

GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD PROTECTION

WORLD VISION TIMOR-LESTE

World Vision has been operating in Timor-Leste since 1995, working with children, families and their communities to reach their full potential by tackling the multi-dimensional causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision Timor-Leste (WVTL) has been delivering humanitarian and development assistance in partnership with communities, civil society actors, the government, development partners and the private sector.

With an average annual budget of US\$4-5 million from bilateral and multilateral grants, private donations and other sources, **World Vision has the managerial, financial, and legal capacity to provide financial oversight and administration for complex grants;** WVTL's current program portfolio totals US \$20 million.



BACKGROUND

Women and girls in Timor-Leste experience high rates of gender-based violence, particularly intimate partner violence. Many children witness or experience violence at home, school and in their communities, which can negatively impact their physical, cognitive and social development.

Gender equality in Timor-Leste remains a pervasive challenge, with the deeply patriarchal Timorese society characterised by traditional gender roles and unequal power relations between women and men. In addition, Timor-Leste's history of conflict and violence has resulted in the normalisation of violence, particularly against women and children.

Gender equality, child protection and social inclusion (GESI) are central to World Vision's vision of 'life in all its fullness for every child'. WVTL recognizes the causal link between gender empowerment and child wellbeing, and that it is impossible to achieve the sustained wellbeing of children without addressing the gender inequalities affecting the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Supporting gender-equitable, non-violent family relationships and strengthening child protection practices is one of WVTL's strategic imperatives (2020-25). These objectives will be achieved through the implementation of gender equality and child protection programs, in partnership with communities, schools, churches and faith-based groups, etc.

KEY FACTS: Violence against Women and Children in Timor-Leste

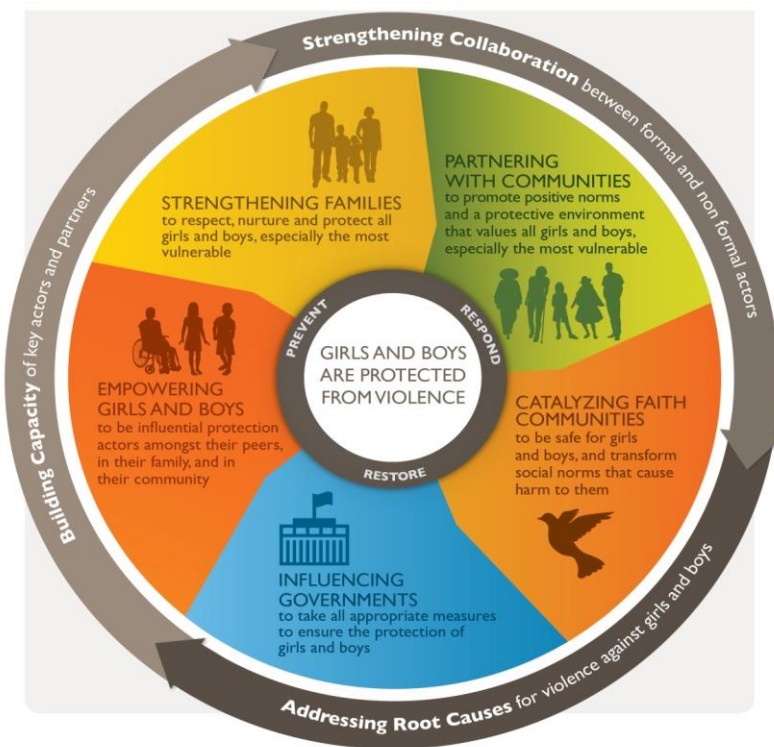
- **59%** of women aged 15-49 who have ever been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their partner.
- **81%** of women who have ever experienced intimate partner violence have experienced this violence many times.
- **77%** of women go to a close relative, **15%** go to the village chief, and **8%** go to the police for help when severely beaten.
- **72%** of women and **77%** of men have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse during childhood.
- **87%** of children are estimated to experience violent discipline at home.

INTEGRATED APPROACH

WVTL takes an integrated approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence and violence against children in Timor-Leste:

To prevent gender-based violence, WVTL's work targets three main components:

1. **PRIMARY PREVENTION** through community awareness and action around violence and gender equality, and promoting positive family relationships. Community engagement in identifying harmful gender and parenting norms, and to find local solutions to increase equitable behaviour and practices are integral to addressing drivers of violence against women and children.
2. **SECONDARY PREVENTION** through community service organisations and service provision strengthening.
3. **ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS STRENGTHENING** for stronger gender-based violence laws, adoption of a Child Protection Law, and improvements in service provision



World Vision's "Systems Approach" to Child Protection

for Children (2016-2020) and National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence (2017-2021). Our **government partners** include the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, Ministry of Education, Secretariat for Gender and Social Inclusion, and PNTL (National Police) Vulnerable Persons Unit. WVTL also partners with **national and local actors**, including the Aileu Women's Association, *Uma Mahon*, *Rede Feto*, *ALFeLa*, *RHTO*, *PRADET*, *Casa Vida* and *Ba Futuru*.

WVTL has **operational presence** in four municipalities (**Aileu, Bobonaro, Covalima and Baucau**) across Timor-Leste, and is known for the strength and quality of its community engagement. WVTL works through pre-existing community structures and leaders (churches, teachers, community leaders, service providers, referral networks) to increase their understanding and capacity to address gender-based violence and child protection concerns. WVTL is uniquely placed to expand the reach and build the capacity and coordination of local service providers and partners. As a faith-based organisation, WVTL builds upon relationships with faith leaders and has been applying **faith-based approaches to address gender-based violence in communities** – a unique and contextualised programming model which has been effective in initiating and sustaining behavior change¹.

PARTNERSHIPS

WVTL's programming is in alignment with the Government of Timor-Leste's National Action Plan

¹ See: https://jiflc.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/World-Vision-Channels-of-Hope-Evidence-Brief_December-2016.pdf; <https://jiflc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/WVSI-CoH-Gender-Phase-1-Evaluation-Summary.pdf>

PROGRAMMING MODELS

Our key project models include, but are not limited to:

IMPACT+

An integrated life skills approach to adolescent engagement that addresses key issues adolescents face, in a holistic way. The model aims to help adolescents transition well into adulthood as active citizens empowered with competencies, values, confidence, and social connectedness.

PEACE ROAD

A life-skills approach that mobilises the community for positive youth development and assets building, helping young people to thrive, promote peace and contribute to their communities.

CHANNELS OF HOPE (Gender and Child Protection)

A faith-based approach that mobilises faith and traditional leaders to champion gender equality and child protection. Supports communities to analyse gender, child protection and rights issues using faith messaging. Communities plan and implement activities to promote positive family and community relationships. Well-suited to Timor-Leste where churches provide support to families experiencing violence.

CELEBRATING FAMILIES

A faith-based model to equip families to create a safe and loving environment where children can flourish.

CITIZENS VOICE AND ACTION

An advocacy model empowering communities to advocate for stronger laws on violence against women and children, and their effective implementation.

PARENTS CLUB CURRICULUM

Engages parents in topics on child development, child protection and disability, including the positive discipline methodology, which equips parents with positive alternatives to physical and emotional punishment, so children can thrive, promote peace and contribute to their communities.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE AND REFERRAL STRENGTHENING

Supports community and faith leaders and referral network organisations to strengthen formal and informal community-based response and referral mechanisms, to provide survivor-centred services.

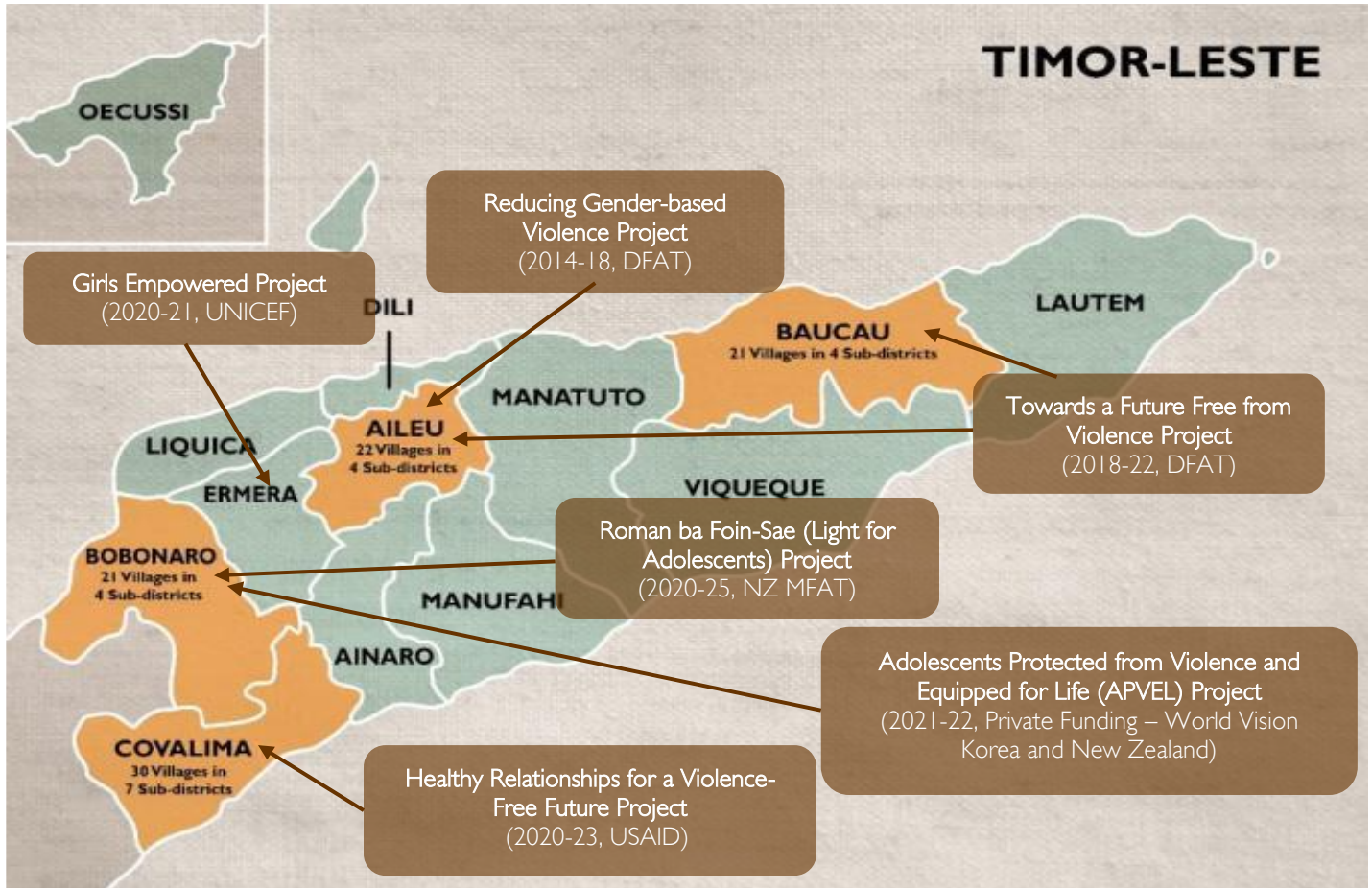
TRAVELLING TOGETHER

A disability inclusion awareness training manual that focuses on approaches and removing barriers.

EXPERIENCE AND EVIDENCE

WVTL currently implements programming to address violence against women and children, and to empower adolescents and youth across the following four municipalities: Aileu, Baucau, Bobonaro and Covalima. WVTL engages a broad segment of the population - children, adolescents, youth, parents, community and faith leaders, etc.

Recent and Ongoing WVTL Gender, Child Protection and Youth Development Projects



To date, WVTL has jointly developed a **Positive Parenting Curriculum** contextualised for Timor-Leste with Plan International and ChildFund, and is working with government (Ministries of Health and Education) and NGOs to scale this nationally. We are also the only INGO delivering **Faith-Based Programming contextualised to Timor-Leste for gender and child protection**, which engages faith leaders to promote and sustain positive norms change in their communities.

We also partner with key service providers to support community mobilisation and **Advocacy** for improved service delivery. In 2017, WVTL initiated the formation of an alliance of NGOs in Timor-Leste to end violence against children, comprised of 3 International NGO partners (WVTL, ChildFund TL and Plan TL). This alliance has since grown to a 33-member strong national **Advocacy Network for Child Rights** (*Rede Advokasia ba Direitu Labarik*) comprising of both international and national actors², with the latter being the majority.

² National members include: ALOLA Foundation, Forum Tau Matan, FOKUPERS, PRADET, ALFELA, CNDC (National Commission on Children's Rights), Forum Comunicação Juventude, Mane ho Vizaun Foun, JSMP, etc. The Advocacy Network has been instrumental in monitoring the implementation of the Timor-Leste National Action Plan for Children, and in advocating for the adoption of a Child Protection Law for Timor-Leste, which is now with the National Parliament for review.

WVTL also supported the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI) in **strengthening the capacity of its Child Protection Focal Points**, as well as the **child protection referral networks** in Aileu, Baucau and Balibo Administrative Posts.

Below is a summary of further achievements and evidence collected from our Gender and Child Protection programming:

14,350

women, men, girls and boys participated in our child protection and gender equality programming during 2019-20

95%

of women learnt about the impact of gender-based violence and how to access support services from *Ekipa Hadomi Familia (EHF)* community action teams established in Aileu

98%

of men learnt about the impact of gender-based violence and how to access support services from *Ekipa Hadomi Familia (EHF)* community action teams established in Aileu

91%

of faith and community leaders that did not agree that 'man is the boss and can hit/kick/hurt women to show he is the boss' at project evaluation, demonstrating increased awareness of GBV

62%

of women strongly disagreed that the man can hurt a woman because 'he is the boss', following Reducing GBV project interventions in Aileu (* baseline value: 4%)

EXPERTISE AND CAPACITY

WVTL's **Gender and Child Protection Specialist**, Joana dos Santos Camoes, has a master's degree in Educational Science focused on youth citizenship and education, and a graduate certificate on Conflict Transformation Across Culture and human rights-based approach programming. She has nine years' experience managing child protection, gender-based violence, trauma healing and peacebuilding programming in Timor-Leste. Prior to that, she had five years' experience providing counselling and social services for orphanages, street children and youth.

WVTL also draws on global and regional expertise and resources from the World Vision International (WVI) Partnership, including global and regional technical specialists for gender and child protection (respectively), and the WVI Technical Services Organisation (TSO).

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World Vision is a global Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.