

## **Forms, Causes, and Effects of Violence Against Women in Mbulu Tanzania**

**By Janvier Rugira**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the nature and prevalence of Violence Against Women (VAW), and how such affects women to make recommendations to reduce the same in Tanzania. Quantitative data were analysed by use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v11) while qualitative were analysed using Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) model. Ninety-eight (98) respondents conveniently participated in the study in one small district of Tanzania. Findings indicated that forms of VAW as including (1) insult by partner, ranked number one, followed by (2) beating, (3) emotional abuse such as economic deprivation of the property, marriage of other wives and denial of sex. Other forms of violence included (6) forced sex; physical abuse; and (7) female genital mutilation. The reasons for VAW are many and vary in nature, but include: (1) lack of husband's tolerance and patience; (2) excessive alcohol consumption, (3) jealousy; (4) economic conditions such as lack of food and other needs. The effects range from (1) physical injury e.g. constant headache; sleep disturbances; (2) psychosocial problems i.e. excessive fear, (3) suicidal ideation and hatred of men, (4) destruction of the family unit. Counselling and legal advice to women suffering from this male violence is strongly recommended.*

Word count: 198

**Key Words: Violence Against Women, Sexual Abuse, Socioeconomic Conditions, Culture, Mbulu, Tanzania.**

### **Background**

According to the UN Convention on Human Rights (1993), women have the right to enjoy a happy life, to study and to work without fear of violence against them. Unfortunately, for too many women, the family and home are not safe places (Aderino, 2009). Across the world, every woman experiences male violence at some point in her life (Watts, 2010). VAW is 'any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life' (Watts and Zimmerman, 2010). Violence against women (VAW) has been accepted as 'understandable behaviour' with patriarchy lending credence to it through the continuous perpetuation of male dominance (Dickstein, 2010). VAW is viewed as the most prevalent form of gender-based violence worldwide (Heise, 2002). According to Gupta, Humm, and Heise (1999), between 25 to 50 % of women in many countries reported physical abuse by a present or former male partner. They further affirmed that many women are powerless to negotiate how to own resources and to use condoms to protect themselves from partners who consume alcohol.

The prevalence of violence against women in Sub-Saharan Africa ranks highly compared to other countries in Africa, Australia, the Americas and Europe. For example Mccholskey, Williams, and Larsen (2005) point out that virtually half (48%) of Zambian women reported that they had experienced violence. In Tanzania as in the Filipino culture, the main perceived domain of women is the home, where women are viewed mainly as mothers, wives or daughters (Carths, 1999).

In 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) ranked Tanzania 4<sup>th</sup> highest in terms of domestic violence prevalence. The MKUKUTA Status Report of 2006 indicated that 60% of women believe that wife beating is acceptable. In 2007, The Guardian, a newspaper in Dar es Salaam, reported that over 50% of women were beaten daily by their partners. In 2009, 56% of women surveyed by Kivulini (2009) agreed it was important for a man to “show his wife who was the boss” and 61% believed that a “good wife” obeys her husband regardless of the situation. Action Aid (2012) revealed that lack of understanding of VAW was compounded by a shortage of research, community discussion and policy development specifically on the needs of adult women experiencing violence. Moreover, there was a culture of shame and silence surrounding VAW in communities in North Unguja and Pemba. This, according to the report, makes it extremely difficult to determine the prevalence of VAW and also leads to the problem of under-reporting. The vast majority of abused women do not seek help from the police or other support services meaning that data from formal institutions and service-based surveys is likely to be a severe underestimation of the real extent of the problem. Compounding this problem is the fact that information is not being routinely collected by institutions and service providers in Zanzibar on violence against adult women or on the different types of VAW.

Despite the fact that there has been explicit acknowledgement of the state’s responsibility for human rights’ violations by private actors in both the public and private sphere in several international conventions, in particular the Vienna Accord 1993 and the Beijing Platform of 1995, violence against women remains highly prevalent and is still a major cultural blind spot. When VAW happens, women normally keep quiet, and they do not take action. It is considered as a ‘burden’ of marriage and should be accepted and it is not something to talk about openly. Women who wish to report VAW and/or leave abusive situations have few places to go where they can get support such as protection orders and temporary separation with child support (WHO, 2005). Legal procedures can also be intimidating, especially for rural women who are more likely to be illiterate or poorly educated and who, because of their roles and norms, may not be accustomed to speaking for themselves or speaking publicly at all. Such women who are victims of violence may also not want their husbands to go to jail, as they are often dependant on their husbands for their and their children’s livelihoods. Due to their acceptance of VAW, feelings of shame and blame and lack of resources, most women who experience violence do not report it to any authorities (Wandel Holmboe-Ottesen, 1991).

Despite the increasing recognition that VAW as a global economic and social concern, studies of VAW in Tanzania and its consequences remain scarce. Many issues are yet

to be understood about the total set of possible socio-economic outcomes associated with VAW. According to Chamaiaack, Grant, Mason, & Moore, Pelliari (2005), VAW is a socio-economic problem with devastating consequences for women, irrespective of age, culture, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. The fact that VAW has long been considered as a private affair has contributed to the serious gap our understandings of socio-economic decision-making and resource ownership within households where VAW occurs. Women in Mbulu Districts, like all others in rural areas, are subjected to various forms of violence that have resulted in their being marginalised and their rights being denied.

### **Understanding Violence Against Women**

Violence against women (VAW) is any harmful act that is perpetrated against women's wishes and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females (World Bank, 2003; Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottemoeller 1999). The United Nations General Assembly (1993), defines "violence against women" as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." The 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women noted that this violence could be perpetrated by assailants of either gender or family members or even the "State" itself.

The term is also used to point to the dimensions within which violence against women takes place: women's subordinate status (both economic and social) makes them more vulnerable to violence and contributes to an environment that accepts, excuses, and even expects violence against women (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottemoeller 1999). VAW takes many forms including physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence. However our study focuses on VAW as violence involving men and women, where the female is usually the victim and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women. Violence is directed specifically against a woman because she is a woman, or reflects women disproportionately. It includes, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological harm (including intimidation, suffering, coercion, and /or deprivation of liberty within the family or within the general community), it also includes the violence which is perpetrated or condoned by the state.

### **Violence Against Women in Tanzania**

The Constitution of Tanzania contains guarantees of human rights in the preamble to all citizens irrespective of their sex. The constitutional creed states that all human beings are equal and that every individual has a right to dignity and respect as a human being. Nevertheless, in rural Tanzania violence against women is widespread (TAMWA, 2011). Existing laws, for example the Marriage Act of 1977 (section 5) prohibit corporal punishment by husbands, and grant spouses equal rights to matrimonial property acquired through joint effort. However, while sources reported that violence against women is widespread in Tanzania (IA 2008; US 11, sec.5), according to the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA) status Report 2006, no national data on violence against women is available (Tanzania Dec. 2006, 33). Women

in rural areas are believed to be particularly vulnerable (The Citizen 26 May 2008; World Bank 5 mar.2008), as the existing legal system is inaccessible to the majority of women located there. WHO (2005) reveals that 41% of women in Dar es Salaam and 56% in Mbeya District who had been married or lived in relationship with a man, or who had a regular sexual partner, had ever experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner. In November 2007, *The Guardian*, a newspaper in Dar es Salaam, reported that domestic violence committed against women was increasing and that over 50% of women were beaten daily by their partners.

In a much broader perspective, this study provides an assessment of the causes and effects of violence against women on socio-economic empowerment; taking the case of Mbulu District in Manyara Region. The foci of the study are namely; the nature and prevalence of violence against women, causes that enhances violence against women, effects of violence against women on socio-economic empowerment and the policy recommendations to be adopted to avoid violence against women. In this study we reviewed the main issues surrounding VAW in Tanzania, noting that in recent decades there has been a proliferation of literature on gender movements. This has been due to, among other reasons, the awakened global consciousness that women could have substantial contribution to the economy if granted the opportunities.

Mbulu District is one of the five Districts of Manyara Region. It is bordered with Karatu District in the North, Babati District in the East, Hanang' District in the South and Iramba in the West. As of December, 2010, the population was estimated to be 322,404 (161,815 males and 160,589 females). The district is characterised by a fast growing population; the average growth rate is 3.8% per annum which is higher than the national average of 2.8%. Average population density is about 56 persons per square km and the average household size is 6.3 persons (Tanzania Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The population of Mbulu District consists of different ethnic groups that speak different languages such as Iraqw, Datoga (also known as Barbaig or Mang'ati) and the Hadzabe or Tindiga.

### **Methods and Sample**

The study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches, using questionnaires. Quantitative data were analysed by use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v11) while qualitative (open-ended questions) were analysed using the Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) model. Both purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to reach ninety-eight (98) respondents in the study; twenty-eight (28) community leaders/ professional groups and seventy (70) from the general population. The study covers 1.2% of the population where  $100/8282 \times 100 = 1.207\%$ . Of 98 respondents who were willing to participate in this [sensitive] study, 12 were married men, and of the remaining 86 women: 57 were married, 8 separated, 9 widows, 1 divorced and 11 were single women. 13% of the respondents had post-secondary school education, 4% secondary school education, 73% had completed primary school education, 6% did not have formal education or training, and 4% did not respond to their educational level question. Their ages ranged from 18 – 50 years old.

## **Findings**

### ***Forms of Violence Against Women***

The study investigated the nature and prevalence of various forms of violence. To measure the ranking for each form, a ranking scale of one to five was applied and respondents were to refer to their personal experiences based on occurrences. For all forms it was observed that insult by partner is highly prevalent to other forms with 62% of respondents ranked it in scale of five which indicates very high prevalence, followed by being beaten by partner where 57% of respondents measured the form at a scale of very high. 53% of respondents ranked emotional abuse as very high. 51% of participants reported economic deprivation on the very high scale. Verbal threats stand at 49%; forced sex 47%; physical abuse and rape was ranked by 27 and 26% of respondent respectively.

### ***Causes of Violence Against Women***

Participants were guided through a discussion that led them to identifying causes of VAW in their community. Among the causes of VAW include excessive alcohol consumption; economic conditions such as lack of food and other needs; denial of sex by a partner; extra-marital sexual relationships; use or abusive language; misuse of family income/property; failure to participate in household income generating activities and frustrations due to a decline in household income. The causes stated above are in their order of significance based on a five scale ranking.

### ***Traditional and Cultural Practices that Causes VAW***

The analysis shows that 13% of the respondents stated that women were not involved in decision-making at the family/village level; 11% responded that women do not have power to own resources; 9% of the respondents ascertained the existence of early and forced marriage (below 18 years of age) can lead to violence; 6% expressed the persistence of female genital mutilation and widow inheritance was a cause. 2% agreed that dowry payment is a source of VAW and 1% indicated that son preference has been a source of violence to women.

### ***Effects and Consequence of VAW***

The effect of VAW was examined to determine the level of severity of the issue surrounding the VAW. Of the investigated effects physical injury (55%) was ranked higher than the rest. Other effects include constant headache, where 42% of respondents ranked this as high, sleep disturbance (34%), excessive fear (29%), and death (11%).

### ***Social and Economic Stability of Household In Relation to Violence Against Women***

The study revealed that 42% of respondents agree that the VAW affects the household's economic stability. In general over 80% of participants agreed and ranked the extent of this effect to be high.

### ***Awareness on Reporting and Assistantship On VAW***

The study also investigated the reporting of incidences of VAW and the places where incidents can be reported. Of the interviewed respondents 57% were aware of the places they could report an incidence. 14% indicated that they do not know the place to go for assistance. 28% did not respond to the question which may simply imply that they do not know where they can seek assistance in case of violence.

### ***Involvement in Decision Making at Family and Village Level***

At the family level 39% of female respondents indicated that they are involved in decision-making while at the village level 63% of female respondents indicated that they are involved in decision making.

### **Discussion and Analysis**

The social and economic costs of VAW are enormous and have ripple effects throughout society. Women may suffer isolation, inability to work, loss of wages, lack of participation in regular activities and limited ability to care for themselves and their children. VAW stems from cultural practices and societal attitudes that are gender-biased and based upon patriarchy or male-dominance while others are a result of policies and laws that do not address VAW or have provisions that are gender discriminatory.

### ***Existence and Prevalence of Violence Against Women***

The study established not only the existence of VAW but also its extent in Mbulu District. The study shows the existence of psychological forms of violence through insults (62%), verbal threats (49%) and economic deprivation (51%). Psychological forms of violence have thus been ranked as very high as compared to other forms. The study also indicated the existence of physical and sexual forms of violence where 58% of respondents indicated they had experienced physical violence through beating, and 22% through being subjected to female genital mutilation.

*“It is not unusual to hear women who have been beaten and/or killed by their spouses in this community”* one respondent said. Although the Law of Marriage Act, revised in 2002, forbids a spouse from inflicting corporal punishment on his/her spouse. Many women endure marital rape and beatings and they become trapped in these barbaric acts. The right to live free from violence against women is a human rights priority. USAIDS (2008) unfortunately reports that in Tanzania, VAW is an everyday reality for many women and girls. According to a fifty country study by WHO (2005) Tanzania ranks the 4th highest in terms of the prevalence of violence against women. A survey conducted by Kivulini (2009) shows that 85% of women in Lake Victoria and Singida Region had experienced psychological violence, 56% had experienced physical violence and 48% had experienced sexual violence (WHO, 2005). This indicated that the results of studies conducted in Lake Victoria and Singida are likely to be very similar to those we found in Mbulu.

### ***Reporting of VAW***

Violence against women is also drastically underreported. Due to widespread acceptance of violence, feelings of shame and lack of resources, most women who experience violence do not report to formal or informal services. According to the WHO (2004) study, 60% of all women experiencing violence had never gone for help from any formal service or authority. The USAID (2009) study found that 80 % of women experiencing violence had not reported the situation to anyone. These alarming statistics reflect the widespread belief that abuse of women is acceptable. In its 'Country Reports on Human Rights Practices' for 2007, the United States (US) Department of state adds that in Tanzania, cultural, family, and social pressures are factors in women's reluctance to report domestic abuse, and that police and other authorities seldom take action against perpetrators. The WHO study conducted in Dar es Salaam and Mbeya in 2005 revealed that 60% of victims had never sought help because they believed that spousal violence was either normal or not serious enough to require assistance (WHO 2005).

There are various reasons why women do not disclose all these acts. There are cultural norms where customs and traditional practices condone the harassment and violence of women because they are supposed to be submissive to their husbands (male power). The issue of children is also very pertinent to women. Hence, women endure abuse in marriages because they do not want to leave behind their children who may be harassed and undergo abuse by the women who take over their positions after them. Additional reasons could be linked to dowry payments which tend to give women (and men) a false belief of being of a 'possession' of the husband.

There are some national efforts to address VAW. The Sexual Offence Special Provisions Act of 1998 poses harsh penalties for perpetrators of sexual violence. The Sexual Offence Provision Act (SOSPA 1998) is part of Tanzania's domestication of the CEDAW and is designed to strengthen the protection of Victims and survivors of sexual violence.

At the grassroots level, women's organizations have provided leadership in boosting the visibility of VAW for nearly 25 years; giving victim-survivors a voice through tribunals and personal testimonies, providing innovative forms of support to victims/survivors of violence, and forcing governments and the international community to recognize their own failure to protect women. In Tanzania, women's advocacy has also prompted the formal sectors (the legal and judicial system, criminal justice system, and the health sector) to begin to respond to the needs of women. Women have pushed for policy change and institutional mechanisms to be set up, be it legal reform, training of police, or providing shelter to women. In attempting to address the structural causes of such violence, women's organizations have sought to empower women through human rights education, credit programmes, and linking women to larger networks.

### ***Cultural Acceptability***

Discrimination against women stems from cultural practices and societal attitudes that are gender biased while others are a result of policies and laws that do not address

gender equality issues or have provisions that are gender discriminatory. According to the WHO (2005), approximately 42% of Tanzanian men and 56% Tanzanian women believe that men have the right to beat women. Indeed, 56% of women surveyed by Kivulini (2009) agreed that it was important for a man to “show his wife who was the boss”, and 61% believed that a “good wife” obeys her husband regardless of her situation.

The view that women “deserve to be beaten” is also common among local government leaders. Kivulini’s (2009) survey revealed that leaders are poorly equipped to support women experiencing violence. 83% of local leaders did not know how to address legal issues and less than 40% had received formal training about women’s rights. Beliefs that perpetuate violence are most entrenched in rural areas. Thus, it is not surprising that women from rural districts are significantly more likely to experience sexual abuse than those from urban districts. USAID (2009) found 66% of women from rural districts had experienced sexual or physical abuse compared to 57% in urban districts.

Other studies have found that women living in rural areas, those with low educational attainment and poor economic status are at higher risk of physical and sexual abuse. Seven out of ten women believe that it is justified to beat women (Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and ORC Macro, 2006). Some of the reasons mentioned as “most acceptable” for wife beating as reported in the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey include neglect of children (56%) and going out without informing the husband (52%). Four in ten women think that arguing with a husband justifies wife beating and 31% think that denying a husband sex is justification for wife beating. 23% of the women in the Ugandan survey felt that burning food is justification for wife beating (Uganda Bureau of Statistics & ORC Macro, 2006). The results are not surprising. From childhood, Ugandan women are socialized to be tolerant and maintain peace in the household. Women residing in urban areas, having secondary or higher education, employed or from relatively wealthy families are less tolerant to partner violence compared to other groups of women (UBOS & ORC Macro, 2006).

### ***Other Causes***

Other factors that can serve to exacerbate VAW include excessive alcohol consumption; economic impoverishment such as lack of food and other basic needs; denial of sex by a partner; extra marital sexual relationships; use of abusive language; misuse of family income/property; failure to participate in household income generating activities and frustrations due to declined household income. The respondents indicated the excessive alcohol consumption as the main cause enhancing VAW. In Tanzania, women continue to experience discrimination and they are perniciously vulnerable to human rights violations. According to the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS), of 2010, 50% of all married women have experienced physical, emotional or sexual violence at the hands of their husbands (TDHS 2010).

The study found that 42% of respondents agree that VAW affects the household economy. In general over 80% participants agreed and ranked the extent of this effect to be high. Other effects of violence against women include unintended pregnancy. Women who experience intimate partner violence can have difficulty using family planning methods. They are more likely to use contraceptive methods in secret, or have a partner who refuses to use a condom. Abused women also experience a higher rate of unintended pregnancies, have more unsafe abortions, and are more likely to become pregnant as adolescents. These factors may contribute to high fertility rate of 5.6% among Tanzanian women (Kivulini, 2009).

Maternal Mortality and Morbidity is another effect of violence where violence against women contributes to Tanzania's high rates of maternal morbidity and mortality (MMM). Recent data indicates that Tanzania has 13,000 maternal deaths each year; approximately every 40 minutes, a woman or girl dies from pregnancy-related causes. The effects of VAW were examined to determine the levels of severity in terms of outcomes. As previously mentioned, our study found that 55% ranked physical injury as the major effect and consequence. Other effects include constant headache, where 42% of respondents ranked high, sleep disturbance (34%), excessive fear (29%), and death (11%).

The public health consequences of violence against women are significant and should be addressed in national and global health policies and programmes (Ellsberg, Jansen, Heike, Watts, Gracia-Moreno, 2008). Violence places women at higher risk of poor physical and reproductive health, mental health and social functioning. Women subjected to violence (including sexual violence) are more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs and to report sexual dysfunction, suicide attempts, post-traumatic stress, central nervous system disorders, and other health related problems such as HIV and AIDS (WHO, 2002).

In Tanzania, the average HIV prevalence rate is 7%, but for pregnant women the rate is 8.2%. Women are often unable to negotiate safe sex which leads to easy transmission of the disease. Inability to negotiate around sex is likely to be a major factor in higher rates of HIV/AIDS infection among females than males. Indeed, young women aged 18-29 who have been abused by a partner have been found to be 10 times more likely to be HIV positive than women who have not been abused (USAID, 2008). Women who are HIV positive are also more likely to experience violence as a result of their status. Fear of further violence frequently prevents women from accessing HIV/AIDS information and services.

### ***Educational Implications***

In Tanzania, early marriage for girls is widespread in many parts of the country because 15 years is the legal age for girls to be married, while the legal age of marriage for boys is 18. Girls are deemed mature enough for marriage once they begin menstruation, while boys are not considered marriageable until they can financially provide for a family. It is alleged that girls have less power to decide about when and whom they can

marry than boys and that girls are sometimes forced to marry men much older than themselves (Human Development Trust, 2011).

There are negative implications related to early marriages which can have long term impacts on the prospects of girls as they often do not complete their education. When they marry they may not have opportunities to undertake further education and training because they are perceived as being too occupied with family responsibilities and taking care of their homes. It is likely that these girls will become mothers at a young age, increasing risks during pregnancy and delivery which in turn increases maternal and neonatal mortality. Pregnancy and child bearing is risky for young people (Creatsas & Elsheikh, 2002).

Women in Tanzania have limited access to property and inheritance rights. This is another form of violence against women. The Tanzanian constitution; CEDAW; the Land Act, 1999; the Village land Act, 1999 and the Law of Marriage Act, revised 2002 stipulate that women and men in Tanzania have equal property rights. Nevertheless, customary legal provisions and common cultural practices tend to undermine women's ability to acquire, inherit, maintain, and dispose of property (Tanzania Women Lawyers' Association -TAWLA 2004).

### **Policy Recommendations**

On 25 February 2008, the UN Secretary-General launched the campaign UNiTE to end violence against women, 2008–2015, with the overall objective of raising public awareness and increasing political will and resources for preventing and responding to all forms of violence against women and girls in all parts of the world. It highlighted that States have an obligation to protect women from violence, to hold perpetrators accountable and to provide justice and remedies to victims.

According to TAMWA (2004), in rural Tanzania violence against women is widespread despite the fact that the constitution states that, all human beings are equal and that every individual has a right to dignity and respect as a human being.

The existing laws, including the Marriage Act of 1977 (section 5), prohibit corporal punishment by husbands, and grant spouses equal rights to matrimonial property acquired through joint effort. In practice, however, women are often denied these rights. Decision making has been dominated by men as compared to women, especially decisions pertaining to assets of the family. At the family level, 34% of women respondents indicated that they are involved in decision making while at the village level 39% women indicated that they involved in decision making.

At the household level, attitudes still exist that men are automatic heads and breadwinners. These attitudes are based on the patriarchal structures that limit women's voices to adequately be heard and influence family decisions on resources and other social matters. This practice limits women's chances of promotion and appointment to higher positions in both public and private sectors (URT, 2001).

## **Conclusions and Considerations**

### ***Conclusions***

Eliminating violence against women remains one of the most serious challenges of our time. This requires clear political will, outspoken, visible and unwavering commitment at the highest levels of leadership of the state and the resolve, advocacy and practical action of individuals and communities. A woman's right to be protected from domestic violence has been recognized in international legislation and agreements. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and regional instruments including the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) provide protection relevant to women suffering from domestic violence. Under the ECHR, the state is obliged to provide protection from domestic violence under Article 3 (the prohibition against inhumane and degrading treatment) and Article 8 (the protection of physical integrity and family life).

UN (2008) launched the Africa UNiTE Campaign to end violence against women and girls by provides an important opportunity to engage in innovative sustained actions to prevent, prosecute, punish and provide effective responses to violence against women and girls. The campaign calls for everybody – men and women - to renew commitments, to mobilize more strongly, not only amongst government bodies but also within the private sector, civil society, and community based organizations, and amongst our traditional leadership structures and decision makers.

This research focused on the causes and effects of violence against women in relation to social and economic empowerment, taking Mbulu District as a case study. Drawing on other research in wider international contexts, this study examined the nature and prevalence of violence against women; examined the causes that exacerbate violence against women; and assessed strategies to stop violence against women. The study revealed that there are various forms of violence against women in Mbulu District. These include lack of husband's tolerance and patience; excessive alcohol consumption by men, jealousy; and broader economic conditions such as lack of food and lack of other basic needs. The latter was uncovered to be a significant factor in VAW. Effects and severity resulting from violence also vary, ranging from physical injury; constant headache; sleep disturbances; excessive fear experienced by women; suicidal thoughts and feelings of hatred towards their male perpetrators.

It was found that very few women who are subjected to the violence report these incidences. This in turn contributes to the lack of effectiveness of applicable laws and policies at the district level. Future studies may be developed to focus on designing proper mechanisms to be implemented in order to address this situation.

Women who are victims of violence are often unable or/and afraid to seek advice, and this can serve to exacerbate an already vulnerable situation by preventing women from participating in the social and economic life of their communities.

While violence against women is a global problem, women in developing nations face particular challenges. Studies consistently show that intimate partner violence against women has serious consequences for maternal mortality and child survival (World Bank, 2003; Heise et al, 1999). Intimate partners commit 40-70% of homicides of women worldwide (WHO, 2004).

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends three levels of engagement:

At the primary level, in terms of educational activities to be undertaken so that VAW doesn't take place, the focus needs to be within schools and communities. There is need to encourage educational programmes that provide adolescents and young adults with vocational training and educational support or social development programmes to teach very young people social skills such as anger management and conflict resolution skills, so as to prevent violence in later life. This will involve changing the beliefs and behavioural patterns of individuals, especially those of men towards women.

At the secondary level, referring to activities applied during the early stages of VAW in attempt to prevent the transmission of VAW culture to others, the focus needs to be on early detection of threats which could prevent disability and death resulting from VAW. National legislation should introduce effective legal and welfare provisions, including enabling and enforcing the immediate removal of the violent partner from the common household and the environment of the woman and her children, whilst fuller investigations are pending to ascertain longer term solutions.

At the tertiary level, focusing on preventing repeated violence and the maintenance of a healthy relationship between the survivor and the perpetrator, attention should be given to the creation of better women's shelters and community-based support services for women who are seeking assistance in coping with violence or safely leaving a violent relationship. There is also a need to create a more effective legal framework for women who have experienced violence to seek redress in the court of law. This will mean developing legislation that will support change in the perception of society so that violence against women is no longer deemed a private affair in order to elicit appropriate punishment for culprits. These essential and life-saving services will help to go some way towards creating an environment that will reduce, if not eliminate, the occurrence of violence against women.

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