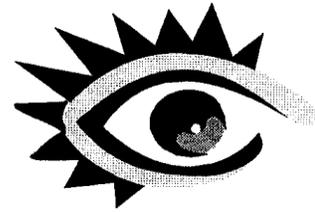
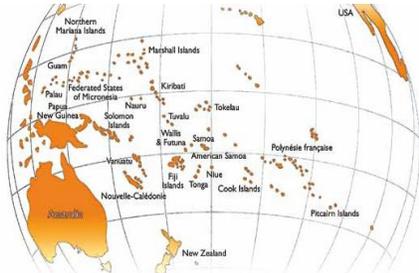


# **Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)**



## **Report and Proceedings**

of

**7<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**Saturday 17 November 2012**

## **Driving Forward Equality for New Zealand Women**

**Western Springs Garden Community Hall**

**956 Great North Road**

**Western Springs**

**Auckland**

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## Programme

9.00 am **Introduction:** Jane Prichard, President, PWW(NZ)

9.15 am **Launch of CEDAW Coalition of NGOs:** speakers Jane Prichard and Professor Marilyn Waring, Patron, PWW(NZ)

9.25 am **Statement on Conference Theme:** Professor Marilyn Waring, Institute of Public Policy, Auckland University of Technology

9.45 am **Speakers' Panel:** Chair Beverley Turner

- Janet Fanslow, Associate Professor, Auckland University School of Population and Health Studies – **Research**
- George Parker, Senior Policy Analyst, Women's Health Action Trust – **Health and Transgender Issues**
- Debbie Hager, Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children – **Violence, especially Impacts for Disabled Women**
- Shila Nair, Senior Advisor, Shakti Community Council – **Refugee and Migrant Issues**
- Deborah Moran, Director, Policy, Ministry of Women's Affairs – **Targets and Benchmarks**

10.50 am *Morning Tea*

11.05 am **Keynote Speaker:** Heather Henare, Chief Executive, Refuge New Zealand

11.35 am **Workshop Discussion Groups:** Conference participants identify issues of extreme importance with Group leaders from Speakers' Panel on research; health and transgender issues; violence, especially impacts for disabled women; refugee and migrant issues

12.35 pm **Report back from Discussion Groups:** Key Points and Next Steps

1.00 pm **Thanks and closure of Conference**

# **Driving Forward Equality for New Zealand Women**

## **Introduction by Jane Prichard, President, Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)**

Tena koutu, tena koutu, tena koutu katoa

Warmest greetings to you all here this morning for the Seventh Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Annual Half-Day Conference.

The Minister of Women's Affairs, the Hon Jo Goodhew, has sent greetings and her best wishes for a most successful conference. Dr Judy McGregor, Human Rights Commissioner for Equal Employment Opportunity has also sent best wishes.

A number of apologies and good wishes from Members of Parliament and Auckland City Councillors have been received.

We extend a warm welcome to our Patron Professor Marilyn Waring and to our keynote speaker Heather Henare, Chief Executive of Women's Refuge New Zealand.

At this Conference entitled *Driving Forward Equality for New Zealand Women* we are bringing some very positive initiatives to you to help New Zealand reclaim its position as a global leader for gender equality. Viewed through the lens of the recent NGO contribution to the examination in July this year in New York of the New Zealand Government's Seventh Report on its implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, (CEDAW), we will be considering innovative strategies to close the gender gap.

### **Introducing Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)**

For those unfamiliar with Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) I offer a short introduction.

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand), currently a leading New Zealand NGO, was established in 2000 as an umbrella organisation to be the New Zealand link to the Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW) in the wider region. We have been represented on the APWW Steering Committee since 1999. The name PWW(NZ) indicates our geographical position rather than ethnic/cultural connections. While Pacific women are very much part of the membership of the organisation they are just one of a diversity of cultures making up our total membership.

Our key objective is to monitor, review and report on CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other UN treaties to which New Zealand is a signatory. In 2005 and 2010 we researched and published the New Zealand NGO Country Report for the Beijing + 10 and Beijing + 15 reviews. PWW(NZ) plays a mentoring role to women and other organisations. Results of our research are made available to all on our web site and in published report documents.

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Inc. is one of the very few New Zealand organisations which has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). When we were granted the status in 2010 we were mandated by the UN NGO Committee and the New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, to make the voices of Pacific Island women heard more loudly at the international level. This we have done through small projects to promote women's leadership skills and to assist in pre-school education. Several women from Pacific Island countries have been enabled to attend UN meetings as

PWW(NZ) representatives. We include a large number of younger women and a diversity of cultures in our membership. PWW(NZ) is a member of the Diversity Action Programme of NZ Human Rights Commission and is registered with the Charities Commission.

In 2007 and 2011 we contributed a highly regarded Alternative NGO CEDAW Report and Addendum to sessions of the CEDAW Committee. NGOs attending the recent session of the CEDAW Committee in New York were pleased that their reports and recommendations were very much valued. The Committee's Concluding Observations to the New Zealand Government on its progress in implementing CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, reflected very well their concerns. The Committee did feel that not enough progress had been made to further implement CEDAW since the previous review in 2007. This year only two New Zealand NGOs attended the session – Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) and the National Council of Women of New Zealand.

At our Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) AGM on 5 July we outlined our prime recommendations to the Committee on how the New Zealand Government might take further action to implement CEDAW. In our short oral statement to the Committee we expressed concern that many of the issues raised by the Committee in 2007 had not yet been acted upon.

We brought (3) key concerns:

1. We are disappointed and extremely concerned that there is currently no Action Plan for New Zealand Women, nor is one deemed necessary. The previous five-year Plan ended in 2009. A new Plan is not contemplated. We believe progress for gender equality for New Zealand women will be best achieved through a new five-year Action Plan which is time-bound, and establishes benchmarks for the achievement of goals together with the monitoring and reporting of measurable outcomes. We urge the Minister and Ministry of Women's Affairs to elaborate a new Action Plan as soon as possible.
2. A PWW(NZ) Petition to Parliament in November 2009 asked the Government to take steps to review legislation to increase protection for those at risk of forced and underage marriage. It is a very real issue, generally clandestine in nature. The mental health of young migrant and refugee girls and young women is being severely compromised, leading them to attempt self-harm and suicide. The Government believes that new legislation is unlikely to have an impact but is, nevertheless, considering a review. As yet no time-frame has been set for the review. It is time for urgency.
3. Gender identity is not recognized in New Zealand's Human Rights Act (1993) as a ground for discrimination. There is also a lack of data collection on sexual identity and gender variance. Nor is there progress in addressing extensive systemic discrimination against transgendered people across all levels of society. We believe it is time gender identity is properly recognized.

More and more, NGOs are being listened to, and so it is critical that they are fully informed about the format for their reports as well as having a complete understanding of CEDAW as a human rights instrument, which specifically ensures equality for women and girls. Regrettably only a very small number of NGOs have had the opportunity to participate in Training Workshops facilitated by IWRAW, the International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific<sup>1</sup>, prior to CEDAW sessions.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/iwraw>

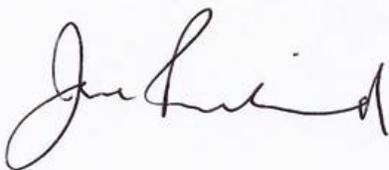
I therefore am very gratified to announce this morning that IRAW Asia Pacific has agreed to facilitate a three-day CEDAW Training Workshop in New Zealand. It will be held at the St Columba Centre in Vermont Street, Ponsonby, in Auckland on 12-14 April next year for up to 25 participants, hosted by Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand). IRAW has had the responsibility for some time of providing training for NGOs attending CEDAW sessions and is really excited about working with New Zealand NGOs.

Shortly we will call for nominations to attend the IRAW Training from organisations and groups who have contributed to NGO CEDAW reporting, who intend to write a report for the next examination of the New Zealand Government Report and who can make CEDAW and their learning from the Training Consultation widely known. The Training could well be part of our honouring of the 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of New Zealand women gaining the vote.

There are still many gender gaps. We look to this Conference to define several prime issues of concern for action. The Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee to the New Zealand Government following the review last July identified some one hundred areas where we could do better. Today we have a focus on violence against women and girls. We have to do better on violence. We believe that education on the comprehensive scope of CEDAW will be critical, including the enhancement of legal education and training for all lawyers, judges and law enforcement officers. Employment issues including equal pay and occupational segregation, negative media portrayal and the special issues for refugee and migrant women and disabled women continue to be very stubborn. Linking CEDAW with the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals has been largely overlooked.

Urgency must be taken on the CEDAW Committee's request to provide within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 36 and 38 of the concluding observations – data and information on the situation of women with disabilities, rural women, older women and women from ethnic minority groups; ensuring welfare reforms do not discriminate against disadvantaged groups of women, and gender mainstreaming of policies relating to recovery from the Christchurch earthquake – and in 38, revise the legal age for marriage to 18 years and introduce legal measures to prohibit underage and forced marriage – you can read the full text in copies of the Committee's concluding observations available here today. The PWW(NZ) Strategic Plan is also available.

There is much to be done for positive progress.



Jane Prichard QSO  
President

## Launch of CEDAW Coalition of NGOs

We're delighted to launch today the CEDAW Coalition of NGOs as a 'ginger group' to drive forward equality for New Zealand women and girls.

Following the review by the CEDAW Committee of the New Zealand Government's Seventh Periodic Report there was general consensus by all involved that despite several useful steps forward there had been little positive advancement for women and girls. The Committee took notice of the many recommendations brought to them by the NGOs present, especially those proposed by representatives of Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand). Our Alternative Report and Addendum written in the new format required by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva were considered to be model documents.

If New Zealand is to reclaim its position as a global leader for gender equality then it will take a huge amount of will on the part of civil society to demand the same level of will by Government to ensure the full implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women known as CEDAW. It must be a "shared cause".

As more of the same will not achieve the forward thrust the CEDAW Committee has signalled very clearly it expects from New Zealand in the next reporting period, then a new NGO model is needed. When Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) was approached by several to consider establishing a "ginger group" specifically for work on CEDAW we already had the advantage of being an umbrella group for some 20 organisations and groups, and a number of individual members.

Conducting nationwide workshops for the NGO New Zealand Country Report for the Beijing + 10 and Beijing + 15 reviews in 2004 and 2009 respectively gave us wide experience in collecting and analysing data. In all of our programmes we have collaborated whenever possible, working in 2004 with the National Council of Women of New Zealand. Ongoing monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the status of women, especially New Zealand women, has been our core objective since our inception in 2000 as a link to the regional Asia Pacific Women's Watch.

As the driver of the CEDAW Coalition of NGOs – and there must be a driver if the Coalition is to gain traction for women's rights in the short term - Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) has impressive credentials.

- We are a single issue organisation – to monitor, review and report on the status of women in New Zealand – Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) was established to monitor the implementation by successive governments of key women's human rights international agreements including CEDAW, its General Recommendations and its Optional Protocol; The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995 and Beijing + 5 Political Declaration and Outcome Document 2000; Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on Critical Areas of Concern in the Beijing Platform 1996-2009; the Millennium Development Goals – specifically Goal 3; Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent related Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security
- Model documents have been compiled for CEDAW in 2007 and 2011

- ECOSOC status – special consultative status as a national body has been held since 2010
- We have a youthful Board and a cross-cultural membership
- Our objectives and programme appeal to all cultures and to young women
- Data is collected from women at all levels of society, in particular women at the edges and on the margins of mainstream society and who find it difficult to have their voices heard
- We have undertaken alternative reporting against United Nations instruments since 2002, while individual members have longer experience.

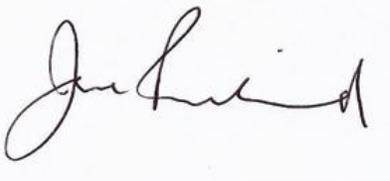
### **How will the CEDAW Coalition of NGOs operate?**

If it is to take urgent action the Coalition must have a very simple structure. A core Action Group working as an adjunct to Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) will plan activities and drive forward its programme for the advancement and empowerment of women. This will be with specific reference to the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee following the examination last July of the New Zealand Government's Report. The very simple structure will allow the Coalition to focus solely on its core task to review, monitor and urge progress on the most urgent issues identified in the Committee's Concluding Observations of July 2012.

The focus will be on education on CEDAW as a human rights instrument and collection of disaggregated data that will make a difference in progressing the issues of concern. We believe the CEDAW Coalition of NGOs should continue its work until three months after the next CEDAW review scheduled for 2016. After that its future should be assessed based on outcomes and successes in the next four years.

There has been considerable interest in membership of the Action Group. We are calling today for further expressions of interest in being part of the Action Group, which must include a broad cross section of women representing the prime sectors of New Zealand society. If you feel you can offer the skills the Action Group requires then please speak to me during the Conference. This Conference will point the way to strategies to help reduce gender violence, especially for disabled women, new research as a tool for making progress for women and girls, innovative ways of looking at transgender issues, outstanding challenges for refuge and migrant women and girls and the further development of targets and benchmarks.

The CEDAW Coalition of NGOs is determined to work with Government and other NGOs in a visionary programme and to form strategic partnerships for progress on advancement for women and girls.



Jane Prichard, QSO.  
15 November 2012

# **Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Press Statement**

19 November 2012

Women from many leading organisations, including women from a diversity of cultures and younger women, meeting at the Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Annual Conference in Auckland on Saturday expressed outrage that there had been so little advance in recent years for gender equality. They echoed comments from the Committee on the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in July this year when the New Zealand Government's Seventh Report on implementing CEDAW was examined in New York.

There was particular concern about the status of vulnerable women, especially disabled women, refugee and migrant women, lesbian, queer and transgendered people. The Watch was urged to explore marginalization and to scrutinize human rights legislation. Nothing will change, especially in reducing the high level of violence against women and children unless there is a culture shift for radical change. Services will not be enough. A call was made for an economic analysis report showing the actual cost to society resulting from gender violence.

The Conference issued a challenge to the Watch to take action to reinvigorate the women's movement on issues that matter. New Zealand led the world from 2000 onwards. In the last four or so years backsliding has caused our leadership to be eroded severely. Backward steps have included changes to the Family Court, changes to legal aid, decreased funding for all family services and sexual health services, changes to child support and closure of the pay equity unit.

The Watch driven CEDAW Coalition of NGOs was launched during the Conference to provide a "ginger group" for human rights education, data collection and research. A solid data base is the key to progress. The new Coalition will bring CEDAW alive and be a tool for activism. Ms Prichard said "The Coalition can be a very strong weapon in our increasingly limited armoury. We must not be silent".

Jane Prichard  
President  
Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)  
Phone: 09 528 3727

## Patron's Opening Remarks

**Dr Marilyn Waring, CNZM, Ph.D., Professor of Public Policy at AUT University**

Dr Marilyn Waring began by congratulating Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) on their year's work, particularly at CEDAW. She also paid her respects and a tribute to Dr Judy McGregor, the outgoing EEO Human Rights Commissioner, mentioning the Gender Audits<sup>2</sup> and the 'Carer Report'<sup>3</sup> in particular, and Judy's support of the transgender report.<sup>4</sup>

Marilyn then went on to mention key aspects of the focus for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and PWW(NZ) in 2013, and key relationships between them. Some of her own recent work on social protection for the Commonwealth Secretariat, for example, was concerned with a move from universality for such protection, to being focussed (led by the ILO) principally on those who have had ongoing engagement in the paid work force. By contrast, social protection for women could mean access to communal land on divorce or inheritance rights for a woman and her girl children.

For many in the Pacific, social protection began with being free from violence. Marilyn noted some of the key features of those reports. She contrasted these with the alternate work being done on traditional economies in the Pacific and then read the following:

"I am reading about Vanuatu's well-being in the context of thinking about social protection. I am concerned that the multi-lateral current use of the concept means that this is only about cash transfers, and focused on market employment. I think it's about a great deal more, especially in traditional economies, hence this Vanuatu report is important. In 2006 the New Economics Foundation (UK) declared Vanuatu to be the happiest country in the world. In 2011, the WHO based report on 'Women's Lives and Family Relationships' reported that 60 per cent of women had experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime by husbands/partners, and for 90 per cent of these women the violence was severe. More than 1 in 4 women experienced physical violence by non-partners over fifteen years. One in 3 women experienced child sexual abuse under the age of 15, and sexual violence over the age of 15. It reported 2 in 5 women were forced into first sex. The study showed the violence caused injuries for many women (including loss of consciousness for 50%) and permanent disability for 1 in 5 of those injured. Women coped by not telling anyone (2 in 5 women), and/or temporarily leaving home (almost half). The study reported less than 1 per cent of women left home permanently because of violence. So much for the happiness index!"

This reading was from Marilyn's short Five Vignettes, which she had written for the Virago 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary publication *Fifty Shades of Grey*, which will be published in March 2013. Marilyn indicated that she was very happy to continue as PWW(NZ)'s patron.

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<sup>2</sup> New Zealand Census of Women's Participation, 2012

<sup>3</sup> Caring Counts: Migrant Workers in the Aged Care Sector, 2012

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.hrc.co.nz/human-rights-environment/action-on-the-transgender-inquiry>

## **Keynote address**

### **Heather Henare, Chief Executive, Women's Refuge NZ**



Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. It is a pleasure to be here and participate in your conference and an honour to be asked to present this key note address.

I am going to break my presentation to you down into three main areas.

First, I want to take this opportunity to make some general observations about women in New Zealand.

Then I want to talk specifically about the issue of violence to women in New Zealand and make some reflections about the recent CEDAW report New Zealand received.

Finally I want to discuss how we as interested feminists, human rights campaigners and all round good citizens, can influence the Government's response to the CEDAW report and be involved in next March's Commission on Status of Women session at the UN in New York, which as you know, is specifically considering violence against women.

Over the past two to three years, Women's Refuge has become increasingly active in a broad range of issues that impact on women in New Zealand. This is as opposed to our traditional position to just comment on issues around domestic violence. To put it another way – we are no longer just “sticking to our knitting!”

While there are several reasons why we have decided to do this, there have been a couple of key drivers. One of these was the realisation that the discrimination and inequalities women fought against decades ago have resurfaced. We are having to fight old fights.

Some of these, such as gender neutral language, I will touch on in more detail later.

Couple this with the impact of the current recession-driven reforms on women. Overwhelmingly the impacts of these reforms are more severe on women and their children.

We are also painfully aware of the ripple effect of policy and legislative changes. A change in one policy has ramifications far wider than probably intended.

So not only is there bias against women, but the impact of this bias continues to be based in historical views about women – and these are having structural and systemic implications for women today.

#### **So what do I mean practically?**

Reforms to welfare are not only particularly punitive to women, but specifically in our sector – they make it harder for a woman to leave a violent relationship. Reforms to the courts, housing and legal aid make it not only harder for *all* women to access justice, but specifically in our sector, they make it harder for a women to secure State sanctioned safety against violence. Actually they will deter women from seeking justice in the first place and in some circumstances holding the woman responsible for her ongoing safety.

For me, the real rub is the implication by politicians and commentators alike that somehow the poverty our children live in, the violence our women are suffering, and the extent of welfare going towards supporting solo mums etc etc – is all somehow related to women’s poor choices and our lack of responsibility. Not only does this absolutely deflect the blame and avoid naming the real causes, but most worryingly people actually believe the rhetoric.

People are still thinking – women should just leave her violent relationship, she should just get a job or maybe two if she’s that hard up. The working class get pitted against those on welfare. Working mothers resent mothers on the benefit. The middle class get to feel detached and blameless for the fact 25% of our children live in poverty.

This hateful and punitive discourse towards women generally, and vulnerable women particularly, has been a key driver in our expanded advocacy role.

Moving on – many of you will be familiar with the comments the UN Committee made on New Zealand’s progress towards implementing CEDAW. While I acknowledge and support the concerns raised about issues such as pay equality and equity, I want to specifically address some of the concerns they raised around violence towards women and girls.

Usually, Women’s Refuge participates in the shadow report to CEDAW produced by the National Council for Women. This year however we for the first time produced and submitted our own report because we were so concerned with the lack of progress being made around violence against women (and on women’s issues generally). We unsuccessfully attempted to get government funding to present our report in person. When one of the agencies who did get support to go offered to transfer that funding to us, as they felt our submission needed to be tabled, the government refused to support this.

So, as the UN Committee observed, while we have campaigns such as “It’s not Okay” and new measures such as Police Safety Orders, we still have a significant problem with violence against women in New Zealand.

Last year the Police attended over 95,000 family violence incidents. About 70% of these were intimate partner violence. Over 50% of the time, no charge was laid, no offence recorded. And those who were charged experienced low rates of conviction.

What is the lesson for offenders here? I think it says loud and clearly to keep up with the abuse, because overwhelmingly the police response is minimal. One can’t help but assume that this is in line with Government’s agenda to keep crime statistics down. This keeps me up at night and every time I turn the radio on and listen to yet another women having been killed by her violent partner, it is yet another failure on our behalf to prevent another death, another tragedy, another women’s life.

It also really worries us that we continue to have to argue the toss for constant and secure funding sources to be able to provide a safety based service for over 25,000 women and children a year. The constant struggle to stay afloat against a backdrop over year on year ‘*over delivery on our contracts*’ is demoralising to say the least. And yet again contracts are being streamlined, marginalised and played off against each other.

More concerning is that agencies are buying into and are actually supporting government’s roll out of women-hating legislation and policy that is denying basic rights, decriminalising domestic

violence on the one hand and then criminalising violence against children, in particular mothers for not protecting their children, when they fail to recognise the violence against women.

It worries me too that I still have to explain to people who should know a lot better what 'gendered violence' is (and that violence in this country is actually gendered!). So when the CEDAW report notes its concerns over our gender neutral language, I absolutely support this.

In fact I feel excited that I am in a forum where there is collective agreement that violence is gendered. As someone who spends 60% of my time with government agencies, it is rare.

I agree that 'family violence' as a catch phrase waters down intimate partner violence. I dismay that we aren't meant to talk about violence against women – let alone *men's* violence to women. I can't believe how often I get caught up in a discussion about how violent women are. In recent weeks media have asked me why I am not worried about the violence happening to men. "Who is there to speak out on behalf of men?" they ask me. Back door reports from Police around a selective number of deaths continue to grow this belief and fuel this bias.

The fact is that until we can talk about what is really going on, we are never going to get to the bottom of the problem and start to make a difference.

At Women's Refuge we often muse over the phrase 'It's Not Okay'. We think that's kind of putting it very mildly. Not only is it not okay – but it's a crime. It's very, very far from 'OK'.

But saying 'It's Not OK' sounds a lot more mild mannered and safe. Now the White Ribbon campaign's tag line is: 'Are you man enough to stop the violence'? So you are man enough to start it, now man up and stop it. That doesn't sit easily with me at all either. However we put it, however we minimise it, at the end of the day the outrage of violence in this country has to be heard. As in the past it's women who lead that change.

The CEDAW report also mentioned its concern over the low level representation on the Taskforce for Action on Family Violence. I sit on this Taskforce alongside about 15 or so government officials and members of the judiciary. There are also 5 members who come from the community sector. While my community colleagues are all Chief Executives, the Government agencies mostly, with the exception of a few, send 2<sup>nd</sup> or even 3<sup>rd</sup> tier managers.

So while the Government touts the Taskforce as its key mechanism for cross sector action on violence within families, it lacks leadership, resourcing, mandate and influence. It's an uneasy situation for us in the community sector with one foot in the door and the other half ready to race off down Lambton Quay in disgust.

Is it better to stay and maintain the struggle to get momentum and commitment from the Government or are we somehow complicit in the Taskforce's stagnation by staying involved? This is a question I ask myself regularly.

What we do know is that no matter how imperfect the Taskforce is, it's all we have.

Next March, interested parties will meet in New York to discuss violence to women. I am delighted to say that Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) are supporting Women's Refuge to attend. Again our attendance will be dependent on the successfulness of refuge funding. So what is our role in this meeting? I guess first and foremost it is to listen. To hear the stories of

our sisters in other countries and to listen to their successes and stand in solidarity with their fight to overcome ongoing discrimination and violence.

For New Zealand, I want the chance to raise the issues that still face New Zealand women and girls living with violence. While I will acknowledge the areas of commitment and success, I will also raise the areas we could do so much better in. I want to talk about how stagnated progress has been in eliminating gender based violence in New Zealand and look at the reasons why this is so. As part of this, I think we need to have some wider discussions about the structural violence women here are experiencing.

I want to make the point that as the Chief Executive of New Zealand's leading services provider to women and children that are victimised by violence, I have seen little progress over 7 years. I think the Government needs to be answerable about their lack of leadership, commitment and resourcing in our sector.

I want the Government to realise that by not doing enough to address violence against women, they are doing a disservice to not only victims of violence but to all women in New Zealand and across the world.

In fact, all of us, women and men, are poorer for the continuing violence experienced by women and children.

To bring this presentation to an end I want to summarize:

- 1 Organisations are being driven by contracting outcomes and service based delivery as opposed to organisational philosophy and rights based organisations
- 2 This political advocacy needs to be visible nationally and internationally. We need to learn from other countries that impact of segmentation of the victim, government contracting and reactive legislation and fiscal referring will only result in more women and children living in poverty, being segregated into 'us and them' and even worse, being killed.
- 3 With this government being so fiscally focused, the only solution going forward, I believe is for the discussion around the economic cost of violence be updated. How do we calculate the cost of violence on the unborn child, killed because the Mum was beaten during her pregnancy.
- 4 The cost of years of abuse, loss of life, loss of potential. The government must be made to understand that the current reforms are only going to increase the cost and make women and children more unsafe.
- 5 The voices of feminism need to reunite in this country. Women's organisations need to align and grow and regain the voice of political advocacy.

With that I will bring this session to a close.

So putting it simply: Let's get the placards out, let's put pen to paper, use the social media and unite to fight the fight against violence in Aotearoa.

## Panel Presentations

**Janet Fanslow, School of Population Health, The University of Auckland**

### **Violence Against Women: Field notes from the Ivory Tower**

#### **Overview**

- Key points from NZ & International research
- Observations on the current response to Violence Against Women (VAW) in NZ
- A challenge: reinvigorating the women's movement about issues that matter

#### **Data from the New Zealand Violence Against Women Study (NZ VAW Study)**

- Aims: to assess prevalence and health consequences of violence against women, with a focus on intimate partner violence (IPV)
- Replication of the WHO Multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women (10 + countries)
  - Cross-sectional survey of women aged 18-64, in two regions (Auckland, North Waikato) in 2003
  - Face-to-face interviews with one randomly selected woman from each household
  - N=2,855, 67% Response rate

#### **Definitions**

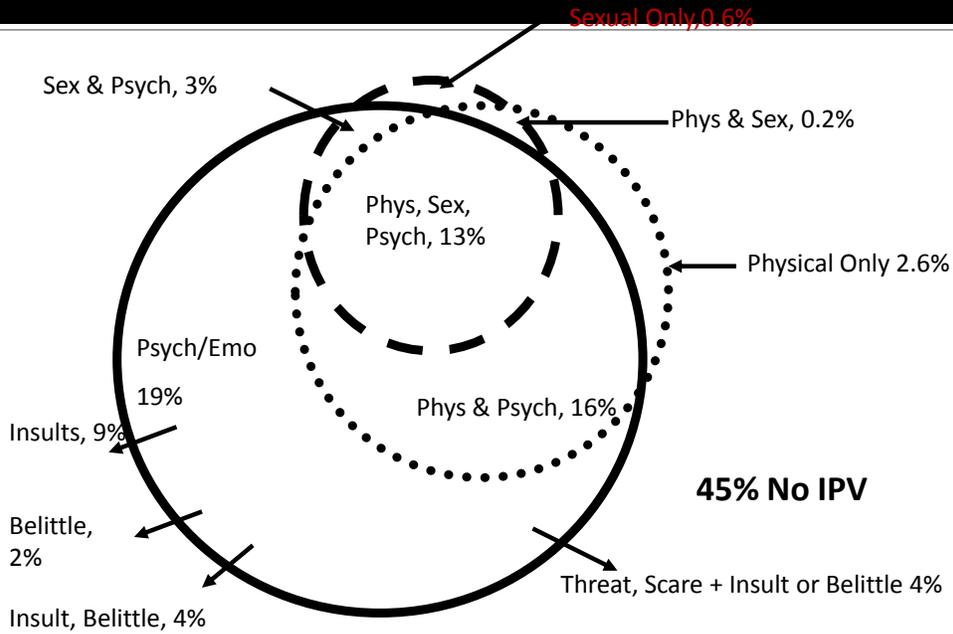
- Intimate Partner (spouse, de facto partner, or ex-partner, boyfriend)
- IPV = Intimate partner violence
- Lifetime: ever in your life
- 12 month prevalence: in the 12 months prior to the survey
- Physical Violence
- Sexual Violence
- Psychological Abuse/Emotional Violence

#### **Types of violence: Lifetime and 12 Month Prevalence, (Fanslow & Robinson 2011)**

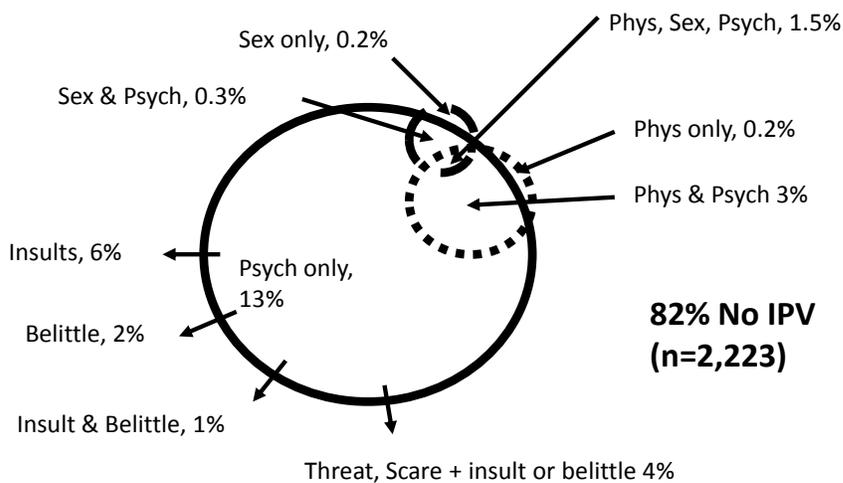
<b>Type (1 or more acts)</b>	<b>Lifetime</b>	<b>Past 12 Months</b>
Physical	32.3%	5.0%
Sexual	17.0%	1.8%
Psychological/Emotional	51.5%	17.2%

Janet L. Fanslow & Elizabeth M. Robinson (2011): Sticks, Stones, or Words? Counting the Prevalence of Different Types of Intimate Partner Violence Reported by New Zealand Women, *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 20:7, 741-759  
To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2011.608221>

## Overlap of types of IPV, Lifetime (n=2,664)



## Overlap of types of IPV, Past 12 months (n=2674)



## What about women's violence towards men?

24.3% of women and 13.8% of men have experienced severe physical violence (e.g. hit with a fist or something hard, beaten, slammed against something) by an intimate partner in their lifetime (The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey [NISVS], US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2012)

## Impacts of Intimate Partner Violence

81% of women and 35% of men reported at least one impact related to the IPV experiences:

- fear
- concern for safety
- injury
- having missed at least one day of work or school

## Health consequences of Intimate Partner Violence

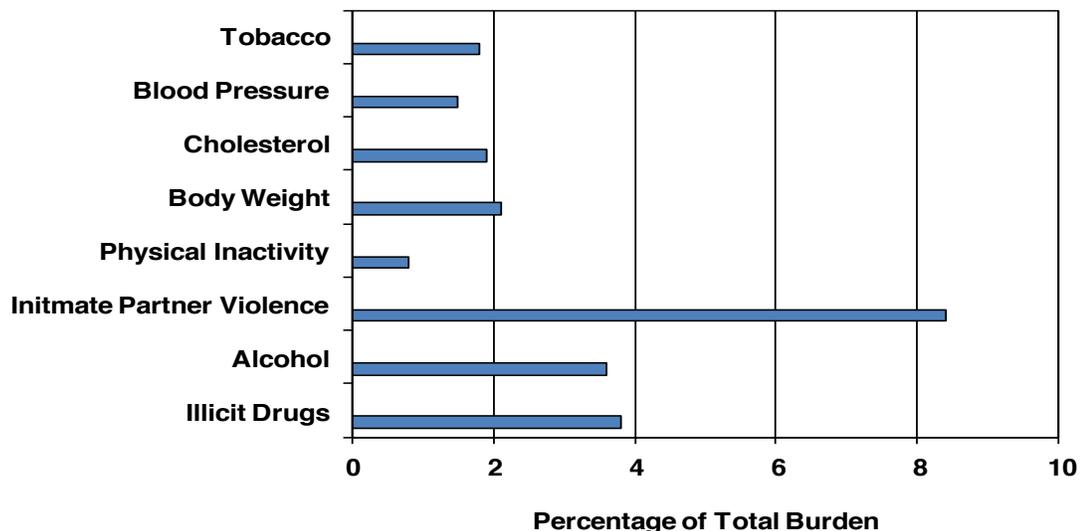
**Physical.** Abdominal/thoracic injuries, Bruises and welts, Chronic pain syndromes, Chronic disease, Disability, Fibromyalgia, Fractures, Gastrointestinal disorders, Irritable bowel syndrome, Lacerations and abrasions, Ocular damage, Reduced physical functioning

**Sexual and Reproductive.** Gynaecological disorders, Infertility, Pelvic inflammatory disease, Pregnancy complications/miscarriage, Sexual dysfunction, Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, Unsafe abortion, Unwanted pregnancy

**Psychological and Behavioural,** Alcohol and drug abuse, Depression and anxiety, Eating and sleep disorders, Feelings of shame and guilt, Phobias and panic disorder, Physical inactivity, Poor self-esteem, Post-traumatic stress disorder, Psychosomatic disorders, Smoking, Suicidal behaviour and self-harm

Source: *World Report on Violence and Health, (Krug et al, 2002).*

## Top 8 Risk Factors contributing to the disease burden in women from Victoria, Australia (15-44 yrs)



## **Observations on current response to Violence Against Women: Erosion**

### **Issues of concern:**

- Changes to the Family Court
- Changes to Legal Aid
- Changes to Housing New Zealand
- Decreased funding to all sexual & family violence services
- Lack of sustained funding plans for Family Violence network coordinators
- Changes to the Crimes Act re: Failure to protect
- Proposed changes to provisions related to child support
- Failure to implement recommendations from the Report of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence, 2009
- Concerns from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women (2012) <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-NZL-CO-7.pdf>
- Task Force for Action on Violence within Families, it is concerned at the lower level of representation among its members, down from chief executive to low-level officials.
- Including the recourse to gender neutral language with respect to gender based violence, including domestic violence;
- Representation on the Taskforce for Action , from chief executive to low-level officials
- Pay inequality and pay equity;
- The status of vulnerable groups of women, including women with disabilities and minority women; the impact of the 2011 earthquake on women; the impact of policy changes such as the financial cuts in legal aid schemes; adequacy of targets and benchmarks to advance women's rights; and the insufficient dissemination and promotion of the Convention.

### **So what now?**

Consider what has influenced government actions to combat violence against women (VAW) across 70 countries, over four decades:

- Services to victims
- Legal Reform
- Policies & programs targeted to vulnerable populations
- Training professionals who respond to victims
- Prevention programs
- Administrative reforms
- Government maintains specialised agency to provide leadership, coordination & support for VAW policies across different sectors & levels

### **The importance of an Autonomous Women's Movement**

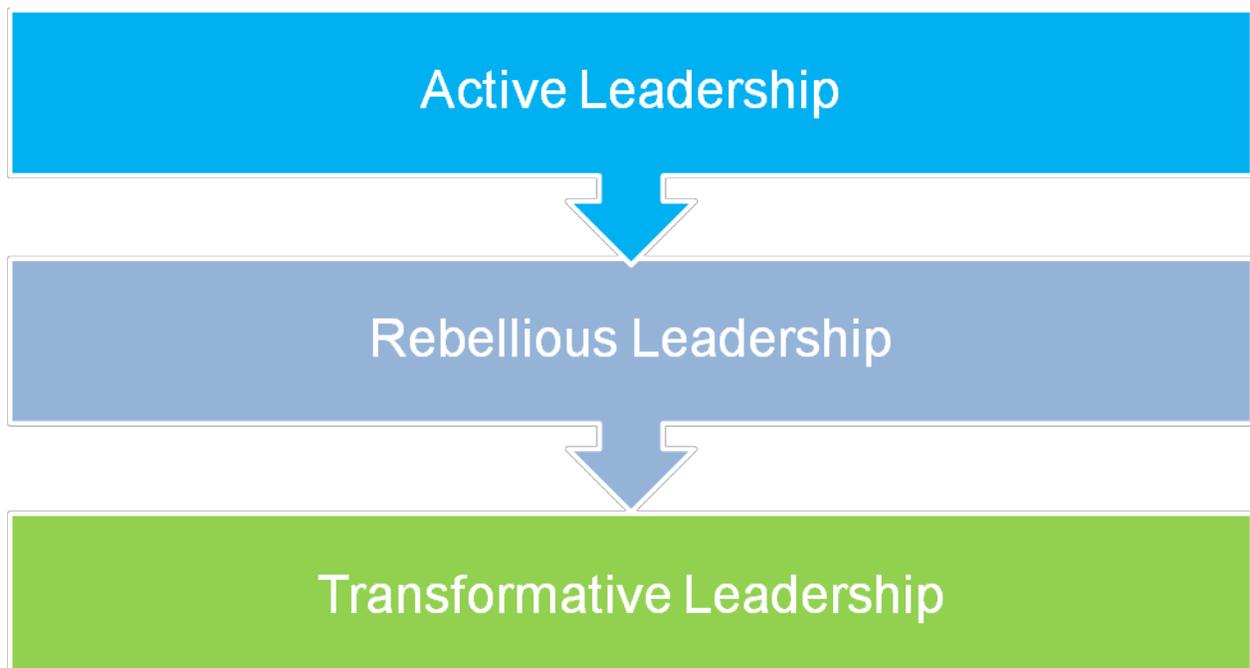
- Women's mobilisation that is devoted to promoting women's status & well-being independently of political parties.
- Women organising as women
  - generate social knowledge about women's position as a group in society
    - (an oppositional consciousness to other priorities)
- Tackling the issue of VAW challenges established gender roles

### **Processes that Women's Movements have used to influence social policy**

- Social movements shapes public & govt will to address particular issues

- Demand institutional reforms
- Engage in lobbying, change cultures so people see issues differently,
- Bring lawsuits & submit briefs to international meetings
- Produce women's newspapers, magazines, organise cultural events & symposia: these activities soften up the public mood & disseminate new ideas
- Organise networking that brings autonomous activists in contact with govt officials, business women, etc.
- Adopt "everyday politics", particular ways of living that model new forms of social organisation, e.g., shared parenting
- Protest & create public disruptions, as well as "unobtrusive" disruptions (e.g. petitions)

**What needs to happen next?**



## **George Parker, Senior Policy Analyst, Women's Health Action**

### **CEDAW – where to next for women's health?**

#### **Making CEDAW a useful tool for Change**

CEDAW is a tool for speaking to the UN and holding the government to account on their international obligations on women's rights and **can be a very strong weapon in our increasingly limited armoury**. The recommendations are useful for lobbying the government on specific issues and reminding them of their obligations and can also be reinforced in other reviews by the UN (Charlotte Gage, 2011).

#### **Our task in Aotearoa New Zealand**

1. Progress with achieving substantive equality for women. Substantive equality meaning:
  - Equality of opportunity in terms of access to the resources of a country, to be secured by a framework of laws and policies, and supported by institutions and mechanisms for their operation.
  - Equality of results upon access and opportunity, toward achieving real change for women. [State parties](#) to [CEDAW](#) have a responsibility to ensure the practical realisation of rights, and are thus obliged to show results
2. Stem the tide of regressive police and legislation

#### **Gender on the AGENDA**

CEDAW Concluding Observations: The Committee encourages the State party:

- To mainstream gender in all national plans and government institutions
- [Necessary resources, authority, visibility and coordination] for the advancement of women and the promotion of gender equality by increasing the resources for the Ministry of Women's Affairs
- To conduct a comprehensive study on how to improve the situation of women in the State party and develop a national action plan for women.

#### **Committee observations on Health**

- State of NZ's abortion laws
- Young women's mental health esp. High level of suicide among young women
- Inequalities in access to health care by minority women esp. Maori
- High rates of teen pregnancy esp. Maori
- Access and quality of health services for lesbian, queer and transgendered persons
- Lack of access to effective age and culturally appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights
- HIV testing of pregnant women- informed consent

#### **Recommendations**

- Review abortion law and practice with a view to simplifying it and to ensure women's autonomy to choose
- Address young women's mental health, to prevent and combat the abuse of alcohol and use of drugs, and to prevent girl's suicide esp. Migrant and minority communities
- Increase efforts to improve health-care services, including mental health care, esp. For Maori and Pacific women
- Improve access and quality of health services for lesbian and transgendered persons

- Promote education on sexual and reproductive health rights esp. Prevention of pregnancy and support for pregnant girls
- Ensure pregnant women are informed that HIV testing is not mandatory and ensure informed consent is obtained
- Ensure on-going welfare reforms do not discriminate against disadvantaged groups of women and are evaluated

### **Sexual Rights**

These include the right of all persons, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, to receive the highest attainable standard of health in relation to sexuality, including access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services; seek and impart information in relation to sexuality; receive sexuality education; have respect for bodily integrity; have a free choice of partner; decide to be sexually active or not; have consensual sexual relations; have consensual marriage; decide whether or not and when to have children; pursue a satisfying, safe and pleasurable sexual life.

### **Reproductive Rights**

These rights rest on the recognition of the basic rights for all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health. They also include the right of all to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents.

### **Reproductive Justice**

- All people deserve the social, financial, political, and legal conditions required to make genuine choices about reproduction – choices that must be respected, supported, and treated with dignity.
- Particular concern about advancing the position of marginalized populations whose reproduction has been forced, denied, or exploited. The rights to have children, not to have children, and to parent children are of an intimate, fundamental nature and ought to be accessible to all.
- Reproductive Justice as a social justice movement is rooted in the belief that individuals and communities should have the resources and power to make sustainable and liberatory decisions about their bodies, genders, sexualities, and lives.

### **Concerns relating to Sexual and Reproductive Justice in NZ**

*Women's health Action holds that we are witnessing an unprecedented erosion of these rights in the following areas:*

- Welfare reform e.g. fertility control
- Lack of sexual and reproductive health strategy and lack of improvements to sexuality education
- Policies and legislation that result in blame and punishment of pregnant women and women who are mothers for poor child health and safety outcomes e.g. failure to protect
- Policies and legislation that undermine women's safety
- Abortion law and access, timeliness and choice in abortion method
- Access to culturally safe and appropriate sexual and reproductive health services

We think this is a serious social justice issue and one for which we need to mobilise a response.

**Shila Nair, Senior Advisor, Shakti Community Council**  
**Refugee and migrant issues**

For many New Zealand migrant and refugee women the notion of `equality' and `equity' is practically non-existent in day to day life -- Not within the home, not within the society and communities they live in, not at the workplace. Most ethnic cultures continue to be strongly patriarchal which in itself is discriminatory to women.

For us, the primary challenge lies in generating awareness and understanding of `equality' within our women in our ethnic communities. For those already aware of the importance and need for `equality', the battle is multi-fold and on different terrains.

Minority Migrant and refugee women have to first strive for equality within the home, then within their respective ethnic communities, then within New Zealand women in general. For instance, in the service delivery area, ethnic migrant and refugee women are still struggling to reserve their right within the mainstream, to service their own and represent their own. Only on achievement of such equal representation, can migrant and refugee women join their other sisters in driving forward equality for all New Zealand women.

Here, I would like to acknowledge women like Jane Prichard, Beverley Turner, Bette Cuthbert, Heather Henare and Betty Sio who actively support the work we are doing within our own communities. I would also like to acknowledge Farida Sultana who initiated the ethnic women's movement 17 years ago through Shakti. While we need to appreciate such efforts of New Zealand women in general who are striving to bring about equity and equality within their own gender, inherent discrimination is still apparent to the ethnic. Unless we as women are collectively able to bring about equality and harmony within our own gender irrespective of race, ethnicity, colour, language, sexuality and disability, driving forward gender equality will remain deficient in strength and objective.

Oppression in the name of culture and tradition combined with violence against women and children is the single most deterrent to the advancement of migrant and refugee women in New Zealand. With such oppression and abuse come all forms of poverty, mental illness and disempowerment.

Forced and under-age marriage continues to be an issue within our young women and we have raised this matter twice with CEDAW. We are happy to note that the Concluding Observations 2012 categorically addresses this issue and has made clear recommendations to the government on legislation and related intervention and prevention. The government has thus far been non-responsive on this issue as regards legislation, but we are happy to note that MP Jackie Blue has submitted a Private Member's Bill which proposes judicial intervention and consent for young people aged 16-17 years having to get married, either by choice or through an arranged alliance. This is a good start but much more needs to be done in terms of ensuring the physical and emotional safety of young immigrant women. For many such young women growing up in New Zealand today, gender equality is not something they can claim as an entitlement.

I will end with a quote from Kofi Annan: `Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a pre-condition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance'.

## **Debbie Hager, Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children Domestic and Sexual Violence – Impacts for Women with Disabilities**

Prevalence of abuse of disabled people and the relationship between disability and domestic violence – please see attached briefing paper written for Auckland Council. (Appendix One)

Currently there is very little accessible domestic or sexual violence service provision for women with disabilities

Very little data is collected about people with disabilities in mainstream and national data collection – especially relating to violence and abuse.

### **What can we do to improve the circumstances of disabled women/people?**

We must stop the erosion of rights of all women. When all women become marginalised in a country, as is occurring now with increased wage disparity between men and women, a range of legislation that harms women more than men, back-sliding on gender equity, than those who are already at the margins – because of (for example) disability, age, ethnicity – get pushed further to the edge and become even more silenced.

Janet Fanslow outlined the erosion of services for women and the new legislation that increasingly puts women at risk. What sits underneath this process?

Neo-liberal politics – introduced in the 1980s and continuing today.<sup>5</sup> This is the belief that the market is more effective than state provision of services and legislation. This has a number of negative effects on women.

- It drives wages and conditions down, further disadvantaging those who are on the lowest wages – and increasing unemployment
- It silences organisations that are reliant on government funding. As funding is reduced organisations become afraid to speak out, and increasing insular, as they attempt to hold on to increasingly scarce resources.

More insidiously, this ideology promotes victim blaming – it blames victims for their own circumstances, rather than taking into account the environmental and political barriers and restraints that inhibit change. Women are blamed for many circumstances that are either beyond their control or are severely compromised by men. For example, women who live with abusive men are blamed for their 'choice' of partner and criminalised for failing to protect their children, unemployed people are blamed for their lack of employment, low waged people are blamed for their lack of skills. This is all done without considering the circumstances and context of people's lives. The resources that would enable people to change their circumstances are removed from them as services are closed, reduced and/or targeted. For example, women attempting to leave abusive relationships will find that domestic violence services are constrained by lack of funding, Housing NZ no longer prioritises women escaping violence, so there may be nowhere for women to move to, it's much harder to get legal aid so women will

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<sup>5</sup> For a detailed history of the introduction of this read Jane Kelsey's book *The New Zealand Experiment* – or watch the Alistair Barry Film, *Someone Else's Country*. To understand the ideological paradigm of this national Government read Nicky Hager's book *The Hollow Men*. *The Hollow Men* is also available as an Alistair Barry documentary.

have limited access to family and criminal court processes and women may find themselves cast as the bad parent for both for having lived with an abusive man and then removing the children from him.

A small example of hypocrisy: Women, and their teenage daughters, are, under the new welfare provisions, being forced to use long-term contraception. Yet, at the same time, WINZ have been criticised for giving men money to get vasectomies. Surely, if the government believes that it has a right to control women's fertility they should also be actively encouraging the control of men's fertility. After all – women can only have one baby at a time – men can have as many as the women they have sex with.

So all women suffer - but marginalised, minority, poor, less educated, elderly and disabled women suffer more.

The CEDAW recommendations provide us with a way forward.

But first we must pursue and reverse the policy and legislative changes that have harmed women. These are attached below. (Appendix Two)

We must talk about men's violence against women. Gender-neutral language not only obscures the reality that it is predominantly women who are harmed by violence; it also obscures the gender of perpetrators. When we say x men and x women were killed in family violence related homicide it fails to inform us that most of those men and women were killed by men.

We must collect good robust gender disaggregated data about:

- violence against women and children
- the effects of political changes on women

And include questions about self identified disability in all of this data collection.

While we have reasonably good human rights legislation in New Zealand, there are very few provisions for women to complain about gender related discrimination. The provisions relate to work places - not to the provision of services or discrimination in private settings. We need human rights legislation that enables us to complain, for example, that women's refuges are not accessible for disabled women, that Housing NZ does not prioritise women escaping violence in their provision of housing and at any time that government legislation discriminates against us.

The government's initial response to CEDAW, and the relative attention it intends to give to the recommendations can be gauged by the letter (attached below) from the Minister of Women's Affairs to her parliamentary colleagues, where none of the criticisms and recommendations for action are acknowledged.

What is this government doing?

- Reducing funding to all women's organisations
- Marginalising women and women's issues
- Destroying the infrastructure of women's organisations
- Un-employing specialist staff
- Intending to create mega social service agencies that align with government policy – not people's needs
- Punishing women, not helping.

We have two choices.

Silence - We can keep silent and try to hang on to the little bit that we have left – not cause any trouble in the hope that we'll be the organisation or service that survives – this option means we watch more and more women's agencies' and women's rights disappear without a ripple – without most of the country even knowing what's happening...

Or we can resist this attempt to silence and marginalise us and be brave and loud.

Let's tell the people of New Zealand about the gulf between what the government is saying its doing and what it actually does. Illuminate the damage and the harm.

Keep talking – we only have to survive two more years – let's fight to keep what we've got until we can start to rebuild again. Use this time to educate the other political parties about the need to redress the harm and make positive changes for women.

Then we can bring disabled and other marginalised groups of women in from the margins, resource women equitably and start to change the paradigm that enables violence against women and children to continue.

## Appendix One: Briefing paper for Auckland Council

Currently, within sexual and domestic violence services, there is very little service provision for disabled women or women with disabled children. There is also limited understanding of the diverse needs of disabled women in sexual and domestic violence services and of domestic and sexual violence in the disability sector.

Disabled women include women with physical disability, mental health problems, intellectual disability, brain injuries and chronic illnesses that result in disability.

“Someone’s experience of disability may be obvious or hidden, serious or mild, singular or multiple, stable or degenerative, constant or intermittent. Disability can be caused by accident, illness, trauma, a genetic condition, aging or by birth. It can affect a person’s mobility, senses, moods and the way their brain functions.”<sup>6</sup>

Disability is related to sexual and domestic violence in two ways.

1. Disabled people are more likely to be abused both as children and adults than non-disabled people. It is not possible to give reliable statistics as the numbers vary according to study design, the population studied, methodology etc. However, the consensus is that “Violence against women with disabilities has been identified as not only more extensive than amongst the general population but also more diverse in nature than for women in general.”<sup>7</sup>
2. Domestic violence can result in short and long term disability including acquired brain injury, mental health problems, blindness, hearing loss and muscular skeletal injuries. Deliberate neglect and abuse can cause chronic illness and loss of function (mental and physical) which results in long-term disability. Sexual violence is strongly associated with mental health problems and could also result in physical disability and brain injury as a result of physical attacks associated with the sexual violence.

In New Zealand domestic violence legislation, domestic violence is defined as occurring between people who live in a domestic relationship – not necessarily a sexual relationship. For disabled people the relationships that this can include are much wider, as disabled people are reliant on a range of people to support them. This is explained in the booklet *Domestic violence and disabled people*.<sup>8</sup>

“People who experience disability may rely on a variety of people to provide them with assistance. Some of these people are family and friends; others are paid caregivers and staff from agencies that people who experience disability use.

Family violence is abuse of one person by another in a domestic relationship and under New Zealand law, it is child abuse when children witness or hear violence between adults.

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<sup>6</sup> Domestic Violence and Disability Working Group. (2010) Domestic violence and disabled people. It’s Not OK Campaign. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.

<sup>7</sup> Howe K, (2000) Violence Against Women With Disabilities - An Overview of the Literature. Women with Disabilities Australia. Accessed from [www.wvda.org.au](http://www.wvda.org.au) on December 10, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Domestic Violence and Disability Working Group. (2010) Domestic violence and disabled people. It’s Not OK Campaign. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.

The domestic violence act defines a domestic relationship as

- a spouse or partner
- a family member
- someone that you ordinarily share a household with
- a close personal relationship

There does not need to be a sexual relationship.

In your family this could be your husband, wife, brothers and sisters, parents, aunties, uncles, grandparents, in laws, boyfriends and other people living in the same household, for example in a flat or institutional setting.

People who are not covered by the Domestic Violence Act, but could still abuse you are: your home help, taxi driver, medical personnel such as nurses, doctors and therapists, care givers, interpreters, teachers, social workers, counsellors and the range of staff in hospitals and other institutions.”

This describes the complexity of the relationships and the higher risk of sexual and/or domestic violence that a disabled person is exposed to.

Building the Evidence (2008) is a research project undertaken in Victoria, Australia, to understand how women with disabilities are recognised and responded to in policy and service provision for domestic violence. Their findings included that:

- “Family violence sector standards and codes and guidelines say little about how to support women with disabilities
- Most services do not routinely collect data on disability and family violence
- Most family violence workers consulted had minimal or no training in supporting women with disabilities
- Little is known about the help-seeking experiences of women with disabilities experiencing violence
- Family violence and disability services need:
  - sustained collaboration with each other that includes specialist advice, secondary consultation and education about women with disabilities experiencing violence
  - education from women with disabilities
  - to undertake risk assessment and to respond appropriately
- Family violence services must
  - improve physical access
  - Provide information in accessible formats...
  - Provide secure, affordable crisis, supported and permanent accommodation...
  - Provide more intensive case management and post-crisis support is needed”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Healey, L, Howe K, Humphreys C, Jennings C, Julian F. (2008) Building the Evidence. Victorian Women with Disabilities Network Advocacy Information Service, Melbourne

These are all issues have been identified as being of concern in New Zealand.

There are two groups in New Zealand that have the specific aim of bringing these two sectors together to improve the understanding of both sectors about the relationship between these disability and abuse and to ensure that service provision is accessible and appropriate for all women – not just those who are not disabled. These groups are DVD and DCAV.

DCAV – the Disability Coalition Against Violence - is a national organisation started by DPA<sup>10</sup> and the National Network of Stopping Violence Services. The group works primarily at government level lobbying for awareness and change to prevent violence against disabled people.

DVD – the Domestic Violence and Disability Working Group - are an Auckland group concerned with raising awareness of the relationship between disability and sexual and domestic violence and improving service provision for abused disabled women. They have run a number of hui and workshops in Auckland about disability and sexual and domestic violence.

DVD supports the initiative for Auckland Council to have a policy and programme of action to address sexual and domestic violence in the city. This is consistent with UNCRPD<sup>11</sup> Article 16 “Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse”<sup>12</sup>

**In order to ensure that the needs and voices of disabled women and children are heard in this discussion and the formation of policy and practice we suggest:**

- That disabled people be leaders in the ongoing development of these initiatives
- That relevant Auckland Council staff attend training with DVD about the relationship between disability and abuse
- That Council fund research into the relationship between the sexual/domestic violence sector
- and the disability sector and how to encourage collaboration for the wellbeing of clients
- That Council’s policy and activities promote community wide changes in the attitudes and behaviours that limit opportunities for disabled people to live lives without abuse
- That council policies ensure that all events are assessed for the risks of sexual and family violence and prevention of violence is included in all planning
- That all events are assessed for accessibility and planned to be fully accessible
- That the Council increase the levels of knowledge and information available to the Auckland community on the link between sexual/domestic violence and disability
- That the Council widen its older person’s policy and strategy to include the risk of violence for those with disabilities
- A recent report, *Finding Safety. Provision of specialised domestic violence and refuge services for women who currently find it difficult to access mainstream services*<sup>13</sup> makes

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<sup>10</sup>DPA is an umbrella organisation representing people with all types of impairments — physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric and neurological, acquired at any stage of life - the families of people with disability, disability advocacy organisations and disability service providers.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations (2006) United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. United Nations, New York. Accessed from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf> on February 10, 2012

<sup>12</sup> ibid

<sup>13</sup> Finding Safety. Provision of specialised domestic violence and refuge services for women who currently find it difficult to access mainstream services: disabled women, older women, sex workers and women with mental illness and/or drug and alcohol problems as a result of domestic violence. (2011) Deborah Hager 2010 Winston Churchill

a number of recommendations about service provision for disabled women. Council could play a crucial role in brokering these relationships and providing funding for cross sector workers.

**The recommendations include:**

- “Domestic violence services and women’s refuges be available to women escaping all forms of violence including that associated with sexual violence, sex work, trafficking, FGM<sup>14</sup> and underage and forced marriage.
- Women are housed and offered services regardless of age, and age appropriate services are offered by all services.
- All refuges have fully accessible accommodation available for women with physical disabilities or those with disabled children
- Specialised refuge services be established for women with mental health and drug and alcohol problems associated with sexual and domestic violence
- Good quality housing is made available for women to move to after refuge or when escaping violence (see [www.homeworkstrust.org.nz](http://www.homeworkstrust.org.nz))
- Women-only drug and alcohol and mental health inpatient services, staffed by women, are available to women in all regions
- Domestic violence training and training about the mental health effects of domestic violence be incorporated into the initial and ongoing professional development training of all health, legal, therapeutic and social service professionals including psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health and drug and alcohol service staff, judges, lawyers, court staff, police, social workers, therapists and counsellors.
- Long-term adequate funding is provided by government to the educational institutions and NGOs that provide this education.
- All services involved in responses to abused women, including clinical and NGO mental health and drug and alcohol services are be encouraged to develop polices about partnership development and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) in local areas
- Service user groups are convened and involved in the development of all services designed to address violence against women and to keep women safe”

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Fellow. Accessed January 23, 2012 from

[http://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/vwluResources/WCMFReport10Hager/\\$file/WCMFReport10Hager.pdf](http://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/vwluResources/WCMFReport10Hager/$file/WCMFReport10Hager.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Female genital mutilation

## Appendix Two: Issues Affecting Women in New Zealand

Concerns about legislation and policy that affect women's ability to live lives that are free from abuse - including legislation that has unintended consequences for women:

### 1. Legislation and policy changes that specifically impact on women's safety:

- Changes to the Family Court that impact on women's ability to leave abusive relationships because of the lack of processes that prioritise women and children's safety include:
  - the focus on mediation and couple work
  - contracting for counselling rather than respondent programmes for domestic violence
  - referring more people/couples to counselling rather than respondent programmes
  - the excessive costs of using the court
  - the inability to be represented by a lawyer and to get legal aid when applying for a parenting order, except when the order is without notice
- Changes to/cutting of funding for prevention and health promotion in all areas including family and sexual violence
- The changes to Housing NZ including the merger with the Department of Building and Housing, the loss of case managers and face to face contact, the restriction on the provision of social housing policy to government and other changes which seriously diminish the function of the organisation to provide social housing to women needing to leave violent relationships. Also, Women's Refuge NZ have been told that domestic violence is no longer a priority for the allocation of housing.
- Decreased funding to sexual and family violence services
- All of the changes to the provision of welfare that disproportionately discriminate against women and children and further impoverish and marginalise sole parents
- The regulation of women's fertility via the domestic purposes benefit
- The Bill to change provisions for child support payments to custodial parents including shared care measured as two nights a week and less sanctions for non payment
- The changes to Legal Aid which make it much more difficult for women to get legal aid and therefore have access to justice
- The Crimes Amendment Act which has the capacity to further abuse and punish women who are living in a violent relationship and, as a consequence of living with sexual and domestic violence, are unable to protect themselves and their children, by criminalising them for this failure.
- Changes to the Families Commission (no longer an advocate for families, less resources, directed by government policy) and the closing of the Family Violence Unit in the Ministry of Social Development
- The changes to the Taskforce on Family Violence, which downgrades the taskforce from chief executives to less senior representatives with lesser decision making / spending powers
- Cuts to Community Law services especially for the specialised services such as those for disability and for youth
- The Child and Family Protection Bill which means that when Protection Orders are granted there is now a requirement for the case to return to court within 2 weeks for a contact/care decision to be made... This can put abused women and their children at serious risk of on-going abuse as it provides the abuser access to his victims and power over their lives via access/contact requirements

- The changes to the Solicitor General's guidelines for prosecution, 2010, which increased the threshold for evidence for crimes to be prosecuted. This means that in cases where it is: 'He says ' / 'She says ' (domestic and sexual violence) the prosecutor is less likely to go forward with the case.
- 2. Legislation and policy that discriminates against women or harms women's ability to participate fully in the community**
- The cuts to the community education budget. This was often women's entry into adult education, employment and decreasing social isolation
  - The cutting of the subsidy for women on the DPB to engage in tertiary studies
  - The focus on "front line services" with the consequent loss of jobs and expertise
  - All of the cuts in services that traditionally employ women – for example, health, education and the social services
  - The closing of the pay equity unit
  - The changes to employment law that disadvantage employees
  - Changes to the Mental Health Commission and the development of the Health Promotion Agency
  - Increases in medical and prescription fees
  - Changes to eligibility to home care for older/disabled people, changes to eligibility to disabled driver parking cards
  - The focus on front line services with the subsequent loss of jobs and expertise
  - Local government changes that impact on the provision of funding and support for women's organisations and violence prevention initiatives
  - Cuts to funding for women's organisations
  - Cuts to educational support for disabled children in main-stream schools
  - Cuts to all public sector staffing and spending, including less research and policy advice – this means that government policy is based on Ministers wishes rather than evidence and best practice
  - The need to fully implement the Ministry of Justice Report Te Toiora Mata Tauherenga, Report of the Taskforce on Sexual Violence, 2009
  - Addressing the issues raised in the Human Rights Commission report on employment in rest homes "Caring Counts"
  - The issues raised in the latest CEDAW report
  - The need for full implementation of the Domestic Violence Act
  - Implementation of the ruling from Surrey versus Surrey about the provision of protection orders

## Appendix Three: Letter from the office of Hon Jo Goodhew



### Office of Hon Jo Goodhew

MP for Rangitata

Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector  
Minister for Senior Citizens

Minister of Women's Affairs  
Associate Minister of Health

Parliament Office  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

7 NOV 2012

#### Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

It was a great privilege to present New Zealand's seventh periodic report to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee in July 2012. Prepared every four years, this is a 'report card' on how well New Zealand women are doing according to international benchmarks. I believe this is an important report that all members of Parliament should be aware of. The full report and the advance version of the Committee's observations on New Zealand's report can be found at: <http://www.mwa.govt.nz/our-work/international>.

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the comprehensive report presented by the delegation, and acknowledged New Zealand for implementing a number of positive legislative and policy reforms for the advancement of women in the period covered by the report (2006 – 2010).

New Zealand was commended by the Committee for having the fundamentals in place for the continuing advancement of women. I note that the three specific priorities I have set for the Ministry of Women's Affairs: greater economic independence, more women in leadership and increasing safety from violence, align with many of the recommendations made by the Committee.

I am discussing the Committee's recommendations, which span various portfolios, with my Ministerial colleagues and officials.

Yours sincerely

  
Hon Jo Goodhew  
Minister of Women's Affairs

## **Deborah Moran, International Director, Ministry of Women's Affairs Government's Better Public Service Targets**

The Government has set 10 priority targets for the public sector to achieve over the next five years. Ministers and a public sector chief executive have been appointed to lead each result and will be accountable for demonstrating real progress against his or her result. Targets and action plans have been drafted for each area.

### **Reducing long term welfare dependence**

1. Reduce the number of people who have been on a working age benefit for more than 12 months.

<http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/better-public-services/reducing-long-term-welfare-dependence/reducing-long-term-welfare-dependence-action-plan.pdf>

### **Supporting vulnerable children**

2. Increase participation in early childhood education.
3. Increase infant immunisation rates and reduce the incidence of rheumatic fever.
4. Reduce the number of assaults on children.
  - By 2017, halt the rise in children experiencing physical abuse and reduce current numbers by 5 per cent.

<http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/better-public-services/supporting-vulnerable-children/supporting-vulnerable-children-result-action-plan.pdf>

### **Boosting skills and employment**

5. Increase the proportion of 18 years olds with NCEA level 2 or equivalent.
6. Increase the proportion of 25 to 34 year olds with advanced trade qualifications, diplomas and degrees.

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/BetterPublicServices/BoostingSkillsEmployment.aspx>

### **Reducing crime**

7. Reduce the rate of total crime, violent crime and youth crime.
  - By 2017 reduce:
    - Crime rate by 15%
    - Violent crime rate by 20%
    - Youth crime rate by 5%
8. Reduce re-offending
  - By 2017 reduce re-offending rate by 25%

<http://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector/better-public-services-reducing-crime>

<http://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector/better-public-services-reducing-crime/achieving-our-targets>

### **Improving interaction with government**

9. New Zealand businesses have a one-stop online shop for all government advice and support they need to run and grow their business
10. New Zealanders can complete their transactions with the Government easily in a digital environment.

Further information can be found on <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/bps-results-for-nzers>

## Workshop Discussions

### *Workshop discussion with Janet Fanslow*

**Rapporteur: Jaclyn Bonnici**

#### *Feedback from participants:*

What we've learned this morning about the statistics of the impact of violence, remain deeply shocking.

What do we mean by 'violence'? It's important to think of violence in all its expressions, including psychological, emotional, physical etc.

It's interesting to note that when we speak in this kind of setting we often achieve a clearer perspective of what we're dealing with. I'd like to find a way to share the clarity and perspective achieved today in our everyday lives.

It strikes me that we're talking about is healthy and respectful relationships and it's important to conceptualise what is meant by that.

As a (now retired) primary school teacher, I did of work on bullying. It's interesting to see the statistics on interpersonal violence as it aligns to the type of violence used by bullies, emotional and psychological. These forms of violence are often not seen, often not reported and often have long-term negative effects. Education about violence must start early, pre-school, from word dot. Violence is a part of our culture and it often starts before birth and education must teach the possibility of self as victim as well as self as perpetrator.

#### *Response from Janet:*

We need to do some strong investment in primary interventions and education is a strong platform to do this from. Education is about the four R's; reading, writing, arithmetic and relationships. The benefit of leading from education is that violence is a population problem and the population is in school. We need to play the government's game and address this from a fiscal perspective by outlining the cost of violence, e.g. every time a woman dies in NZ it costs \$4 million.

#### *Feedback from participants:*

Here in New Zealand we seem to do a lot of petitions and they just get tabled. In my home, India, if our petitions are ignored we protest until we are heard.

The priority is for rights-based organisations to join together. Organisations like ours, Womens Refuge, are now dependent on government and as we are funded year to year, our work is constantly threatened, squeezed. We are constantly managing a debate not only of women's rights to live free from violence but also the debate about how to secure funding. Linking back to Janet's presentation about the importance of autonomous women's groups, we need to use our collective energy to hold governments to account and to re-ignite our people power.

We say that the government needs to take action but we all need to take action as individuals, we all have to own it and demonstrate it in what we're doing. In our everyday lives we must say what is unacceptable, it's about the everyday rebellions and it's figuring out how to have these difficult conversations within your family, your neighbourhood, your workplace. This also links back to being able to articulate the meaning of violence and explain the impact it has in our communities.

We can be the catalyst for change. With knowledge gained from today we can build momentum.

Recommendation to visit the New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse <http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/>

When we started the White Ribbon Campaign, we did so with the support of the New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse.

In terms of boys and violence, all the male role models these days are violent and there are so few images of loving, happy families. Not just physical violence but the whole lot. These negative role models are on the football field, getting involved in punch ups etc. and this must have an effect.

What does non-violent masculinity look like and how do we encourage alternative male role models?

I am increasingly concerned by the sexualisation of women in the media. When I was younger we had role models like Grace Jones and Laurie Anderson. These days marketing to young women is particularly worrying.

I have seen clothes for four-year old girls with statements like "I'm available!" printed on them. I have made complaints to The Warehouse for selling such things. One advertisement for platform shoes at Number One Shoe Warehouse had a young woman sitting atop bunches of bananas. I put a photo of the advert up on Facebook and on Twitter and so few people responded or engaged – it's so entrenched.

We had some success with having *Wet on the Net* – Stop Demand

There appears to be tension between not being seen to be prudish and being sexually liberated

*Response from Janet:*

To take action it is important to know:

- What is happening
- What we want to happen
- Who has the power of chance
- Who we are going to report back to, make accountable

If we think that this level of action is important, how will we organize ourselves?

*Feedback from participants:*

We could target universities especially via Facebook groups.

Historically, some of our greatest achievements have been achieved on university ground.

The media would like to see university-based advocacy.

I would like to see young people linking back with older people as a lot of the thinking has been done already and there is a lot to share with each other.

A youth advisory group has been established within the Women's Refuge and we've linked these youth with older staff. It works particularly well in this forum to have young men talking about feminism.

Feminism is about social change for everybody. The current set up isn't working well for women or for men.

*Response from Janet:*

Many of the questions we are asking about the number of people affected by violence and whether they are men, women, able, disabled etc, if we are interested in achieving that level of data, we can seek the funding for this kind of research.

*Feedback from participants:*

Janet, I hope that when the NZFCH reports back to the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, you going to present the statistics you've shared with us today. The agreement at the Taskforce table was for one agency to take responsibility to collect the statistics from the different representatives at the Taskforce (e.g. NZ Police, CYF) in order for the government agencies to be informed and we need to take opportunities like this to share research findings. There are often discrepancies in what is being stated publicly about violence, e.g. when NZ Police were reporting no increase in violence, Women's Refuge were reporting both increase in reporting and increase in violence. It was the Police's lines that were published and disseminated.

*Response from Janet:*

Everything that gets reported, whether its to a refuge or to the Police, the victims have to take that step to report, to tell. What's good about going into communities and asking a person about their experience of violence is that we reach people who haven't reported formally, who haven't told anyone previously. We now know that one third of women in New Zealand have experienced violence. Of this statistic, 75% of people have told someone, mostly friends and family so there is a level of trust there. However, only a minority of these people have reported their experience of violence through an official channel, e.g. only 20% have reported to Police.

*Feedback from participants:*

I am an ear, nose and throat surgeon and at a recent report back at a conference it was noted that women who presented in hospital with nose fractures tended to report tripping on the stairs or a coffee table whilst men who presented with nose fractures reported being punched on the rugby field or at the pub. Not one nose fracture was reported as being the result of domestic violence. This is so revealing of the lies and untruths that we see.

The Women's Refuge used to have 1% referral rates from health providers and now we have 2% - an underwhelming increase.

*Response from Janet:*

New Zealand has world-leading programmes directed towards making our health systems and providers more responsive. From 2002, millions of dollars spent have been invested. We need to ask why our doctors aren't asking patients and finding out about the true cause of these injuries. Our health systems need to step up. Our education systems, our media and individuals in their own right also need to step up. A platform of robust and supportive government policies would help to achieve this.

In communities I live and work in, religious leaders often talk directly to men to try and intervene in violent behaviour. I would like us to influence our religious leaders to make more substantive change and to include women.

The New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs has been trying to roll out education programmes at for instance, two-day conferences. I have attended a few sessions and was amazed by the barrage of questions from men about women's violence towards men and about men feeling increasingly demoralized by having to stay at home and care for children.

Police, Ministers, everyone always ask, "what are you doing to help the men". It is important to look for good examples of where things have been done well, historical accounts of what has worked in terms of affecting change. Is there scope for developing an effective public campaign speaking out against men's violence towards women? The media appears to have so much resource, the Commerce Commission has so much money, increasingly there is interest from unions to be involved too – can we build campaign together?

## **Report back: Recommendations**

1. We want robust research
  - Update the 1995 Economic cost of Domestic Violence by Susan Snively's, published in 1995 detailing the cost of productivity loss and loss of life
  - Continue to collect population-based data around violence
2. We want key sectors to step up and we want collaboration between sectors, including:
  - Education
  - Business
  - Housing
  - Health
3. We want a re-invigoration of public movements – let's:
  - Network
  - Get noisy about what respectful and healthy relationships look like
  - Find a mechanism to talk about multiple streams of mobilizing political advocacy so that we're working from everyday, local, national and international platforms

## **Workshop discussion with George Parker**

**Rapporteur: Maggie Behrend**

A number of the themes George raised in her presentation were discussed further in the health and transgender issues workshop she facilitated. The group was very mixed with respect to age, ethnicity and gender identity and represented the wide diversity within /the broad spectrum of LGBTIQ community in the Auckland region. Participants were particularly interested in sexual identity and human rights, the intersections of sexual identity and/or ethnicity and health, informed consent, and appropriate health services for different communities.

George spoke of the potential for CEDAW to support transgender and LGBTIQ issues. Historically, CEDAW has not been applied to sexuality and gender identity, however recently there has been a shift to broaden human rights instruments to encompass these and the inclusion of a recommendation (34e) on transgendered persons in the CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations to the New Zealand Government is a significant breakthrough. Furthermore, as CEDAW has a particular focus on violence, it can be used to address the high level of violence against the LGBTIQ community.

George further expanded the point she made during her presentation that issues facing the transgender community are not separate from the fight to end discrimination against women. Some of the primary human rights principles concerning the transgender community are the same principles that affect women: bodily autonomy, consent, etc. Furthermore, discrimination against individuals identifying as LGBTIQ is often based on gender stereotypes – how men and women perform masculinity and femininity. Gender stereotypes also perpetuate discrimination against women. Eliminating stereotypes would benefit both women and the LGBTIQ community, and is specifically advocated by the CEDAW Committee in recommendation 21a.<sup>15</sup>

The group discussed the usefulness of holding a forum to flesh out the Committee's recommendation (34e) to the New Zealand government "[to] improve access and quality of health services for lesbian women and transgendered persons". A forum would enable NGOs to come together and discuss how CEDAW can be used to progress the issue for the transgender community. Group members recognised the importance of good cultural representation at such a forum given the diversity within the community. The NGO 'The Project' may be able to hold the forum.

The group also identified the need for more research and data around gender diversity and health. One member discussed the absence of research on the effects of use of HRT (hormone replacement therapy) among transgender peoples on their life expectancy. Better data collection could also expose discrimination within the transgender community, for example access to health services between Pakeha trans-men and trans-women versus access by Pacifica trans-men and trans-women.

Conversation then steered towards the subject of informed consent and the importance of involving women in health decisions. George discussed serious concerns around HIV testing of

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<sup>15</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 52<sup>nd</sup> session, *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of the Discrimination against Women (C/NZL/CO/7)*. 27 July 2012. View online: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-NZL-CO-7.pdf>

pregnant women without their knowledge or consent, which formed part of a shift in thinking about pregnancy and the expectant woman's physical and mental health to focusing on the foetus and the construction of women's bodies as vessels for babies or as potential threats to fetuses. She advocated instead for the focus to be on women's health that will in turn have a positive effect on foetus and child health. George recommended women be more involved in decisions about their health care.

There were concerns within the group about the HPV vaccination programme and the government's failure to meaningfully address access issues for Māori and Pacifica women. The HPV virus is a matter of sexual health, not women's health: the HPV virus affects both men and women, yet only women and girls are the target for intervention and the programme does not educate about sexual health. Higher mortality rates among Māori and Pacifica women from cervical cancer is indicative of lower access to health-care services by Māori and Pacifica populations, however, rather than focusing on addressing access issues and asking why messages about screening are not reaching certain groups, the government's solution is to target teens with vaccination. The group felt more support and culturally appropriate services would be a better way to address ethnic differences in health outcomes across the board.

## **Report back: Recommendations**

1. Hold a forum on CEDAW, human rights and LGBTIQ
  - The Project may be able to host the forum and it was suggested that the Pride Festival<sup>16</sup> could be the platform for the forum.
2. More research and data collection around gender diversity.
  - The group acknowledged that discrimination does not affect individuals equally and that better data collection would expose discrimination within LGBTIQ communities, and would give a clearer picture of who was and was not accessing health services.
3. More culturally appropriate health services and support.
  - Given the concerns the group raised about HIV testing without informed consent and the HPV vaccination intervention, the group recommended more culturally appropriate services and support to enable people to better access health care and to be more involved with decisions about their own care.

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<sup>16</sup> An annual event celebrating the LGBTIQ community to be held in 2013 from February 9 – 22

## ***Workshop discussion with Shila Nair***

**Rapporteur: Shasha Ali**

### *Issues raised of interest*

- Isolation of ethnic minorities (e.g. Vietnamese women in rural)
- Settlement-related
- Violence against women (Domestic violence, Forced/ under aged marriage and FGM)
- Mobilisation of women's movements – it's time to start getting political
- Silencing minority women by policy and culture
- Rural women's perspectives
- Changes needed to Marriage Act 1955- how to move this?
- Violence against women – emphasis: Men's VAW
- Right of ethnic women to service our own people

### *Discussion*

#### Mobilisation of immigrant women's issues

- Talking about unpopular things: Shakti has a herstory of this
- Need a strategy to engage immigrant and refugee women
- Engaging individuals
- Engaging community organisations
  - Note-there has been an influence of conservatism involved in funding of entities which does not challenge patriarchal cultures, religions oppression to women etc. These funding are backed by Govt/ MSD - questions on funding

#### Culture practices as excuse for violence

E.g. FGM and forced marriage

- Culture not an excuse for violence
- Analysis of policies and a need to be challenged (eg. How Maori challenge Whanau Ora)
- Challenging men's VAW in the whanau/family
- Need to note impacts of colonisation and religious cultures/imperialism

#### We need to keep talking about things:

- We need Shakti
- Younger women needs to be visible and local about VAW-normalised violence
- Youth inter-generated dialogue and all level environments
- Case study: Mangere, resettlement section with refugee people
- Negative stereotypes-lead to fear of the unknown
- Barriers of resettlement
- Fear to of the unknown
- Carry over trauma

### *Key issues*

1. Having a strategy to look at the challenging patriarchy in migrant and refugee communities
2. Having a space for voices to be positive about organisations that actually speak and against VAW e.g. Shakti
3. Monitoring, Govt policies and funding, affecting work with ethnic communities

4. Resettlement alone creates siloed cultures in different communities – Isolation may lead to “ghettoisation” = pose different issues from youth in migrant and refugee communities

*Question posed to MP Jan Logie (Green Party MP)*

How do we make submission to Government about organisations motivated by Government funding?

Issues related:

- Competing agendas amongst organisations and individuals
- Discussion on existing update on FGM situation in ethnic communities (prevention)
- Human rights based framework needs to be used, and work needs to be facilitated by the “right” people (not conservatives perpetuating patriarchal values amongst women and youth in name of culture)

### **Report back: Recommendations**

1. Mobilisation of immigrant women’s movement needed – need for a strategy to engage in women – revitalise participation
2. Culture is not an excuse for Violence Against Women, Forced Marriage/VM/FAM, Domestic Violence.
3. Addressing gender analysis lack/need in Govt policies. Strategies and funding of organisations that affect migrant and refugee, minority women.

*What do we start?*

- CEDAW workshops through networking.
- One language: having a common understanding that we are addressing men’s violence against women.

## ***Workshop discussion with Debbie Hager***

**Rapporteur: Sneha Venkatesh**

1. Access refuge for women with disabilities
  - For example, one particular women's refuge centre caters for wheelchair assistance for disabled women.
  - Housing New Zealand does not have many facilities for women with disabilities. Provide more accommodations rather than a place of refuge. A range of facilities need to be considered for disabled women and children as all disabled peoples' needs are not the same.
2. Privatisation of Government supported Housing
  - Social service housing into private ownership has its own negative implications. Modifications in these houses are not done for particular needs of the disabled women and children. Only one modification is done throughout hence making disabled women immobile. They are unable to move houses if they wanted and so they are discriminated.
  - On an average, people in New Zealand move houses every three years from their old community but disabled women are unable to move to a different house, let alone moving to a different community.
3. Elder and disabled being abused
  - Elderly people or disabled people do not receive proper care from the carers sometimes. In some cases, the carers themselves abuse the elderly or disabled people.
4. Large or Medium size In- care Organisation Management
  - Disabled people need an independent person to look after their needs. Rather than having only the disabled people at the various meetings, the only other person present at these meetings are the providers of the In- care organisation to cater for the various needs of disabled people. This is not good, so there is a need for a 'third party' who should be present at these meetings.
  - People who are in large or medium size In- Care Organisations need an independent person to assess the needs of disabled people, at the moment no extra funding is provided to cater to this.
5. Health Disability Commission
  - There is a housing disability commissioner that visits the disabled person to see if their Human Rights are complied with. But people who live in their own homes and are cared for do not have anyone to monitor their human rights. And many such

cases where the disabled person's human rights are being violated go unknown to the system. Disabled people are very reliant on other people hence they cannot report a violation of their human rights. Many disabled people are unable to contact the Human Rights Commission, health rights or sexual rights services themselves.

#### 6. Debbie raises two critical issues

- Care giving is one of the most lowest paid jobs in the entire country. So unless you change the status and the pay of these caregivers, the situation won't change. Often caregivers are working double shifts to get enough money to pay the bills and keep the family together. Hence they undergo a lot of stress and not have enough status. These jobs are mostly given to those who are marginalised in society because it is a low paying job. Caring for elderly and disabled people should be seen as a valuable position in society. And so, the caregiver's value needs to be raised in society.
- There needs to be a wider definition on what constitutes the Domestic Violence Act. Intimate care duties are not seen as people who could pose a threat in the current Bill but people like family members, partners or person you are going out with are the ones who could pose as being the abuser. Domestic Violence legislative bill needs to expand to a range of people who could pose as being the abuser, including a caregiver or family member who is caring for the disabled person.

#### 7. Equal distribution of resources need to be addressed to the government.

- Disabled strategy- A person from outside the family needs to be the caregiver. Therefore, the caregiver works an eight hour shift and leaves the house to refresh and start his/ her duty next day for the disabled person. Now the government is planning to change and have the caregiver live with the disabled person and the family of the disabled. That could get stressful for everyone hence leading to serious problems like abusing the disabled person. So, the definition of full time caregiver needs to be changed.

#### 8. Focus on Children with Disabilities

- The government has closed residential schools for disabled children. The focus is mostly on disabled adults but what about the children. And having disabled children could get stressful for the parents. Where there needs to be more support for children with disabilities the government decides to reduce the support.
- One of the major things this government has done is severely cut the resources available to schools where they have special needs. Yes, the closing of the schools can be somewhat contested because some people with disabilities think there should not be schools for children with special needs.
- There are mostly respite homes for people with disabilities. Mostly, there is no respite care facility provided at the person's home. Hence they need to go to a respite home. Now most rest homes have elderly people and if a young person with physical disabilities goes to these places, they would feel de-motivated to be in such

respite homes. There is no proper place for young people to get help for shorter duration of time.

- The government is picking people who are powerless. Hence people are becoming less able to voice their issues.

#### 9. Culture of Domestic Violence in New Zealand society

- It is caused by male superiority or in other words a patriarchal society. The causes and consequences to domestic violence are- poverty, unemployment, the drinking culture in society.
- Gender and racism intersect because women are not equal to other men. And some women are not equal to other women. Hence these are the two main issues in society.

### **Report back: Recommendations**

1. To be aware of, and prioritise women and girls with disabilities. And to be aware of the way the disabled and elderly people are disadvantaged or marginalised in society.
2. Expand the understanding of the Domestic Violence Act.
3. Improve the status of caregivers and the wages which caregivers are paid.