

NABILAN:
ENDING VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN
PROGRAM

Summary Review Report

30 June 2021



Review Summary

The Nabilan program is an eight-year AUD 32,135,690 investment of the Australian Government to support ending violence against women and children in Timor-Leste. The program is implemented by The Asia Foundation in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste and civil society organisations to improve the quality of services for victims of domestic violence and to change social norms to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence. Phase 1 of the program ran from April 2014 - April 2018 and phase 2 commenced in April 2018 and will end in April 2022.

The aim of this Review is to assess Nabilan's progress against its end of program outcomes with an emphasis on Phase 2 programming with a view to informing the design process for Phase 3. The Review was undertaken by a team of four from DESI Consulting, two in-country consultants and two working remotely. They interviewed over 50 stakeholders and held three focus group discussions. All were conducted via video or tele-conferencing due to lockdown restrictions in Timor-Leste which were called after the Review had commenced. More than 80 program-related documents were reviewed, and the Review data was analysed against the seven Review questions provided by DFAT in the Terms of Reference.

The major finding is Nabilan is a universally respected program, providing high quality support to Government and civil society organisations delivering services to victims of domestic violence, and engaging in advocacy and prevention of domestic violence. There is strong evidence Nabilan's partners provide increasingly high-quality inclusive services across a number of services including counselling, medical forensic examinations, case management, emergency accommodation and legal aid. Nabilan has accompanied partners over many years to build their institutional and organisational capacity, in addition to their technical capacity, which has contributed to their sustainability and resilience.

Some of the program's stand-out achievements include the development and roll-out of the Certificate III Course in Social Work which has produced 84 graduates and professionalised the sector. It is a formally accredited course and promoted by the Government of Timor-Leste as the professional standard for workers in the sector. Nabilan's support to training medical forensic examiners has increased the standard of evidence available to prosecutors in the pursuit of justice for victims.

Nabilan has contributed significantly to laying the foundation for effective work in prevention, demonstrating the link between gender equality and gender-based violence, and generating commitment in individuals and organisations to make a change. The program is generating evidence around best practice in Timor-Leste for changing social norms, trialling methods adapted to the Timor-Leste context with promising results.

A unique feature of the program is the flexible support provided to individuals, networks and movements that demonstrate willingness or ability to address drivers of domestic violence or respond to cases or social issues in the public sphere that are related to injustice against victims of domestic violence. In this way, the program has been able to support nascent organisations to grow, and support initiatives that may not otherwise qualify for more formal grants. It has also been able to foster collaborations and promote a shared understanding and approach to reducing violence against women and children.

Key Review Question and Findings:

1. Is the Nabilan approach relevant for the Timor-Leste context?

Nabilan's focus on service delivery and prevention represents global best practice, and the program is strongly aligned with the development priorities of the governments of Australia and Timor-Leste

2. To what extent has Nabilan made progress towards its EOPOs?

Nabilan has made considerable progress towards its EOPOs. At the beginning of Phase 2, EOPO 1 had strong existing foundations from which to build, resulting in quality and consistent progress in almost all service delivery areas. At inception of Phase 2, EOPO 2 still required more theoretical and methodological thinking, resulting in slower and more uneven progress in prevention work.

3. To what extent has the Nabilan program been inclusive, and could this be strengthened?

Social inclusion is a key strength of Nabilan. Actively seeking strategies to ensure programs were tailored to people with disability, LGBTIQ (partnership with CODIVA), and people living in remote areas (KOKOSA! in Suku Letefoho) are evidence of Nabilan's focus on inclusion.

4. Is Nabilan working with the right partners, and in the right way?

Nabilan is working effectively with relevant GoTL ministries, civil society organisations, networks, movements, communities and individuals to improve technical capacity and institutional strengthening. Partnerships with sector stakeholders outside the program could be strengthened.

5. What key factors will contribute to the sustainability of the Nabilan program outcomes beyond the end of the program?

The key factors contributing to sustainability are already being undertaken by Nabilan to varying degrees. Advancing the capabilities of the GoTL to resource VAW service delivery is progressing but is largely out of Nabilan's control. More successful has been the program's work in enhancing the capacity of the sector, developing a VAW workforce, creating collaborations and alliances, and supporting a feminist movement.

6. Is Nabilan's organisational model appropriate and efficient?

Nabilan's organisational model is working well, including since March 2020 after which international staff have been working remotely from Australia. An opportunity exists to reconfigure international support to the program away from day-to-day leadership and management of the program to MEL and donor/external partner coordination.

7. How can Australia's investments in EAW in Timor-Leste be strengthened?

Continue financial support to service delivery and provide on-going professional development to sustain and improve quality of services. Continue support to prevention programming, including the scale up to municipalities and development of a prevention framework. Seek to strengthen partnerships with sector actors beyond the program without compromising on quality of programming.

Like many other programs, Nabilan has faced several challenges during the pandemic which it has largely been able to overcome. Nabilan worked closely with its partners to ensure minimal disruption to services with the result that numbers of clients served increased in comparison to the previous year. Nabilan received an extra AUD1 million from DFAT which enabled it to respond quickly to requests from the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion for support to establish quarantine centres, a collaboration which has fostered closer ties and opportunities for improved programming into the future. Social norms programs have been delayed because of repeated lockdowns but Nabilan put in place contingencies to ensure the safety of participants and staff. In March 2020, Nabilan's international team members, including the Team Leader, were evacuated and have been working remotely. This has accelerated the transfer of day-to-day management of program delivery and partnership management to national team members which is credited with helping to improve relations with Government. The effectiveness and efficiency of the program has been sustained due to the strong and established relationships between national and international staff members. The program is largely on track to meet its End of Program Outcomes.

Progress against End of Program Outcomes

EOPO1: Women and children who experience violence have access to quality and inclusive services - On track

- IO1.1: Service providers use increased skills, knowledge and sensitivity to deliver services - On track
- IO1.2: Women and children experience violence are referred to appropriate services - On track
- IO1.3: Relevant Ministries use evidence to allocate funding of essential services - Not on track
- IO1.4: The justice sector improves its response to violence against women and children - Partially on track

EOPO2: Individuals, communities and institutions take action to reduce violence against women and children - On track/delayed

- IO2.1: Quality VAWC prevention initiatives which target individuals, communities and institutions are implemented - On track
- IO2.2: Individuals, communities and institutions recognise violence against women and children as a problem - Partially on track
- IO2.3: Communities in Suku Letefoho and other focus areas are taking independent action to prevent violence against women and children - Partially on track/delayed

The Nabilan team was frequently noted for its professionalism and commitment over the eight years of the program, and evidence was provided of a values-driven approach to program implementation with Nabilan staff modelling sensitivity and care for partners and beneficiaries.

Areas for strengthening the program were identified, including working closer with other programs in the sector around sharing lessons learned, collaborating on implementation and showing more leadership. Several interviewees would like to see the program expand to more municipalities which is planned for in Phase 3 as capacity of partners to deliver prevention programs is developed. The Review Team is mindful that some of the suggestions for Phase 3 programming would involve extra resources. However, there is an opportunity to build on the experiences of programming during COVID-19 to

appoint national staff to leadership and management positions responsible for day-to-day program delivery, including managing partnerships with GoTL, CSOs and other implementing partners. The current international team leader position could become an advisory post with a focus on MEL and donor relations, including DFAT and coordination with other stakeholders with programs in the sector.

GoTL also asked DFAT to consider supporting a specific facility to support trauma victims, a request which needs further investigation as to whether it would duplicate existing services provided by PRADET, and whether the request could be best met by Nabilan or the Program for Human Development.

There are three specific areas for the design process to investigate further. First, stepping out a process for strengthening and expanding the social norms pillar including programming in more municipalities. The GoTL has specifically asked for support in developing common messaging around prevention of violence, and the Review sees an opportunity for the program to support GoTL and CSOs to develop a national prevention framework. Second, build on current research into prevalence and drivers of violence against children to pilot interventions that respond to the intergenerational cycle of domestic violence. Third, respond to calls for more support for victims to access justice while being mindful the justice sector is resilient to systemic change, for example, this could entail further work around monitoring known perpetrators of violence. The first two are already being considered by the program, and the third does not necessarily require extra resources but a more focused approach by the program towards influence activities that more directly impact on the program's overall goal. For example, resources currently going into generic court monitoring could be refocused on activities that contribute more directly to safety of women and children.

Recommendations

These recommendations are informed by the changed global situation to:

- Ensure continuity of services for victim/survivors of violence; and
- Ensure prevention projects do not 'end' in a way that leaves individuals and communities at risk.

1. Recommendations for DFAT

- i. Initiate a design/procurement process for Phase 3 ASAP that will ensure continuity of programming in both pillars, and retain Nabilan in-country staff
- ii. The Asia Foundation is best placed to ensure continuity. It has proven ability to deliver quality programming and is flexible and adaptable in a changing context. DFAT's grant model is an enabling factor.
- iii. DFAT Post to consider complementing existing donor coordination mechanisms, such as attendance at steering committee meetings, with more informal interactions, particularly with the European Union, KOICA and the UN Resident Coordinator (and USAID and ADB in the future) with a view to supporting GoTL coordination efforts, provide real time updates on program implementation learning/challenges that could impact on each other's investments, and other strategic questions as they arise.

- iv. DFAT Canberra create further opportunities for Nabilan program staff to share good practices in regional forums.
- v. Further explore GoTL request for support for a specialist centre for trauma survivors

2. Recommendations for The Asia Foundation

- i. More purposefully strengthen existing synergies between Timor-Leste programs: Nabilan, CSCP and Inclusive Tourism Program
- ii. Take up a stronger donor coordination role to support Nabilan, particularly with the six relevant UN heads of agencies
- iii. Create opportunities for learning forums to amplify impact of research and learning in Timor-Leste
- iv. Facilitate regional opportunities for Nabilan national leadership team to support their professional development
- v. Facilitate amplification of Nabilan's profile and lessons learned in region through the Foundation's network

3. Recommendations for Nabilan (to inform design):

- i. Revisit Theory of Change, particularly look for opportunities for joint action with GoTL and Judicial Actors either directly or through partners to complement advocacy and delivery of services
- ii. Retain the dual focus on ending VAWC through prevention and response, including support to victims seeking redress through the formal justice system.
- iii. Building on findings from research currently underway, contribute to sector-wide understanding of the link between violence against children and gender-based violence in Timor-Leste, and develop a more explicit strategy for the prevention of violence against children into the program's Theory of Change.
- iv. Map professional development needs to strengthen national management and leadership capacity and confidence
- v. Work with DFAT and The Asia Foundation to delineate coordination roles with other ending VAWC stakeholders
- vi. Step out a sustainability strategy for service delivery, and what a national framework for prevention of violence against women and children might look like, including supports
- vii. Consider promoting and using the NeNaMu curriculum as a foundational course for organisations and individuals working in gender equality programming in Timor-Leste. It could be viewed as the prevention equivalent of the Certificate III course in Social Services, and provide the professional skills for implementing other prevention programs like KOKASA!
- viii. Plan how prevention programming can be rolled out to municipalities through local partners in a sustainable manner.

4. Recommendations for GoTL and TAF/Nabilan and DFAT to work on together:

- i. Building on UN Women’s mapping of existing programming in ending VAWC by identifying: 1) gaps; 2) duplications, 3) opportunities for collaboration; and 4) risks.
- ii. Use upcoming National Action Plan process as an opportunity to: 1) address sustainability of service delivery; 2) to inform GoTL’s evidence-based approach to preventing violence against women, around which sector-wide consensus can be built; and 3) to make a connection between GBV and violence against children and intergenerational cycle of violence.
- iii. Explore linkages between MSS/DFAT joint programming in social protection for women and services for victims of violence with a view to including sufficient budget for services for victims of violence into the national budget.