

Fact Sheet
UPR Cycle 3 New Zealand 2019
Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children



Men's Violence Against Women (VAW)

Summary

Both the CEDAW concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of New Zealand¹ (NZ) and 25 countries in the UPR second cycle² made recommendations specifically concerned with improving the service and justice response to women and children harmed by men's violence against women (VAW). However, despite government acceptance of many of these recommendations, women and children are increasingly unsafe in NZ.

National Framework

NZ has good Domestic Violence legislation, however it has not been well enforced and many women are missing out on justice. There is a Family Court that mediates separation; however women report that the court reduces their safety³. In NZ one in three ever partnered women will experience psychological or physical and/or sexual abuse from their male partner or ex-partner during their lifetime⁴. The prevalence for Māori women is 57.6%⁵. Pacific women⁶ and other non-Western minorities also experience high rates of physical and sexual violence, but there are no disaggregated statistics. Between 60% – 90% of disabled women are abused⁷ and older women experience violence and abuse from family and others.

References

¹ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Concluding observations on the eighth period report of New Zealand. Adopted by the Committee at its seventh session (2 – 20 July, 2018).

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fNZL%2fCO%2f8&Lang=en

² UPR, NEW Zealand Second Cycle recommendations, 2017.

³ For example: The Backbone Collective, (2017). *All eyes on the Family Court: A watchdog report from the Backbone Collective*. Author.

⁴ Fanslow, J., & Robinson, E. (2004). Violence against women in New Zealand: prevalence and health consequences. *New Zealand Medical Journal*, 117 (1206), 1-12.

⁵ Fanslow, J. L, Robinson, E., Crengle, S., Perese, L. (2010). Juxtaposing beliefs and reality: prevalence rates of intimate partner violence and attitudes to violence and gender roles reported by New Zealand women. *Violence Against Women*, 16(7): 812-831Sage

⁶ Le Va (2018). <https://www.leva.co.nz/our-work/violence-prevention/resources-research>

⁷ Hager, D. (2017). Not inherently Vulnerable: An examination of paradigms, attitudes and systems that enable the abuse of disabled women. A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Health Science, University of Auckland.

Challenges	Impact
1). VAW services are significantly under resourced and under staffed. Many have closed leaving some regions with no access to services.	Many women cannot access specialist violence services for support/safety/ recovery from VAW. This often results in women staying in unsafe situations or returning to an abuser rather than becoming homeless.
2). Very few specialist services for Māori, Pacific and other non-Western women, no services for older women, disabled women and women with mental health/substance abuse problems.	Women who don't want to, or can't use mainstream services have nowhere to go to escape to find safety/support. These may be the poorest women with the least options. This can mean staying in abusive situations longer/experiencing more extreme violence than women able to access mainstream services.
3). No national organisational specifications, quality standards or required qualifications for people in the anti-violence sector in NZ.	Services provided to women and children are of varying quality and not all of them prioritise the safety of women and children.
4). Various language is used to describe VAW and children (VAWAC) – most of it degendered – for example family violence or family harm. There is no one term used across government and NGOs.	This results in a degendering of discourse about violence and abuse and a reduced focus on VAW, with women seen as equally causative in the violence they suffer. It also means there is no cohesion in data collection and very little ability to collate data across sectors.
5). NZ does not have a data source dedicated to identifying, recording and analysing VAWAC. There are no official domestic violence statistics collected on a regular basis. Within/between organisations definitions, and the language used to describe VAW, is constantly changed.	Policy makers, practitioners and researchers are required to make do with data collected for administrative purposes by government and non-government agencies. Data collected in different years is not comparable to other years. This hides the extent of VAW in NZ.

Recommendations

- 1). Annually increase funding to fully resource equitable domestic and sexual violence (DSV) response and prevention for all women including Māori, Pacific, non-Western minorities, gender diverse, disabled and older women.
- 2). Fully fund development/implementation of specialist services for Māori, Pacific, non-Western minorities, gender diverse, disabled and older women, including women with mental health and substance abuse problems.
- 3). Develop and implement national service specifications and quality standards for all DSV services and a compulsory qualifications framework for everyone working in the violence sector – eg police, health, violence sector staff, social workers, lawyers and judges.
- 4). Develop one nationally accepted, gendered definition of VAW in accordance with the definition used in the United Nations General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), to be used across all of government and non-government services.
- 5). Establish a national, systematic, integrated data collection and analysis process to gather data about VAWAC, using a nationally accepted definition of VAW⁸. Develop this system in accordance with UN General Assembly resolution (2007) Recommendation 11 and the Framework for Action, Outcome 3⁹.

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⁸ Gulliver, P., Fanslow, J. (2012). *Measurement of family violence at a population level: What might be needed to develop reliable and valid family violence indicators?* Auckland, New Zealand: New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, The University of Auckland

⁹ United Nations, *Framework for action: Programme of United Nations Activities and Expected Outcomes, 2008-2015.*