for Informal Justice System - <http://fwld.org/publications/information-booklet-justice-gender-human-rights-informal-justice-system-2/>
- Information Paper on Basic Principles of Justice Delivery in Formal and Informal Justice System - <http://fwld.org/publications/information-paper-basic-principles-justice-delivery-formal-informal-justice-systems/>
- Areas of Improvement in Women and Children Centers - <http://fwld.org/publications/information-booklet-justice-gender-human-rights-informal-justice-system/>

Legal Aid and Consultancy Center, a wide range of resources on violence against women and access to justice in Nepali and English, available at: <http://www.laccnepal.org/publication.php>, including the following:

- Brochure on Violence Against Women, Legal Provisions and Remedies - <http://www.laccnepal.org/uploads/achive/20180215015131.pdf>
- A Booklet on the Legal Provision of Women Rights in Nepal - <http://www.laccnepal.org/uploads/achive/20180215014920.pdf>
- Legal Provision on Domestic Violence - <http://www.laccnepal.org/uploads/achive/20180215013836.pdf>
- Single Women Protection - <http://www.laccnepal.org/uploads/achive/20180222025550.pdf>

Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Nepal (TPO-Nepal), a range of IEC material and other resources on mental health, available at: <http://tponepal.org/category/iec-materials/>

SAATHI, A Study on the Psycho-social Impacts of Violence Against Women and Girls with a Special Focus on Rape, Incest and Polygamy (2001), available at: [https://www.saathi.org.np/images/stories/pdf/Psycho-Social\\_Impacts\\_VAW&G.pdf](https://www.saathi.org.np/images/stories/pdf/Psycho-Social_Impacts_VAW&G.pdf)

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UNDP and MenEngage Alliance Nepal, Nepali Masculinities & Gender-based

Violence (2014), available at: [http://www.np.undp.org/content/dam/nepal/docs/projects/UNDP\\_NP\\_AVRSCS\\_nepali\\_masculinities\\_and\\_gender-based\\_violence.pdf](http://www.np.undp.org/content/dam/nepal/docs/projects/UNDP_NP_AVRSCS_nepali_masculinities_and_gender-based_violence.pdf)

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WOREC, Status and Dimensions of Violence Against Women in Nepal: Reality Revealed (2016), available at: [http://www.worecnepal.org/uploads/doc/WOREC-Nepal\\_\\_1525677755ANBESHI\\_Reality\\_Revealed\\_2016\\_.pdf](http://www.worecnepal.org/uploads/doc/WOREC-Nepal__1525677755ANBESHI_Reality_Revealed_2016_.pdf)

## GLOBAL RESOURCES

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/ VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Global Women's Institute, Inter-American Development Bank, and World Bank Group, Violence Against Women & Girls Resource Guide, available at: <http://www.vawresourceguide.org/overview>

South Asia Development Forum, and World Bank Group, Violence against Women and Girls: Lessons from South Asia, available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/20153>

UNFPA, Addressing Gender-based Violence (2009), available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/addressing-gender-based-violence>

UNFPA, Partnering with Men to End Gender-based Violence (2009), available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/>

partnering-men-end-gender-based-violence

UNFPA, Programming to Address Violence Against Women (2009), available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/programming-address-violence-against-women>

UN Secretary-General's Campaign, UNiTE to End Violence Against Women, available at: <http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/index.shtml> - includes a range of information resources on domestic violence/violence against women

UN Women, Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls, available at: <http://www.endvawnow.org/> - includes a wide range of resources on the topic as well as programming guidelines

WHO, Fact sheet on Violence Against Women, available at: <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women> - includes links to publications, toolkits etc.

WHO, Fact sheet on Elder Abuse, available at: <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/elder-abuse> - includes links to publications on prevention of elder maltreatment etc.

### **VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**

UNICEF, #ENDviolence, available at: [https://www.unicef.org/endviolence/#anchor\\_101388](https://www.unicef.org/endviolence/#anchor_101388) - includes a broad range of resources on violence against children (including in the domestic context)

UNICEF, Behind Closed Doors: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children (2006), available at: <https://www.unicef.org/media/files/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>

UNICEF, Prevention and Responding to Violence, Abuse, and Neglect in Early Childhood (2013), available at: [https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Report\\_on\\_preventing\\_and\\_responding\\_to\\_violence\\_in\\_early\\_childhood\\_2013\\_Cassie\\_Landers.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Report_on_preventing_and_responding_to_violence_in_early_childhood_2013_Cassie_Landers.pdf)

UNICEF, Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse (publications), available at: [https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58022.html](https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58022.html)

WHO, Fact sheet on Child Maltreatment, available at: <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>

### **RESOURCES FOR MEN AND BOYS**

Department of Child Protection, Government of Western Australia, How to Deal with Domestic Violence: A Self-Help Booklet for Men Who Want to Change, available at: <https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Documents/2015/Howdodealwithdomesticviolencebooklet.pdf>

Edspace, Factsheet: Male Domestic Abuse (violence towards men), available at: <http://edspace.org.uk/factsheet/male-domestic-abuse/>

Lifeline (Australia), Tool Kit: Men Experiencing Difficult Times, available at: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/static/uploads/files/men-experiencing-difficult-times->

wfhxocjwuz.pdf

MenEngage Alliance, available at: <http://menengage.org/> - see especially the 'resources' section for publications and video resources

MensLine (Australia), Men's Toolkits, available at: <https://mensline.org.au/the-tips-and-tools/mens-toolkits/> - includes advice for men and self-help toolkits on e.g. anger management, communication, and self-care

USAID, Working with Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women and Girls: Approaches, Challenges and Lessons (2015), available at: [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/Men\\_VAW\\_report\\_Feb2015\\_Final.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/Men_VAW_report_Feb2015_Final.pdf)

White Ribbon Campaign (engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls), available at: <https://www.whiteribbon.ca/> - see especially 'publications' section

White Ribbon Australia has helpful fact sheets on domestic violence, available at: <https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/understand-domestic-violence/facts-violence-women/factsheets/>

Domestic violence and mental health organisations/services (for general information and advice)

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (Australia) - <http://www.dvrcv.org.au/>

This organisation's website has a range of excellent resources and help & advice for all categories of people affected by domestic violence

1800RESPECT (Australia) - <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

This domestic violence organisation has a range of helpful resources and advice on supporting someone in a situation of domestic violence.

Lifeline (Australia) - <https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/domestic-family-violence>

This organisation has a range of information and advice, including a fact sheet and toolkit, on domestic and family violence

Women's aid (UK) - <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

This organisation's website has great resources for people seeking help (including those under 18), those worried about someone else, and those working with survivors.



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who Use or May Use Violence and Abuse, available at: [file:///C:/Users/johuh/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge\\_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads](file:///C:/Users/johuh/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads)

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United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Women (2015), Global Database on Violence against Women, available at: <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/about>

UNODC (2014), Global Study on Homicide 2013, available at: [www.unodc.org/gsh/](http://www.unodc.org/gsh/)

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# How to support survivors of gender-based violence when a GBV actor is not available in your area



A STEP-BY-STEP  
**POCKET** GUIDE FOR  
HUMANITARIAN PRACTITIONERS

# WHAT IS THE *POCKET GUIDE*?

The *Pocket Guide* and its supporting materials<sup>1</sup> provide all humanitarian practitioners with information on:

- **How to support a survivor of gender-based violence (GBV)**
- **Who discloses their experience of GBV with you**
- **In a context where there is no GBV actor (including a GBV referral pathway or a GBV focal point) available.**

The *Pocket Guide* uses global standards on providing basic support and information to survivors of GBV without doing further harm. We encourage adaptation of this resource to your local context with the support of a GBV specialist and in a manner that maintains a survivor-centered approach.

While the *Pocket Guide* uses a Psychological First Aid (PFA) framework (Prepare, Look, Listen and Link), previous knowledge or training on PFA is not needed. Comprehensive PFA training is encouraged.

SECTION	PAGE	USE FOR
Key messages	69 - 70	Immediate guidance
Decision tree	71	
Information Sheet on available services	72 - 73	
Do's, Don'ts and what to say:	74 - 77	
Look	74	
Listen	75	
Link	76	
Step-by-step guidance Seeking support & PSEA Prepare, Look, Listen & Link	78 - 82	Preparation and building knowledge and skills to respond
Children and adolescents	83 - 87	Immediate guidance for children and adolescents under 18 years

<sup>1</sup> Accompanying the *Pocket Guide* is a *Background Note* and a *User Tips/How-To Guide*.

# KEY MESSAGES

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- Always talk to a GBV specialist first to understand what GBV services are available in your area. Some services may take the form of hotlines, a mobile app or other remote support.
- Be aware of any other available services in your area. Identify services provided by humanitarian partners such as health, psychosocial support, shelter and non-food items. Consider services provided by communities such as temple/monastery/mosques/churches, women's groups and Disability Service Organizations.
- Remember your role. Provide a listening ear, free of judgment. Provide accurate, up-to-date information on available services. Let the survivor make their own choices. Know what you can and cannot manage. Even without a GBV actor in your area, there may be other partners, such as a child protection or mental health specialist, who can support survivors that require additional attention and support. Ask the survivor for permission before connecting them to anyone else. Do not force the survivor if s/he says no.
- Do not proactively identify or seek out GBV survivors. Be available in case someone asks for support.
- Remember your mandate. All humanitarian practitioners are mandated to provide non-judgmental and non-discriminatory support to people in need regardless of: gender,

sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability status, age, ethnicity/tribe/race/religion, who perpetrated/committed violence, and the situation in which violence was committed.

## Use a survivor-centered approach by practicing:

- **Respect:** all actions you take are guided by respect for the survivor's choices, wishes, rights and dignity.
- **Safety:** the safety of the survivor is the number one priority.
- **Confidentiality:** people have the right to choose to whom they will or will not tell their story. Maintaining confidentiality means not sharing any information to anyone.
- **Non-discrimination:** providing equal and fair treatment to anyone in need of support.
- **If health services exist, always provide information on what is available.** Share what you know, and most importantly explain what you do not. Let the survivor decide if s/he wants to access them. Receiving quality medical care within 72 hours can prevent transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and within 120 hours can prevent unwanted pregnancy.
- Provide the opportunity for people with disabilities to communicate to you without the presence of their caregiver, if wished and does not

endanger or create tension in that relationship.

- If a man or boy is raped it does not mean he is gay or bisexual. Gender-based violence is based on power, not someone's sexuality.
- Sexual and gender minorities are often at increased risk of harm and violence due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Actively listen and seek to support all survivors.
- Anyone can commit an act of gender-based violence including a spouse, intimate partner, family member, caregiver, in-law, stranger, parent or someone who is exchanging money or goods for a sexual act.
- Anyone can be a survivor of gender-based violence – this includes, but isn't limited to, people who are married, elderly individuals or people who engage in sex work.
- Protect the identity and safety of a survivor. Do not write down, take pictures or verbally share any personal/identifying information about a survivor or their experience, including with your supervisor. Put phones and computers away to avoid concern that a survivor's voice is being recorded.
- Personal/identifying information includes the survivor's name, perpetrator(s) name, date of birth, registration number, home address,

work address, location where their children go to school, the exact time and place the incident took place etc.

- Share general, non-identifying information
  - To your team or sector partners in an effort to make your program safer.
  - To your support network when seeking self-care and encouragement.

*“ It has come to my attention that people are experiencing harassment around the water point because it is isolated and far away. We can try to reduce this harassment by encouraging use of a closer water point, or encouraging collecting water in groups, or...” “ Someone shared with me an experience of something bad that happened to them. I can't share the details, but need support around how this interaction is affecting me.”*



# DECISION TREE



## PREPARE

Be aware of existing services.

For children and adolescents, go to page 83



A GBV incident is disclosed to you...

**By someone else...** Provide up-to-date and accurate information about any services and support that may be available to the survivor. Encourage the individual to share this information safely and confidentially with the survivor so that they may disclose as willing. **NOTE: DO NOT** seek out **GBV** survivors.

**By the survivor**  
**LOOK & LISTEN**  
(refer to page 74 & 75)  
Introduce yourself. Ask how you can help. Practice respect, safety, confidentiality and non-discrimination.

Is a GBV actor/referral pathway available?

**Yes.** Follow the GBV referral pathway to inform the survivor about available GBV services and refer if given permission by the survivor.

**No. LINK** (refer to page 76 & 77)  
Communicate accurate information about available services.

Does the survivor choose to be linked to a service?

**Yes.** Communicate detailed information about the available resource/service including how to access it, relevant times and locations, focal points at the service, safe transport options etc. Do not share information about the survivor or their experience to anyone without explicit and informed consent of the survivor. Do not record details of the incident or personal identifiers of the survivor.

**No.** Maintain confidentiality. Explain that the survivor may change his/her mind and seek services at a later time. If services are temporary, mobile or available for a limited time, provide information on when these

*Adapted from the Shelter Cluster's GBV Constant Companion ([www.sheltercluster.org/gbv](http://www.sheltercluster.org/gbv)).*

# INFORMATION SHEET

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Fill in this information sheet for services in your area and keep it in a place where it is easily accessible.

Work with a GBV specialist, your team leader and partners to identify (1) available services provided by humanitarian partners and (2) community-based services such as religious groups/places of worship, women’s groups, Disabled Persons’ Organizations etc.

Child Protection	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Mental health/ psychosocial support	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Health	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Sexual and reproductive health	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Non-food items/WASH incl. dignity kits	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Shelter	Information:	
	Focal Points:	



Legal	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Food and nutrition	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Services for adolescents/ youth	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Services for people with disabilities	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Services for sexual and gender minorities	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Services for child or female-headed households	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Other	Information:	
	Focal Points:	
Other	Information:	
	Focal Points:	

# DO'S, DON'TS AND WHAT TO SAY

For children and  
adolescents,  
go to page 69



## LOOK

### DO'S

- ✓ **DO** allow the survivor to approach you. Listen to their needs.
- ✓ **DO** ask how you can support with any basic urgent needs first. Some survivors may need immediate medical care or clothing.
- ✓ **DO** ask the survivor if s/he feels comfortable talking to you in your current location. If a survivor is accompanied by someone, do not assume it is safe to talk to the survivor about their experience in front of that person.
- ✓ **DO** provide practical support like offering water, a private place to sit, a tissue etc.
- ✓ **DO** to the best of your ability, ask the survivor to choose someone s/he feels comfortable with to translate for and/or support them if needed.

### DON'TS

- ✗ **DO NOT** ignore someone who approaches you and shares that s/he has experienced something bad, something uncomfortable, something wrong and/or violence.
- ✗ **DO NOT** force help on people by being intrusive or pushy.
- ✗ **DO NOT** overreact. Stay calm.
- ✗ **DO NOT** pressure the survivor into sharing more information beyond what s/he feels comfortable sharing. The details of what happened and by whom are not important or relevant to your role in listening and providing information on available services.
- ✗ **DO NOT** ask if someone has experienced GBV, has been raped, has been hit etc.

### Examples of what to say...

- "You seem to be in a lot of pain right now, would you like to go to the health clinic?"
- "Does this place feel OK for you? Is there another place where you would feel better? Do you feel comfortable having a conversation here?"
- "Would you like some water? Please feel free to have a seat."



## LISTEN

### DO'S

- ✓ **DO** treat any information shared with confidentiality. If you need to seek advice and guidance on how to best support a survivor, ask for the survivor's permission to talk to a specialist or colleague. Do so without revealing the personal identifiers of the survivor.
- ✓ **DO** manage any expectations on the limits of your confidentiality, if applicable in your context.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **DO** manage expectations on your role.
- ✓ **DO** listen more than you speak.
- ✓ **DO** say some statements of comfort and support; reinforce that what happened to them was not their fault.

### DON'TS

- ✗ **DO NOT** write anything down, take photos of the survivor, record the conversation on your phone or other device, or inform others including the media.
- ✗ **DO NOT** ask questions about what happened. Instead, listen and ask what you can do to support.
- ✗ **DO NOT** make comparisons between the person's experience and something that happened to another person.
- ✗ **DO NOT** communicate that the situation is "not a big deal" or unimportant. What matters is how the survivor feels about their experience.
- ✗ **DO NOT** doubt or contradict what someone tells you. Remember your role is to listen without judgment and to provide information on available services.

### Examples of what to say...

- "How can I support you?"
- Everything that we talk about together stays between us. I will not share anything without your permission."
- "I will try to support you as much as I can, but I am not a counselor. I can share any information that I have on support available to you."
- "Please share with me whatever you want to share. You do not need to tell me about your experience in order for me to provide you with information on support available to you."
- "I'm sorry this happened to you."
- "What happened was not your fault."

<sup>2</sup> There are some contexts that have mandatory reporting rules related to certain types of cases. Refer to your Protection focal point and/or GBV specialist for further information and guidance.



## LINK

### DO'S

- ✓ **DO** respect the rights of the survivor to make their own decisions.
- ✓ **DO** share information on all services that may be available, even if not GBV specialized services.
- ✓ **DO** tell the survivor that s/he does not have to make any decisions now, s/he can change their mind and access these services in the future.
- ✓ **DO** ask if there is someone, a friend, family member, caregiver or anyone else who the survivor trusts to go to for support.
- ✓ **DO** offer your phone or communication device, if you feel safe doing so, to the survivor to contact someone s/he trusts.
- ✓ **DO** ask for permission from the survivor before taking any action.
- ✓ **DO** end the conversation supportively.

### DON'TS

- ✗ **DO NOT** exaggerate your skills, make false promises or provide false information.
- ✗ **DO NOT** offer your own advice or opinion on the best course of action or what to do next.
- ✗ **DO NOT** assume you know what someone wants or needs. Some actions may put someone at further risk of stigma, retaliation, or harm.
- ✗ **DO NOT** make assumptions about someone or their experiences, and do not discriminate for any reason including age, marital status, disability, religion, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, identity of the perpetrator(s) etc.
- ✗ **DO NOT** try to make peace, reconcile or resolve the situation between someone who experienced GBV and anyone else (such as the perpetrator, or any third person such as a family member, community committee member, community leader etc.)
- ✗ **DO NOT** share the details of the incident and personal identifiers of the survivor with anyone. This includes the survivor's family members, police/security forces, community leaders, colleagues, supervisors, etc. Sharing this information can lead to more harm for the survivor.
- ✗ **DO NOT** ask about or contact the survivor after you end the conversation.





## LINK (continued)

### Examples of what to say...

- “Our conversation will stay between us.”
- “I am not a counselor, however, I can provide you with the information that I have. There are some people/organizations that may be able to provide some support to you and/or your family. Would you like to know about them?”
- “Here are the details of the service including the location, times that the service is open, the cost (if applicable), transport options and the person’s name for who you can talk to.”
- “Is there anyone that you trust that you can go to for support, maybe a family member or a friend? Would you like to use my phone to call anyone that you need at this moment?”
- “When it comes to next steps, what you want and feel comfortable with is the most important consideration.”
- “Do not feel pressure to make any decisions now. You can think about things and always change your mind in the future.”
- “I cannot talk to anyone on your behalf to try to resolve the situation. But what I can do is support you during our conversation and listen to your concerns.”
- “It sounds like you have a plan for how you would like to go from here. That is a positive step.”

# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDANCE

## THE SURVIVOR'S PERSPECTIVE:

### Benefits and Risks for Seeking Support

Seeking services is not always safe for a survivor and could lead to more harm. Remember that your role is to provide accurate, up-to-date information on available services and let the survivor make their own choices on what feels safe for them. Consider the following example of benefits or risks:

#### RISKS of seeking support

- Possibility that the survivor's friends, family and/or community will find out, which can lead to being stigmatized, kicked out of their home or community, and/or exposed to more violence.
- Possibility that the perpetrator(s) finds out other people know what happened, leading to retaliation by harming or even killing the survivor.
- Possibility that service providers are exposed to threats and violence by the perpetrator or community if they are seen as helping a survivor.
- Possible insensitive response by service providers if they are not trained properly

#### BENEFITS of seeking support

- Access to life-saving support when in distress.
- Access to safe, confidential and professional medical care in a timely manner that could prevent HIV and unwanted pregnancy
- Access to other services that provide more dignity and comfort, including options for safety and psychosocial support.
- Access to support that may prevent further violence from occurring.

#### SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE by a humanitarian actor or individual associated with humanitarian aid

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) is a term used to refer to steps taken to protect vulnerable people from sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian actors and associated personnel, including humanitarian aid workers, volunteers, security guards, contractors, drivers, UN mission personnel, UN police personnel, peacekeepers, suppliers/vendors of goods and services for humanitarian purposes and so on.

Regardless of who the perpetrator is, the roadmap to support any survivor of GBV as outlined in this resource remains the same. For additional responsibilities that arise when the perpetrator is an aid worker or associated with humanitarian aid, contact your PSEA Focal Point or in-country PSEA network.



## PREPARE:

**Preparation is key.** Even without a GBV actor (including a GBV referral pathway or a GBV focal point) available in your area, there may be other services, including at the local/community level, that can be helpful to address someone's needs. You likely know about more services than you think!

### Be aware of available services

- Use the **Information Sheet (page 72 & 73)** to fill in information about available services. Work with a GBV specialist, your team leader, colleagues and other partners. Write down necessary information about how to access those services, including where to go, who to talk to, and who can/cannot access them (e.g. only women, necessary documentation, etc.).
- Ask your team leader, program manager and/or cluster/sector coordinator about the protocols for Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. In the case that your agency does not have an established protocol for PSEA, consider reaching out to a PSEA focal point for guidance in your setting. Practice makes perfect! Get comfortable with the sample scripts on pages 74 - 77. Practice

## Practice makes perfect

- Get comfortable with the sample scripts on pages 74 - 77. Practice out loud or with colleagues and friends. The more you practice, the more comfortable you will be if a survivor of GBV seeks your help.
- Refer to the **User Tips Manual** for additional information on how you can train on/practice these materials.
- The **Pocket Guide** is helpful for anyone who is going through a difficult situation. The next time your colleague or friend comes to you for support or advice, practice using the questions and statements in this resource.



## LOOK:

**When someone discloses their experience of gender-based violence to you...**

### Introduce yourself

- Introduce your name, your role and who you are. Ask how you can help.

### Address urgent basic needs

- Each person will have different basic needs, which may include urgent medical care, water, finding a loved one or a blanket or clothes if lost, torn, stained or removed. Especially for GBV survivors, clothes may be the primary urgent need for them to feel more comfortable and dignified.

- Let the survivor tell you how s/he feels about their personal safety and security. Take care to not make assumptions based on what you are seeing.

## Be aware of the different ways that people reach out for support

- Allow people to express their emotions in whatever form they take. People have diverse responses to stress and crisis. Some people may be quiet and unable to talk; angry and yelling; blaming themselves for what happened to them; crying; violent and so on.
- People with disabilities, people who speak a different language and others experience different barriers when reaching out for support. Adhere to the survivor-centered principles and

confidentiality when finding ways to listen to and support these individuals. Even if you cannot understand someone you can always demonstrate care and support.

- Ensure female staff is present to provide support, especially in contexts where women and/or girls are culturally unable to interact with men.

## Recognize what you can and cannot manage

- Some situations require more specialized support beyond your role, such as situations involving children, mandatory reporting,<sup>3</sup> imminent danger of a survivor, or where the survivor may be of harm to themselves or to others. There may be other focal points with the capacity to better support in this scenario. Refer to your **Information Sheet (page 72 & 73)**.

**REMEMBER**, if you want to seek support from a supervisor or another humanitarian practitioner, ***ALWAYS ask permission from the survivor first***. Tell the survivor who you want to talk to, why you want to talk to them and what information you want to share. If the survivor is not comfortable or outright refuses sharing of their information, help them as best as you can using the tools in this Pocket Guide.



<sup>3</sup> There are some contexts that have mandatory reporting rules related to certain types of cases. Refer to your Protection focal point and/or GBV specialist for further information and guidance.





## PREPARE:

After ensuring the survivor's basic needs are met, and that s/he is not in immediate danger, LISTEN.

The survivor may be very upset and/or confused, but as a helper it is important to stay as calm as possible. Allow the individual to share as much or as little information as s/he would like to. It is not your role to provide counseling, take the individual to services or conduct a detailed interview about what happened to them. Rather than asking detailed questions about the incident itself, focus on providing them with information about the services you know are available

**TIP:** Normally, it is best to avoid questions, especially those that begin with "WHY," as such questions can feel like they are placing blame on the survivor. Instead, just listen or, if needed, ask questions such as *"can I tell you about services that are available to support you"* or *"how would you like me to support you?"*

## THE POWER OF LISTENING:

Sometimes you may be in a situation where there are absolutely no services or resources available for you to share with a survivor. You may feel helpless. It is important that you are honest with the survivor, recognizing the survivor's courage to share their experience with you, express that you are sorry you cannot be more helpful and provide the survivor with as much dignity in the course of your conversation as possible. Being present while demonstrating active listening is supportive in and of itself.



## LINK

As you support the survivor to make decisions on their next steps...

**Ask the survivor if there is someone s/he trusts to go to for support.**

- If asked what your opinion is, encourage the survivor to make the decisions on who to go to, when and why.
- Do not give your own opinion of the situation.

## If any services do exist, provide accurate information to the survivor on the available services or options for more comfort.

- Preparation is key. Use your *Information Sheet (page 72 & 73)* and make sure you have accurate, up-to-date information on the services available and how to access them.
- If you are not sure a specific service exists, say you are not sure.

## Compassionately end the conversation.

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Positively reinforce any decisions that the survivor made.
- Keep in mind, your role is to support the survivor in their decisions and choices, even if the survivor does not make any. Do not engage in repeated sessions or meetings with survivor, counseling or attempts to manage the survivor's case.

## After the conversation

**Reflection and self-care:** It is important to remember that you can do everything right, but you are not going to fix this person's experience or take away their pain. Listening to and hearing other people's experiences can expose you to their painful, traumatic or hurtful experience – also known as experiencing secondary trauma. Think about how to take care of yourself as these feelings come up for you. Reach out to your own support system and network, including your colleagues, team leader or a GBV specialist, to de-brief on the exchange (keeping in mind the survivor's confidentiality) and seek support.

Since certain types of violence (for example, domestic violence) can operate in cycles, you may see this person again or learn that they experienced another incident of violence. You cannot change their experiences, but you can:

- Listen without judgment to a survivor during each incident regardless of if you've talked to them before or not.
- Think about how to improve your programming, make the services you offer safer, and create a more positive environment for those who experience GBV.

# SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS UNDER 18 YEARS

## KEY MESSAGES

- **Always talk** to a GBV or child protection specialist in your country/context first to understand: (1) what services are available in your area and (2) local protocols and procedures.<sup>4</sup>
- **Do not harm.** Do not seek out child survivors. It is not your job to investigate or assess if a child/adolescent is experiencing violence. Doing so can lead to more violence and risks for the child/adolescent. Be approachable if a child/adolescent wants to seek your help.
- **Remember your role.** If a child/adolescent reaches out to you for help,
  1. Provide a listening ear, free of judgment.
  2. Support the child/adolescent by connecting them to

an adult that the child/adolescent identifies as being safe and trusted. This may not be their parent, caregiver or a family member.

3. Do not make decisions for him/her, including forcing the child/adolescent's caregiver or any other person to be with them when s/he talks to you.

- **Provide comfort.** Allow the child/adolescent to lead the conversation, even if this means providing company in silence. Be at eye level with open body language to show the child/adolescent that they can open up to you if s/he wants to. Refrain from asking questions about what happened, by who and why – instead use comforting statements and speak in a manner that they can understand.

**REMEMBER,** if a GBV or child protection actor/referral pathway is available in your area, facilitate safe and confidential referral of the child/adolescent to a specialist to better assist them.

Use this guidance when there is no **GBV or child protection actor/referral pathway** available in your area.



<sup>4</sup> Refer to your GBV or Child Protection focal point in-country on local protocols and procedures, including: (1) limits on confidentiality and (2) designated GBV and child protection focal points.

→ Treat every child fairly. All children should be offered the same unbiased support regardless of their sex, age, family situation, status of their caregiver or any other part of their identity. Do not treat a child that has experienced GBV as helpless. Each child has unique capacities and strengths and possesses the capacity to heal. Speak to a child survivor in a way that they understand and with respect for their dignity and opinions.

→ **Maintain confidentiality.** Do not write down, take photos or document in any way your interaction with the child/adolescent. Put away any phones or computers that may be perceived as recording the conversation. Ask for permission to share any information about the child/adolescent or their experience. This means asking if you can share the information even with someone that the child/adolescent identifies as someone they trust.

→ **Ensure the safety of the child.** The physical and emotional safety of the child is the primary concern. Consider the child's safety throughout all interactions with him or her, and in relation to any next steps taken.



In some cases it may be unclear how to support **the best interest of the child** and his/her physical and mental well-being. If ever unsure about the safety of the situation, inform the child that you will need to confidentially speak to another service provider or team member that may have more knowledge on how to ensure his or her safety.

→ **Be aware of how a child/adolescents or their caregiver may seek support.** Children and adolescents seek help in different ways than adults, and rarely make direct disclosures. Children may find it difficult to trust or talk to adults, especially adults they do not know well; experience fear, embarrassment or shame; or be afraid of expressing their emotions. You may: (1) hear rumors of child abuse, (2) be approached by adults seeking help for a child or (3) suspect abuse of a child, based on signs or behaviors from the child.

## DO'S

## DON'TS

### IF SOMEONE ASKS YOU FOR HELP ABOUT A CHILD/ADOLESCENT IN NEED...

- ✓ **DO** provide accurate, up-to-date information on available services to the individual who asked you for support.
- ✓ **DO** respect confidentiality.<sup>4</sup>
- ✗ **DO NOT** investigate a rumor or seek to find/interview the child/adolescent.
- ✗ **DO NOT** discuss or share the details of what you learned with anyone.<sup>4</sup>

### IF THE CHILD/ADOLESCENT SEEKS YOUR HELP...



## LOOK:

- ✓ **DO** ask the child/adolescent if they want to find a quiet and private place to talk. Make sure it is a place where others can see you, but not hear you.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ **DO** ensure that you are sitting at their eye level. Maintain open body language.
- ✓ **DO** ask girls and boys if they want to talk to an adult woman or man of the same gender.
- ✗ **DO NOT** direct the child/adolescent to go to a quieter or private place, or isolate the child against their will.<sup>6</sup>
- ✗ **DO NOT** touch, hug or make physical contact as this can be traumatizing, uncomfortable and distressing.



## LISTEN

- ✓ **DO** listen attentively and pay attention to non-verbal body communication.
- ✓ **DO** be calm and patient, accepting what is being said without passing judgment.
- ✓ **DO** let the child/adolescent express themselves and use their own words.
- ✗ **DO NOT** interview or assess.
- ✗ **DO NOT** write anything down, take pictures or verbally share information about the child/adolescent or their experience.
- ✗ **DO NOT** display shock, disbelief, anger or any other reactions that may cause the child/adolescent distress.
- ✗ **DO NOT** use big words or speak more than the child/adolescent.



## COMFORT

- ✓ **DO** reassure the child/adolescent that it is OK s/he told you what happened.
- ✓ **DO** respect the child's opinion, beliefs and thoughts.
- ✓ **DO** use comforting statements appropriate to the cultural context... examples include:"

*"I believe you"* – build trust"

*"I am glad that you told me"* – builds a relationship with the child"

*"Thank you for sharing your experience"* – expresses empathy

*"You are very brave to talk with me"* – reassuring and empowering

- ✗ **DO NOT** make promises you cannot keep such as saying "everything will be OK" when it is not within your control to assure a child's well-being.
- ✗ **DO NOT DO NOT** force the child/adolescent to continue talking with you if s/he does not want to.



## LINK

- ✓ **DO** ask if there is someone that the child/adolescent trusts, and if s/he wants help in reaching out to this person, or accompaniment to find this person.
- ✓ **DO** stay with the child/adolescent until s/he feels safe or are in the care of someone who s/he identifies as safe and trusted.
- ✓ **DO** provide the child/adolescent and adult s/he trusts with accurate, relevant information on services that are available and how to access them
- ✓ **DO** say what you know and what you do not know. Say "I do not know" or "I do not have that information" if you do not have the information requested.

- ✗ **DO NOT** force a child/adolescent to have their caregiver or any other person with them when s/he talks to you as these individuals may have perpetrated the violence, or the child/adolescent may not want to share their experience with them.
- ✗ **DO NOT** leave a child/adolescent unattended while s/he is in distress (for example, crying, angry or in shock).
- ✗ **DO NOT** try to solve the situation yourself, make a plan or make decisions for the child/adolescent.

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## Reference for children's age and ability to make decisions

Note that a specialized practitioner – with experience working with children/adolescents who experience GBV – is best positioned to determine a child or adolescent's ability to make decisions in coordination with the child/adolescent themselves and their respective caregiver(s).

**Your role as a non-specialist is to listen to and comfort the child/ adolescent, link them to someone that they trust, and share information on available services.** The age categories below are for reference only and may change depending on the age, level of maturity, developmental stage and other factors.

**Older adolescents age 15 years and older** are generally mature enough to make their own decisions and understand their experiences.

→ Your role: (1) listen to the adolescent share their experience, (2) support the adolescent to connect with someone they trust for ongoing support and (3) provide information on available services and how to access them.

**Young children 6 to 9 years and young adolescents 10 to 14 years** may or may not be able to self-report experiences of violence. They may or may not be able to make decisions on their own.

→ Your role: (1) support the child/ adolescent to find an adult they trust to support them with next steps and (2) provide information on available services and how to access them to both the child/ adolescent and the identified adult.

**Infants and toddlers 0 to 5 years** will not self-report experiences of violence given their lack of or limited communication skills. Another individual –a friend, caregiver, family member, community member etc. – will likely seek help on the child's behalf.

→ **Your role:** provide information to the accompanying individual on available services and how to access them.

*Adapted from: UNHCR, Best Interest Determination Guidelines, 2008. IRC/ UNICEF, Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse, 2012.*

यो स्रोत सामग्री 2015 IASC GBV Guidelines को सहायक मार्गदर्शिका हो ।  
[www.gbvguidelines.org](http://www.gbvguidelines.org)

[www.gbvguidelines.org/pocketguide](http://www.gbvguidelines.org/pocketguide)



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