

Participatory Action Research: Strengthening Project Implementation

Autonomous Region Of Bougainville Papua New Guinea Ending
Violence Against Women

November 25, 2016

Project name: From Gender Based Violence to Gender Justice and Healing

Project partner: Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation and the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA)

Total funding: \$1,693,366*

Funding timeframe: 2015–2017

Educators, defenders, advocates and activists these are all roles that women human rights defenders (WHRDs) play in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. In the project From Gender Based Violence to Gender Justice and Healing (Justice and Healing), participatory action learning research is being used to provide opportunities for reflection during project implementation that, in turn, give direction for the future of the project.

WHRDs are part of the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation's Justice and Healing project that aims to reduce FSV by addressing the root causes of gender inequality. So far, they have conducted 299 awareness raising activities on FSV, women's rights and gender equality.

Nearly half (44 percent) have reported advocating for funds from government for activities to respond to FSV and one quarter also reported asking the police and Council of Elders (local community government) to improve services to respond to FSV. WHRDs also interact directly with survivors of FSV, with 13 percent of them reporting that they have counselled women who had experienced FSV in the past year.

At the end of the first year of the Justice and Healing project, Pacific Women supported the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation to conduct an assessment of 78 of its WHRDs to better understand their capacity to undertake work to address FSV at the community level.



Women human rights defenders during an assessment and planning workshop in April 2016. Photo by Elena Leddra/IWDA.

The assessment looked at individual capacities such as knowledge of human rights, gender equality and FSV as well as confidence and skills to act; external factors that support or restrict work of WHRDs, including gender relations, networks, support of male relatives and resistance from communities; and the actions that each WHRD had taken.

Applying principles of action learning, the WHRDs and researchers reviewed activities and adapted them to respond to the lessons learned on what was and was not effective.

The methodology enables an environment of equal relationships between researchers and participants, as well as applying culturally and context appropriate techniques to data collection and analysis.

This assessment provided not only a baseline for the project, but also recommendations that informed planning and implementation for the second year of the project. In addition, it allowed active engagement of WHRDs, project team and partners in the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

**This Story of Change was originally published in the [Pacific Women Annual Progress Report 2015-2016](#). All values are consisted with that reporting period. For the most up-to-date value of activities, visit our [interactive map](#).*