



CENTRAL PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Division for Community Development



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SUMMARY OF PROVINCIAL EFFORTS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender Based Violence has been an ongoing issue dealt with amongst the family welfare cases within the Welfare system administered under the Division of Community Development. Women and children who are victims of abuse as a result of family violence often seek redress to mitigate the effects of violence through our welfare office under the Division of Community Development.

Like any other provinces, we have a funded position of a Welfare & Child Protection officer who deals with family matters administering cases and providing paralegal services and also referral of GBV victims to other service providing partners in the referral pathway within the province. In the course of attending to family matters, the welfare officer administers enforcement of family legislations such Family Protection Act, Lukautim Pikinini Act, Juvenile Justice Act, Adultery & Enticement Act, Adoption Act and so on.

2. IMPACT OF GBV ON ITS PEOPLE

GBV has had its share of the negative effects on women and children of this province. Family marriages have been seriously affected and as a result, children are innocently victimized. In most cases family violence and abuse cases come about as a result of polygamous relationships where women and children's rights are being denied as a result the normal day to day functions of families are disrupted.

3. EXISTING DATA AND COLLECTION S SYSTEM

We have a data collection system in place but not specifically for GBV cases. Gender based violence cases are recorded under different case categories like desertion, neglect, adultery, maintenance, divorce and child protection cases. All these case categories have some elements of violence in them. The only times we have pure violence related cases to attend to is when victims

seek paralegal assistance for Interim Protection Orders (IPO's) from the courts for self - protection and this becomes very obvious of violence directly inflicted on the victim. Most of these cases come as referrals from the FSVU police units. Over the years, the provincial welfare office alone attends to well over 200 cases of which 30% is specifically related to GBV. This is excluding data collected from the five (5) districts within the province. In addition to this there is a data collection system we are linked to online through a platform using a child protection application called "Primero" for collecting data of children in need of protection.

4. PROVINCIAL GBV STRATEGY

Currently the province does not have a stand - alone strategy however as part of the mandated sectoral program under the Welfare section, issues relating to violence against women are attended to and processed accordingly consistent to the National GBV strategy 2016 to 2025. Though we do not have a Provincial Strategy, this does not stop us from attending to victims of gender - based violence because we are obliged to attend to victims of violence consistent to the intention of the Family Protection Act and Child Protection Act respectively.

5. BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR GBV

There is very limited support on budgetary allocation for GBV programs. Specific support on GBV programs is very limited therefore other additional interventions to directly respond to and minimize the incidence of violence is stalled. Despite that, the only funding available is the recurrent budgetary allocation merely for operational costs. The operational costs involved in various activities for Children and Women stretches the budget to an extent where we cannot satisfactorily accomplish other much needed complimentary GBV programs to completely eradicate GBV.

6. STATUS OF ESTABLISHING GBV SECRETARIAT FOR FSVAC

The province currently does not have a GBV secretariat established as yet. There were attempts in the past by outgoing Deputy Provincial Administrator with the support of the late Welfare Officer but due to lack of prominence given by the Provincial administration, this agenda was given low priority and therefore shelved. With the recent introduction of the Lukautim Pikinini Policy and its support

legislation, the Lukautim Pikinini Act 2015, we are now making headways through the approval of a policy submission this year that has been endorsed for the establishment of delivery structures of which FSVAC will also be accommodated somewhere within these structures. Rollout of the implementation to initiate the establishment of these structures will be facilitated as soon as certification of this PEC approval is authenticated.

7. GBV CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICES

In the course of attending to victims of violence, we have come to realize that most support services for victims are located in the National Capital District. Services such as Safe Houses, Courts, Counselling Services and Para-legal Services are all located in the NCD as such referrals for victims of violence are confined to service providers in the NCD. There is hardly any local NGO or CSO providing essential services for victims out in the districts except for only one community safe house for women and children that is operational in Dom village over in Cloudy Bay area of the Abau District. Other than these, the Division of Community Development through the Welfare section provides for para-legal assistance especially assisting victims of violence for Protection orders from the district Courts.

8. GBV PREVENTION ACTIVITIES AND INTERVENTIONS

Due to the lack of funding support for activities and interventions to prevent the incidence of violence against women, we are unable to implement such activities and programs.

However, despite that we are only able to attend to individuals on a case by case scenario. That is attending to individual clients providing paralegal assistance and referral to other appropriate services depending on the nature of the cases. There are a whole range of programs and associated activities as per the National GBV Strategy 2016 – 2025 however due to lack of funding and staffing constraints, we as a division mandated with that responsibility are unable to holistically implement these strategies and its activities to the satisfaction and expectation of victims and clients.


9. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT TO GBV

There has never been any direct support from development partners to GBV in this province however through the Children's program particularly guided by the National Child Protection Policy and its enabling legislation which is the Lukautim Pikinini Act 2015, UNICEF has been very supportive in the training and capacity building of Child Protection officers to enable Child Protection officers to attend to violence against children where parents and guardians are closely linked to or are seen as perpetrators in some situations. Therefore, it is envisaged that in the course of dealing with violence against children simultaneously violence against women who are related to these children can be dealt with. This is also reinforced

Other international NGO's such as Child Fund only has been very instrumental in the training of community volunteers as Human Right Defenders to mobilize community support to prevent child abuse and gender violence and in doing so promoting the intention of the two pieces of legislations namely the Family Protection Act and the Lukautim Pikinini Act.

10. CHALLENGES HINDERING PROGRESS ON GBV

Just like any other programs, GBV has its own challenges that has been a hinderance to adequately implementing the causes and effects of GBV in the Province. Most significantly this program is under resourced by way of funding, staffing and resources and of course the geographical locations of our rural communities.


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Acting Provincial Administrator

