

OUR VOICE:

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IS KEY TO EFFECTIVE COVID-19 RESPONSE IN TIMOR-LESTE



The COVID-19 pandemic has created a global crisis unparalleled in recent history. It needs a universal response to match its size and complexity. Unfortunately, Timor-Leste's Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan does not specifically address women's issuess.¹ This is a problem for our country.

Why?

Research finds that Timor-Leste is the 2nd most at-risk country from COVID-19 in our region, there is too much at risk to ignore diverse women's experiences at this time.²

Accounting for women and girls in recovery responses will slow transmission of COVID-19 and lessen its economic impact, achieving better outcomes for everyone.

Research shows that policies that do not include women in decision-making are less effective and do harm.¹¹

The UN has called on all governments to prepare for and take urgent action to make the prevention and redress of violence against women a key part of their national response plans for COVID-19.³

The Issue: Violence Against Women and Girls

Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, has intensified globally⁴. Domestic violence helplines and shelters around the world have reported significant spikes in calls for help and are almost full. This is because gender based violence increases during every type of emergency- economic, conflict or disease⁵.

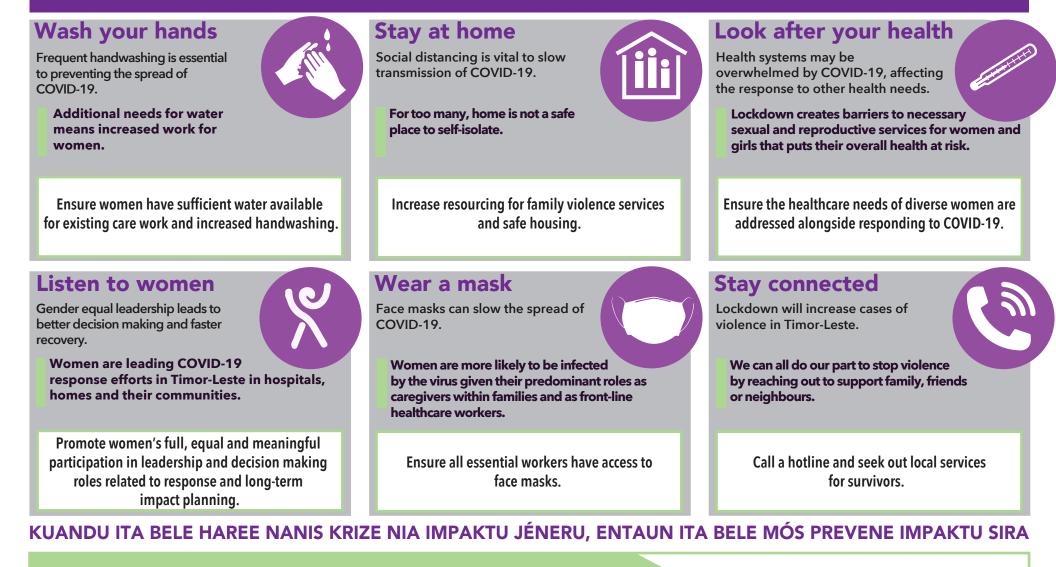
In Timor-Leste 59% of ever-partnered women between the ages of 15-45 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime⁶. This is likely to increase as security, health and money worries put more stress on confined households.

How?

Disruption to Livelihoods	Increased Unpaid Care
In Timor-Leste:	Globally:
•75-90% of vendors in the municipal and postu markets are women. ⁷	•Women spend twice as much time on household work as men and four times as much time on childcare.
 Women are more likely to invest their income for their family's benefit like meals or schooling? Travel restrictions have limited rural women's ability to continue earning money for their family. The economic fallout from women's business closures and job/ livelihood loss can lead to increased household stress which can lead to gender 	 Women and girls have primary responsibility for water collection? As social isolation policies are enacted and schools shut down, women and girls are likely to see their already disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities increase significantly. Sick relatives will rely on women for care and households will need more water to wash their hands regularly. Increased responsibilities in insecure times may place women at heightened risk of domestic violence due to
based violence.	heightened tensions in the household. ¹⁰

Recommendations

UNFPA projections predict that 1 million additional cases of gender based violence can be expected to occur globally if lockdowns continue for at least 6 months.¹¹ If we are going to stop violence in Timor-Leste we all have to do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the needs, priorities and knowledge of diverse women are considered and the barriers they face addressed.



Atu hato'o informasaun kona-ba kazu violénsia ka asesu suporta, kontaktu ba Polísia iha númeru telefone 112 ka asisténsia Rede Referral, númeru telefone bele hetan iha: .

https://hamahon.tl/

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