

Abstract

In the past two decades, various studies have shown the increase of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), particularly domestic violence in Timor-Leste. The alarming trends of GBV tolerance in Timorese society still exist even after the promulgation of the Law Against Domestic Violence (LADV) in 2010 and the adoption of its three years National Action Plan (NAP-GBV) 2012-2014. The study of domestic violence has tended to focus on the description of its complexities, the nature, and the consequences of the violence to women, children, and society in general. The research on evaluating the service provision and attitude changes in society towards domestic violence is meagre. Using published and unpublished sources this thesis investigates the effectiveness of government policy intervention on domestic violence in Timor-Leste focusing on the implementation of NAP-GBV 2012-2014. The NAP-GBV is an integrated approach that provides a framework to establish strategic, coordinated, and long-term effort fighting against GBV in Timor-Leste. Different government ministries and institutions, national and international NGOs, and service providers have been involved in supporting and executing the programs and activities outlined in the NAP-GBV. The Action Plan is composed of four main pillars: prevention, service provision, access to legal formalities and monitoring and evaluation. It aims to deter the violence before it occurs through awareness-raising, education, and economic empowerment, provide accessible service to victims of violence, hold perpetrators to account, and ensure effective evaluation.

This thesis critically scrutinises the implementation of the NAP-GBV using the United Nations Entity for Women (UN Women) guidelines on effective NAP as an analysis framework. By researching evaluation reports commissioned by the government on the NAP-GBV 2012-2014 and other reports from NGOs service providers, this thesis examines how the policy was evaluated and how different stakeholders collaborated to achieve the plan's outcomes, as well as identifying gaps and challenges encountered. The thesis finds that the government evaluation report suggests that the goals of NAP-GBV were generally achieved. Domestic violence is now being considered as a public offence within Timorese society, and more cases are brought to criminal justice systems according to the Law Against Domestic Violence. However, there were challenges and gaps that need to be addressed to reduce domestic violence in Timor-Leste. These include the limitations of professional staff in the social, justice and health sector responding to domestic violence, lack of financial and human resources in relevant ministries to execute the Action Plan, and lack of coordination,

monitoring, and evaluation systems. Effective collaboration is essential, and the role of individuals representing key implementing institutions is influential in the success of the interventions. The evaluation report also shows the lack of intervention on perpetrators rehabilitation mechanisms to reduce recidivism. Hence, the adoption of specific measures such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) in dealing with the perpetrator is important to consider in the future NAP. Further research on enablers and inhibitors of evidence-based practice in interventions related to domestic violence planning and program design is very important to the efforts of tackling domestic violence in Timor-Leste.