

The *Nabilan* Health and Life Experiences Study

FACT SHEET 4. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN TIMOR-LESTE

Updated March 2016

In every country, violence against women and girls is a public health and human rights issue. Globally, 35% of women have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, and 30% have experienced intimate partner violence.¹

In 2015, as part of the *Nabilan* Program, The Asia Foundation conducted the Health and Life Experiences Baseline Study. The Study aimed to produce national data on the prevalence, and consequences, of different forms of violence against women in order to increase awareness, inform programs and policies, and monitor progress towards the elimination of violence against women in Timor-Leste.

The nationally-representative women’s survey was conducted with 1,426 randomly selected women. The men’s perpetration survey was carried out with a total of 839 randomly selected men in two district-representative samples. For more details on the methodology see Fact Sheet 1.

KEY FINDINGS

Many women experience rape in Timor-Leste

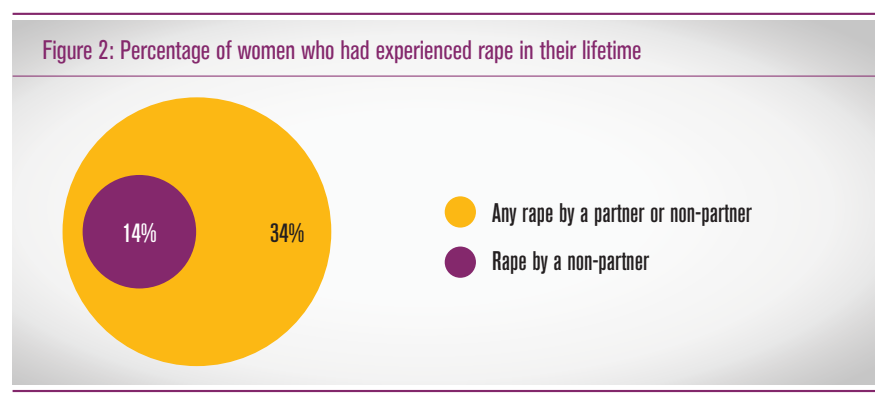
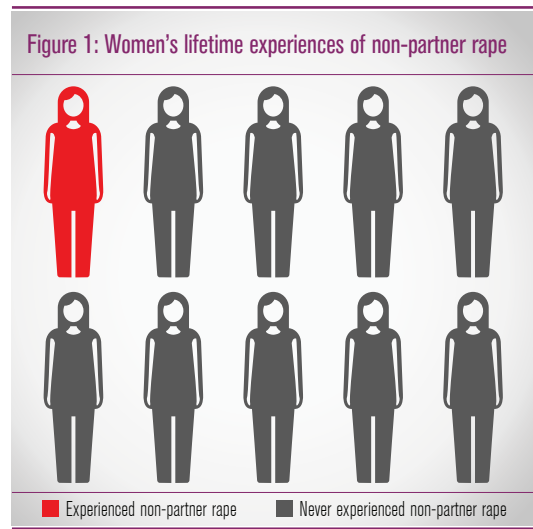
- More than one in ten (14%) women had experienced rape by a man who was not their intimate partner at least once in their lifetime, and one in ten (10%) had experienced this in the last 12 months.
- Four percent (4%) of all women had been raped by a non-partner when they were too drunk or drugged to refuse.
- Among all women surveyed, 3% had experienced gang rape in their lifetime.
- Half of the women who had experienced non-partner rape had been raped on multiple occasions.
- Most rape, however, is perpetrated by male intimate partners. More than one in three (34%) women surveyed had ever experienced any rape (either from a partner or non-partner) in their lifetime and 27% of women had experienced this in the last 12 months.

Box 1: Definitions of rape

Non-partner rape means that the woman was forced to have sexual intercourse against her will, or when she was too drunk or drugged to refuse.

Non-partner gang rape means that the woman was forced to have sexual intercourse with more than one man at the same time against her will or when she was too drunk or drugged to refuse.

Partner rape means that the woman was forced by her male partner to have sexual intercourse or had sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what her partner might do.

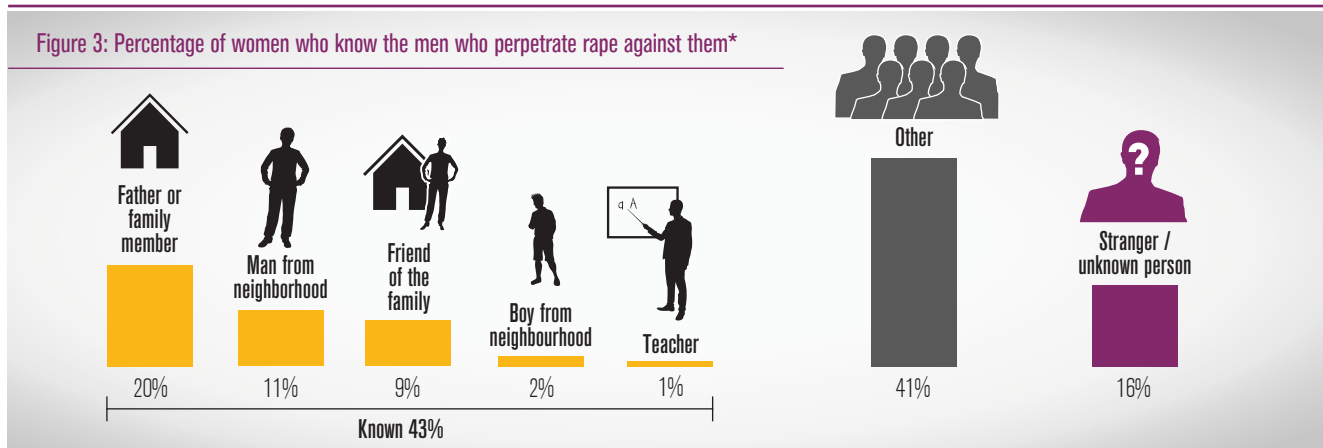


Suggested citation: The Asia Foundation. 2015. Fact Sheet 4: Sexual Violence against Women in Timor-Leste. The Asia Foundation, Timor-Leste: Dili.

1 World Health Organization (WHO), 2013, Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. Available at: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf.

Women often know the men who perpetrate rape against them

Many women who had been raped by a non-partner said that this was done by someone they know – usually a father or family member, a man from the neighborhood, or a friend of the family.

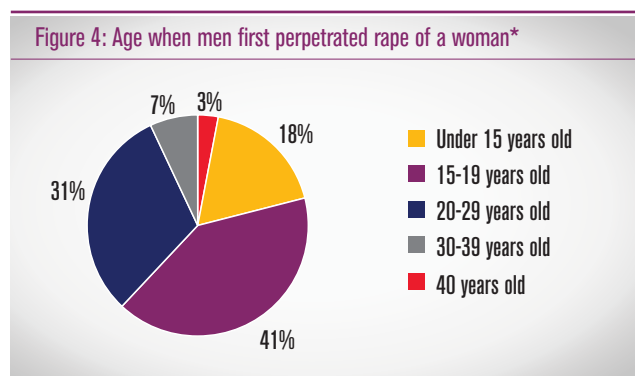


*Among women who had experienced non-partner rape

Between **15-22%** of all men in the study sites had raped a non-partner woman.

Men who rape begin at a young age

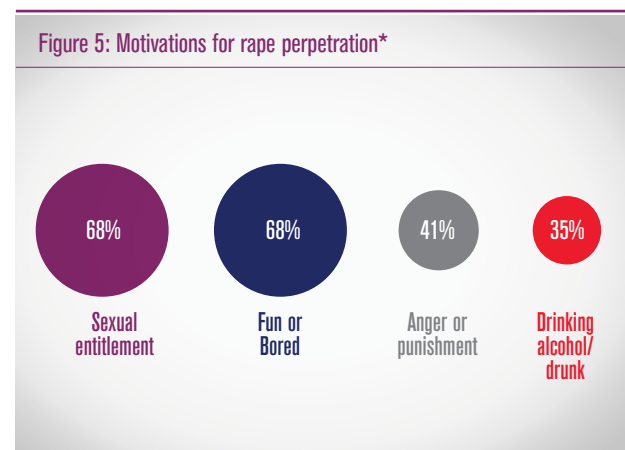
More than half (59%) of all men who had perpetrated rape did so for the first time when they were teenagers.



*Among men who had perpetrated rape

Most men who rape do so for entertainment or because they feel entitled

For men who had ever raped a woman, the Study asked them what motivated them to do this. In both Dili and Manufahi, the most common motivations that these men reported were related to sexual entitlement (for example, they felt entitled to have sex regardless of consent) or that they did it for ‘fun’ or because they were ‘bored.’



*Among men who had perpetrated rape

Moving forward: The Nabilan Program and preventing violence against women

The findings from the *Nabilan* Health and Life Experiences Baseline Study show that rape, both by intimate partners and non-partners, is a significant issue that impacts many women in Timor-Leste. The data from the Study illustrates the urgent need to target sexual violence prevention messages around consent and respect towards boys before they become teenagers. Improved access to health, justice, and legal services, as well as addressing the root causes of violence – particularly social norms about men and women’s roles – and shifting the social acceptance of violence against women are vital steps towards ending violence against women in Timor-Leste. Together, we can stop violence before it starts.

For more information on the *Nabilan* program or the Study methodologies, please contact:

Sophia Cason | Team Leader, *Nabilan* Program: Ending Violence Against Women | The Asia Foundation
sophia.cason@asiafoundation.org | +670 331 34 57