

## VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

*"Violence against children is never justifiable, nor is it inevitable. If its underlying causes are identified and addressed, violence against children is entirely preventable."*

United Nations Secretary General, 2006

### ISSUE

Almost a decade on from the launch of the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children in 2006 the hidden, invisible nature of many forms of violence still masks the true magnitude.

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines violence against children as *"all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse"*.<sup>1</sup>

Violence against children affects every strata of society, and occurs in many settings - homes, schools, communities, care and justice institutions, workplaces, and increasingly, via the Internet.

Its consequences are immediate, often irreversible and far-reaching, profoundly impacting a child's emotional and physical health and their social development.

But it is not just individual children or families that are affected: violence against children impacts societies as a whole – resulting in lost productivity, disability, and decreased quality of life – all of which can hold back a country's development.

### SCALE AND SCOPE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN INDONESIA

Recognizing the urgent need to systematically measure the prevalence of physical, emotional, and

### KEY MESSAGES

Children are at higher risk of physical and emotional violence in their own family than anywhere else.

- Emotional or psychological violence includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies. Acts of emotional violence include restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment (WHO, 1999).

Schools, and care and justice settings play an important role in protecting children, but for many, they also expose children to multiple risks, such as corporal punishment, bullying or violent behaviour.

Sexual violence disproportionately affects women and girls. It is one of the most widespread human rights abuses, and includes abuse, harassment, rape or sexual exploitation (including prostitution or pornography).

- The true extent of sexual violence is unknown, yet global estimates suggest 20% of women and 5-10% of men experience sexual abuse at one point as children (WHO, 2010). The practice of early marriage is another form of sexual violence common worldwide. Young girls are often forced into marriage and sexual relations, causing health risks, such as early pregnancy, exposure to HIV/AIDS, and limiting their school attendance.

sexual violence against children in the country, as well as identify risk and protective factors, and the health consequences of violence, the Government of Indonesia (supported by UNICEF and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]), has undertaken a Violence against Children Survey (VAC).

Results, scheduled to be released in 2014, will strengthen the evidence base and provide a vital step forward in supporting more effective national policy and planning for child protection, as well as identify targeted interventions and entry points to promote social behavior change.

<sup>1</sup> See also UNICEF Indonesia Issues Brief: Children and Exploitation, 2013

Up to now, most data on the impact of violence against children in Indonesia relies on limited provincial- or district-level surveys and/or studies of specific target groups.

Though not comprehensive, such evidence provides a snap shot of the pervasiveness of violence against children which shows that there is a high prevalence of physical and emotional/ psychological violence taking place in the home: An estimated 80 per cent of 2 to 14 year olds in six districts in Papua and West Papua experienced at least one form of psychological or physical punishment by a family member[s].<sup>i</sup> Between 42 and 77 per cent of children surveyed in five districts in West Timor and East Nusa Tenggara Provinces experienced physical violence over a one-year period (2011).<sup>ii</sup> In a 2009 four-province survey, high proportions of 10 to 18 year olds in Aceh, Papua, Central Java, and East Nusa Tenggara reported experiencing violence in various forms (Figure 1).<sup>iii</sup>

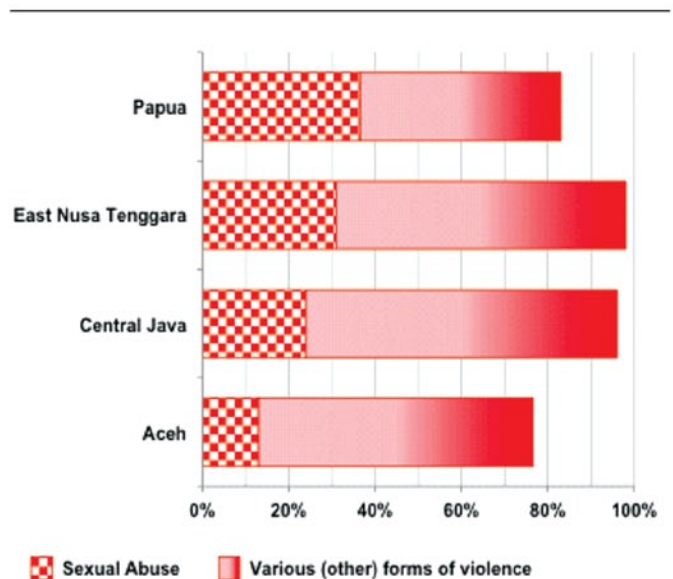


Figure 1: Percentage of children 10-18 years old reporting having experienced violence at home or in the community.

Studies reveal that many children are victims of sexual violence: The 2009 study also found that 26 per cent of adolescents had experienced one or more kinds of sexual abuse.[ ibid] These figures are further reinforced by a study on child protection shelters in Indonesia (*Rumah Perlindungan Sosial Anak/ RPSA*) showing that many recipients of RPSA-support are victims of sexual violence, perpetrated by a close family member, as well as teachers and neighbours.<sup>v</sup>

In schools, the use of corporal punishment remains an accepted norm, and physical violence, such as bullying is a common practice: The Law on Child Protection protects children in schools from “violence and abuse from teachers, school managers, and school mates both in the school and other educational institutions” (article 54) but it does not explicitly prohibit corporal punishment. A recent study in Papua found that in three districts, corporal punishment was the most common form of discipline in over half of the schools interviewed, and that the majority of principals, teachers and students believed corporal punishment is an appropriate method for disciplining students.<sup>vi</sup>

## WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING

In recent years, the Government of Indonesia has made significant steps to strengthen children’s protection from harm and abuse, with a focus on building the knowledge on the extent of violence; strengthening the legal and regulatory framework (and its enforcement); and improving the quality of the services provided, especially to the victims of violence.

**National planning and development:** A major milestone is the inclusion of child protection – for the first time – as a key priority in the 2010-2014 National Medium-Term Development Plan (*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional [RPJMN]*). A number of provinces are either in the process of, or have adopted local legislation, regulations and plans. Translating national plans into actionable provincial and district-level interventions is an ongoing effort.

**Strengthening legislation and ongoing law reform:** Significant progress is being made towards incorporating the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC] and its Optional Protocols into the legislative framework, including through the Child Protection Law (2002); the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (2004); and the Law on Anti-Trafficking (2007). The Juvenile Criminal Justice System Law, most recently adopted has been another significant step forward in moving towards Indonesia’s greater compliance with the CRC and other standards, such as the UN Beijing Rules on Administration of Juvenile Justice. Priority areas for further legislative reform include the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and for children in conflict with the law, and better protection from sexual violence.

**Law enforcement:** This includes developing mechanisms to encourage people to report incidents of violence to the police, and strengthen the way cases are handled by the courts. Initiatives underway include strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies, notably the police, in dealing with victims of violence, as well its perpetrators. Support services are being strengthened through initiatives such as the establishment of Special Units for Women and Children – Unit Pelayanan Perempuan dan Anak (UPPA). Operationalizing elements of the new Juvenile Justice Law, once it comes into force in 2014, will be a vital next stage.

**Improving the quality of services and strengthening coordinated service delivery:** Developing the role and capacity of social workers is vital. Recent progress has focused on the integration of child protection issues in pre- and in-service training of social workers; strengthening referral services; increasing access to victim support via helpdesks at police stations and the child helpline 129 (TeSA 129); and improving the access to integrated services, such as the *Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu* (PPT) – a one stop service centre that provides medical, counseling and legal services. Further work is underway to link PPT services, often based in public hospitals, with community health centres to strengthen the reach to rural communities. To strengthen national tracking and coordination, a database on case management for women and children victims is in progress.

**Strengthening inter-sectoral coordination is an ongoing priority at national, provincial and district level:** Overall coordination is benefiting from the establishment of Provincial Offices for Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection, that link to the national agency. The health sector plays a key role in strengthening inter-sectoral coordination. Recent action focuses, for example, on the role of community health centres in improving early detection and screening of victims of violence, especially suspected child abuse cases, and integrating support services (beyond medical) at public hospitals. Other areas of focus include joint task forces to combat trafficking. This work is ongoing, for example, in NTT where a coordination mechanism is in development to enable various providers to better understand their mandate in relation to the Anti-Trafficking Law.

## UNICEF IN ACTION

Preventing and responding to violence and abuse is essential to ensuring children’s rights to survival, growth and development are realized. UNICEF supports the Government of Indonesia, and other stakeholders in a number of focus areas aimed at improving the capacity of the government and civil society to protect children from violence and ensuring at risk and vulnerable children receive proper support. Recent examples include:

**Strengthening the knowledge base on violence against children:** In addition to the ongoing prevalence study on violence against children, UNICEF also supports provincial- and district-level studies that provide a strong foundation to inform decision-making. Most recently, UNICEF in partnership with the Center for Child Protection (PUSKA PA), University of Indonesia and the Provincial Office for Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection in Makassar, South Sulawesi conducted a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) Study of Violence against Children. Results show that the use of violence as a form of punishment is deeply entrenched in the culture and generally considered acceptable by adults and children alike. Such deep insights to the societal view of violence are invaluable in identifying socialization strategies to promote positive shifts in behaviour.

**Engaging faith-based organizations to raise awareness and guide behaviour change:** Given the crucial role of religion in Indonesian society in guiding people’s attitude and behaviour, UNICEF engages with faith-based organisations to raise awareness on violence against children and to facilitate changes in attitude and behaviour. In partnership with the *Lembaga Studi Agama dan*



Children stand up for their right to be protected from violence and urge immediate action to stop violence.

# ChildProtection

FACT SHEET

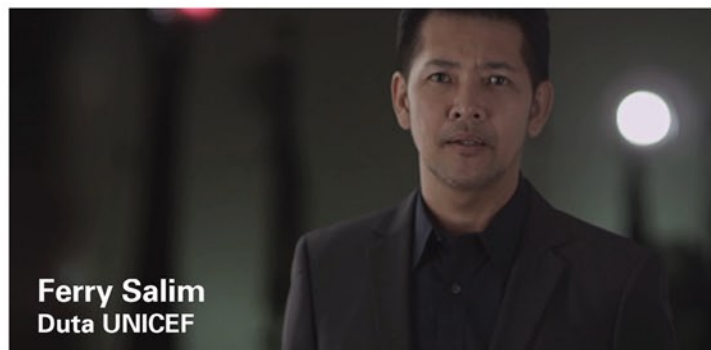
*Filsafat* (LSAF - the Institute for the Study of Religion and Philosophy), UNICEF supported the introduction of programmes to prevent violence in pesantrens (Islamic boarding schools) in Garut District, West Java and other areas.

**Supporting “positive discipline”:** UNICEF engages in many initiatives to establish safe, child-friendly and violence-free schools. One of them is the joint UN Initiative to combat violence against women and girls in the Province of Papua. In partnership with UNFPA, UN Women, the Bureau of Women’s Empowerment and the Provincial Office of Education, UNICEF has been organizing trainings for teachers on the use of positive feedback and dialogue rather than corporal punishment in their interaction with students. The programme on “positive discipline” builds on research findings that showed the negative impact of corporal punishment on children’s motivation and capacity to learn.

**Improving parenting skill:** Parenting plays a crucial role in the development a child. UNICEF in partnership with the provincial Bureau of Women’s Empowerment in South Sulawesi developed an initiative to improve parenting skills through the introduction of parenting guidelines, highlighting child development and positive discipline.

**Empowering children’s active participation in promoting children’s rights:** Children’s Forums are now established in most provinces, and in some districts. They provide space for children to share ideas, discuss issues and participate in a broad range of activities. Children have recently participated in data gathering exercises and community awareness raising in East Java; peer education in East Nusa Tenggara and East Java; mapping of child delinquency and development of school action plans on prevention of violence in schools in West Nusa Tenggara, Central and East Java; and the mapping of the child protection system in Central and East Java, South and West Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara and Aceh: the results of which supported the development of the child protection regulation in each of these provinces about an end to violence against children in Indonesia.

## NEXT STEPS: A CALL FOR ACTION



UNICEF Indonesia’s National Ambassador Ferry Salim talking about violence against children. See the PSA video at [www.unicef.or.id](http://www.unicef.or.id).

Despite these steps in the right direction, violence against children in many cases remains invisible in Indonesia, and corporal punishment continues to be socially accepted.

UNICEF and the Government of Indonesia therefore joined the global campaign: *End violence against children – make the invisible visible*. The campaign aims to raise awareness about the extent and the impact of violence against children in the country. It includes a call for action to stimulate debate and promote individual and community-led action to bring about an end to violence against children in Indonesia.

### For further information, please visit:

[unicef.or.id](http://unicef.or.id)

[facebook.com/UNICEFIndonesia](https://facebook.com/UNICEFIndonesia)

[twitter.com/UNICEFIndonesia](https://twitter.com/UNICEFIndonesia)

[unicef.org/endviolence](http://unicef.org/endviolence)

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<sup>1</sup> University of Indonesia, *Situation analysis of adolescents in Indonesia*, 2010, Mimeo: Jakarta.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Widodo, N. *Evaluasi Program Perlindungan Sosial melalui Rumah Perlindungan Sosial Anak (RUPSA)*, 2011, P3KS Press Jakarta.

<sup>4</sup> Government of Indonesia, Bureau of Women’s Empowerment and UNICEF, 2011.