

# A HAPPY AND SAFE HOUSE

*for you and your children*



*You can live a life without domestic violence.  
Family, friends and others can help.*

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is violence that **happens in the home**. It is also called family violence or violence against women and girls.

It is **never OK** for a man to use violence against a woman.

- ✗ Not because she has an affair.
- ✗ Not because she says no to sex with her husband.
- ✗ Not because he is drunk.
- ✗ Not because he paid bride price.

All women and children have the **right to be safe** from domestic violence.

This booklet tells you how domestic violence harms you and your children. It also tells you where you can get help.



## DIFFERENT KINDS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

There are different kinds of domestic violence. All the different kinds of violence are serious.

**All the different kinds of domestic violence are a crime.**

If you are living with domestic violence, you are not alone. Violence in the family is a big problem in the Solomon Islands.

*Domestic violence is a serious crime.*

## Physical violence

*Sera lives with her husband John in his village. John gets very angry if all the house work is not done every day. When he is angry, he punches Sera and beats her with a stick. He does not care if she is bleeding.*

***This is physical violence.***

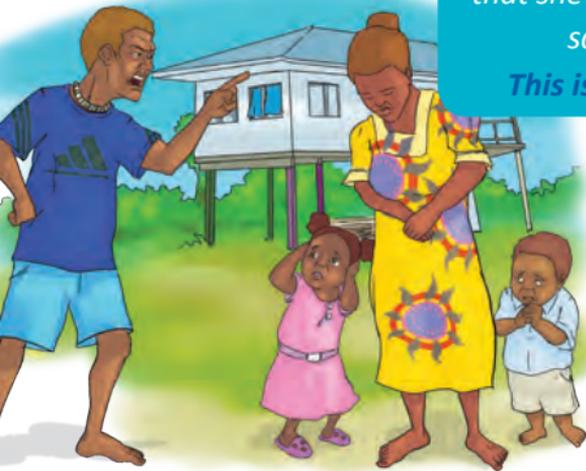
Physical violence is hitting, pushing, punching, slapping, choking, burning or using weapons such as knives or sticks. Hitting children is also physical violence and is against the law.

Always remember that **you are not to blame** for your husband's violence. His violence is **never your fault**. He uses violence because he wants to. Not because of anything you have done.

***Domestic Violence is never OK.  
It is a serious crime.***



## Emotional violence



*John likes to swear at Sera in front of his friends and neighbours. He calls her bad names and tells her that she is no good. He has even said he will kill her.*

***This is emotional violence.***

When a woman is insulted, humiliated and made to feel bad about herself, it is emotional violence. It is also emotional violence when a man refuses to let his wife visit family and friends.

## Economic violence

*John always takes Sera's money. He uses the money to buy beer and betel nut. Sera tells him she needs the money for food, school fees and bus fare, but he does not care.*

***This is economic violence.***

When a man controls a woman's money or when he uses family money only for himself, this is economic violence.

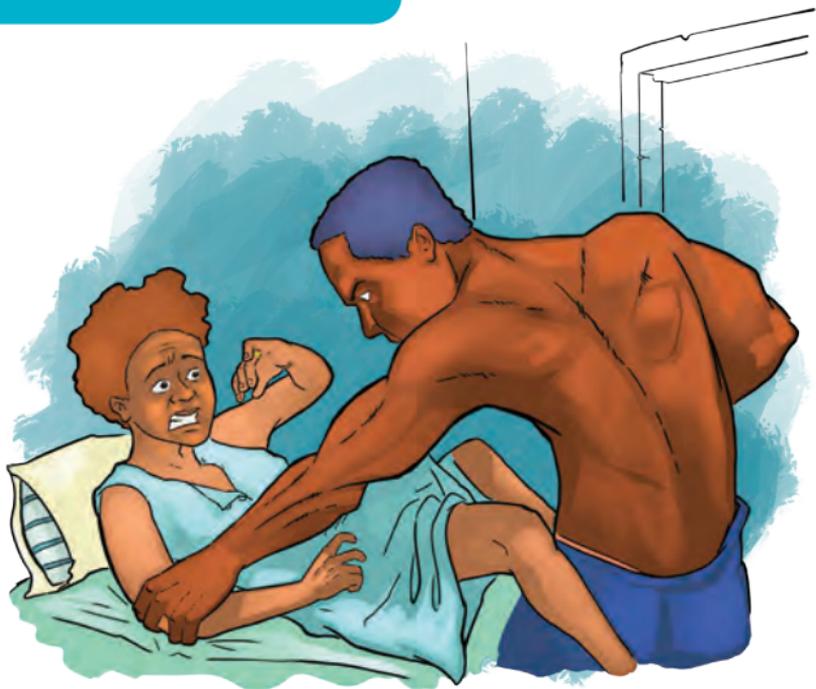


## Sexual violence

*Sera's husband makes her do sexual things she does not want to do. If she tries to say no, he beats her and rapes her.*

***This is sexual violence.***

Sexual violence is forced sex (rape) and making someone do sexual things they do not want to do, including things that humiliate them.



Touching someone sexually, or forcing a child or other family members to do sexual things is also sexual violence.

When a husband forces his wife to have sex, this is against the law.

# GET HELP TO STOP THE VIOLENCE

If you are living with domestic violence, there are people in your family and your community who **want to help you**. There are also services available to support you.

- Talk to someone you trust like a friend or a family member. Talking can help you feel better. They can also support you to get help.
- Agree on a way to let your neighbour know when you need help. You could bang on cooking pots or turn the house lights on and off.



- Make a Safety Plan for when you need to leave the house in a hurry. Hide a packed bag with things you will need or leave the bag with someone you trust.
- **Tell your extended family and ask them to help you. Explain how the violence is hurting you and your children.**

# PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU

Go with a friend to get help. You can get help from these people.

- The **Authorised Justice** (AJ) is a local court member living in the community. The Authorised Justice (AJ) can give you a Protection Order to stop the violence.
- The **police** can give you a Police Safety Notice to protect you.
- The clinic, **doctor** or nurse can provide medical care.
- The Public Solicitors Office is a free lawyer that can give you legal help about your rights.

- SAFENET, the Family Support Centre, Seif Ples Crisis Centre, Seif Familis and Christian Care Safe House can also help.
- Local community and church groups can listen to your story and provide support.



*See the telephone numbers for these services at the back of this book.*

# THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

*John is not violent all the time. Sometimes, he treats Sera well. He is loving and kind. He says sorry for his violent behaviour. He begs Sera to forgive him. But he always becomes violent again.*

***This is called the cycle of domestic violence.***



If no one stops the cycle, the violence gets worse and worse over time.

## VIOLENCE HARMS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Victims of domestic violence get cuts and broken bones. They get sick from worry and stress. Some women even try to kill themselves.

Children who see domestic violence are very scared and stressed. They perform badly at school. They can start to use violence against other children.

Boys in violent homes can grow up to use violence against their wife, because they learn that domestic violence is acceptable.

Girls may marry violent men because they believe it is okay for their husband to beat them.

*Getting help to stop domestic violence can protect your children now, and in the future.*



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE LAW

The Solomon Islands Family Protection Act (2014) makes any kind of domestic violence a crime.

If the court finds someone guilty of domestic violence, they can go to prison or be ordered to pay a fine.

The law gives responsibility to police, Authorised Justices and the courts to protect families from violence.

The Authorised Justice is a local court member living in the community. The Authorised Justice can give a woman a Protection Order to make a violent man stop the violence.

## WHAT IS A PROTECTION ORDER?

A Protection Order is a legal paper from the Authorised Justice or the Court. It tells the person who is violent to stop the violence. If they do not obey the Protection Order, they can go to prison.



*The Protection Order is to keep the family safe.*

## WRONG BELIEFS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

If you take action to protect your family, you are doing the right thing.

There are many false ideas about domestic violence. It is important that you know the truth.

***If I report the violence to the police, they will not help me.*** This is not true.

The law says the police must help women who report domestic violence.

***If I get a Protection Order, my church and relatives will turn against me.*** This is not true.

Many people in the community believe domestic violence is unacceptable. The church does not want women and children to suffer.

***If I leave my husband, I will lose my house and other belongings.*** This is not true.

The law says that the house belongs to you and your husband. You have the right to remain in the family home.

Visit the local court for help.



## A HAPPY, SAFE HOME

It might be a happy, safe home where you are and your children are safe.

A loving home where children are protected and supported to succeed in life.

A place where you and your husband are equal partners and make decisions together.

Asking for help and support can help you achieve your dreams for yourself and your family.

*What kind of life do you want for yourself and your children?*



## WHERE TO GET HELP

Authorised Justice living in your community  
SAFENET Emergency Helpline (free call) – 132  
Family Support Centre – 20 619  
Christian Care Safe House – 22 801  
Seif Ples Crisis Centre – 24 677  
Public Solicitor Office – 28 406  
Department of Social Welfare – 20 686  
Police Protection Unit – 23 666  
Ambulance or Hospital Emergency – 23 600  
Your church  
Local Women's Organisation



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