

CHILD PROTECTION & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Paediatric Society of PNG
Mid-Year Symposium
6th-10th of June 2022
Dr. A.Rero

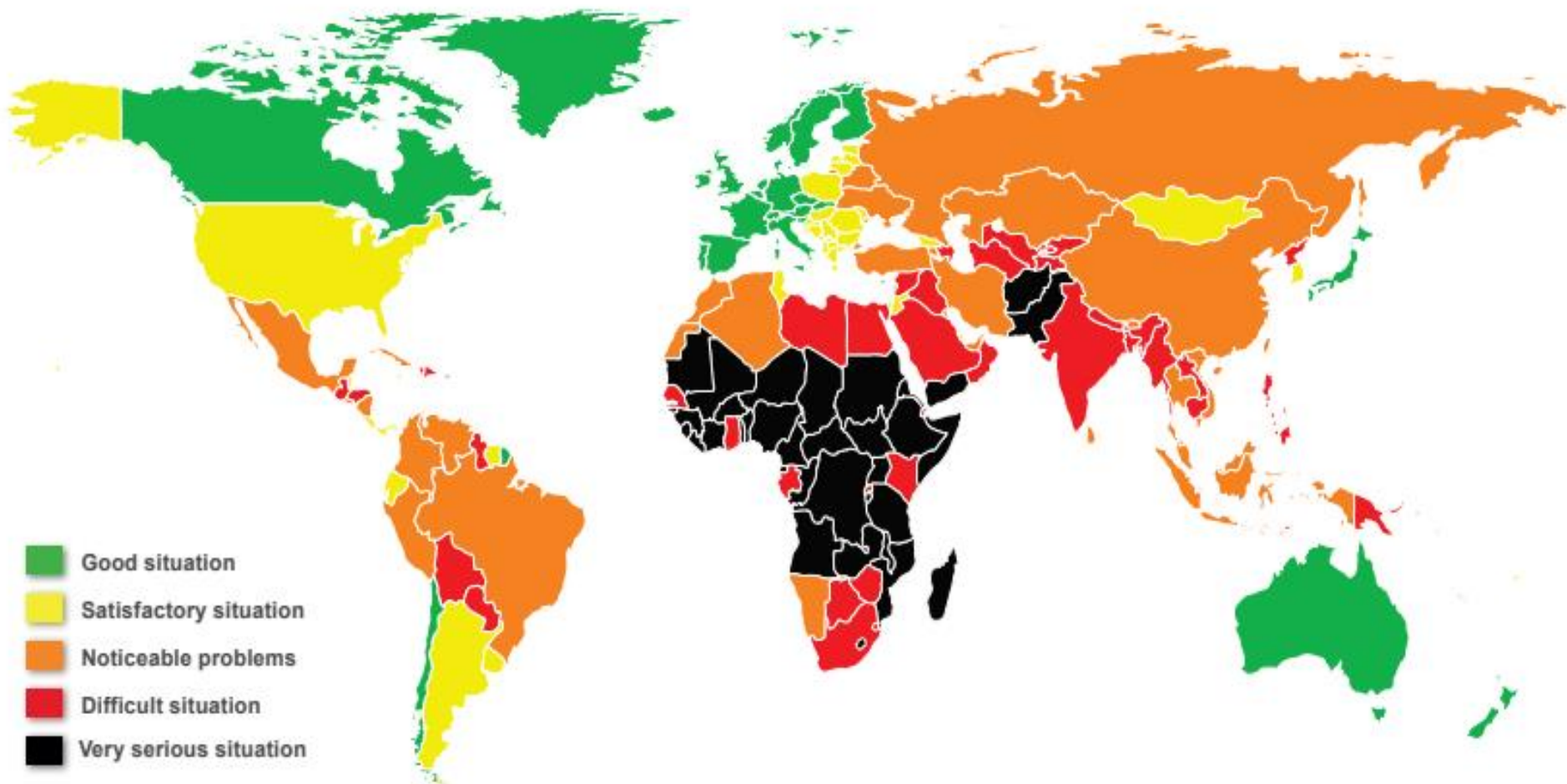
Introduction

- Every child has the right to Life, health, education & protection
- Violence against the most vulnerable members of our society has a devastating impact & leads to a wide range of health & social problems.
- Includes all forms of violence; physical, sexual, emotional as well as neglect, whether perpetrated by parents or other caregivers, peers, romantic partners or strangers.
- Knows no boundaries of culture, class or education.
- Evidence from around the world shows that violence against children can be prevented.
- PNG –it is a daily reality for most children, making them feel unsafe in their very own homes and communities.
- Every child has the right to be safe from harm.

Global Statistics

- An estimate **1 billion** children have experienced physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect each year.
- **3 in 4 children** between the ages of 2-4 experience some form of violent discipline on a regular basis.
- Worldwide, **1/3 of students** ages 11-15 have been bullied by their peers during the past month.
- **120 million** girls and young women under age 20 have experienced some type of forced sexual contact.
- **215 million** children are involved in child labour.
- **1/3** adolescent girls aged 15-19 have been victims of emotional physical or sexual violence perpetrated by their husbands or partners
- **1/2 of children** under age 5 live with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WORLDWIDE 2018



PNG Statistics

- **PHR Program**

- Data collection on child abuse/CP started in 2013 with only 6 cases reported

- **Demographic Health Survey (2016-2018)**

- **3.6%** girls got married before age 15

- ***Females aged 15-19 years***

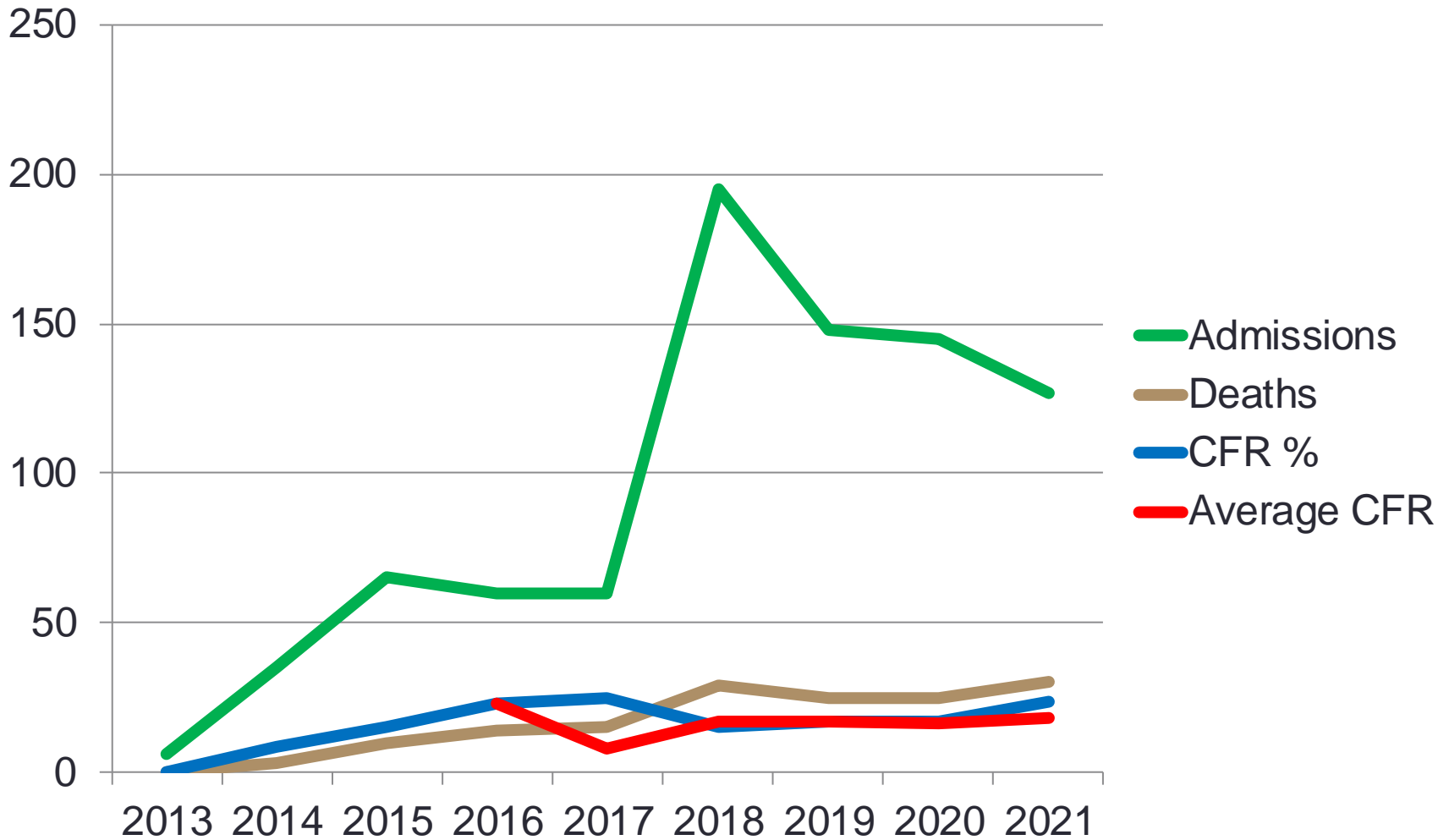
- **12%** had teenaged pregnancies

- **39.4%** experience physical violence

- **14.8%** experience sexual violence

- **11.4%** experience both physical & sexual violence

PHR- Annual Morbidity & Mortality Child Protection



Studies in PNG

> P N G Med J. 1990 Sep;33(3):203-6.

Sexual abuse of children presenting to the Children's outpatient Department of Port Moresby General Hospital

A McClelland¹, H Polume

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 2080670

- **23 cases of child sexual abuse**
- **-87% female**
- **-61% perpetrator known**

Studies in PNG

- **Child sexual abuse seen in EHP in 2013 Dr C. Mond**
 - 38 cases seen: 3 males & 35 females
 - median age 5 years
 - 95% perpetrators known/ relatives

Observational Study

> J Trop Pediatr. 2016 Aug;62(4):282-7. doi: 10.1093/tropej/fmw001.

Epub 2016 Feb 15.

The Burden of Child Maltreatment Leading to Hospitalization in a Provincial Setting in Papua New Guinea

Allanie Rero ¹, Jimmy Aipit ¹, Tina Yarong-Kote ¹, Villa Watch ¹, John W Bolnga ², Robert Vei ², Marilyn Morris ², Elvin Lufele ³, Moses Laman ⁴

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 26884441 DOI: [10.1093/tropej/fmw001](https://doi.org/10.1093/tropej/fmw001)

Abstract

Introduction: Child maltreatment is prevalent globally. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), child maltreatment remains an under-reported problem.

- prevalence of sexual abuse was 5.7%
- Neglect was 3.4%
- physical abuse 1.0%
- mortality highest in the neglected group with SAM accounting for 89% of deaths

What is Child Protection?

- Refers to any action that aims to prevent, protect and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children.

Abuse

Deliberate act of ill treatment can harm/ cause harm to a child's safety, well-being, dignity and development. All forms of physical, sexual, psychological or emotional ill treatment.

Neglect

Deliberately failing to provide/ secure child's rights to physical safety and development.

Exploitation

Use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment

Violence

All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Types of Violence Against Children

- ✓ **Maltreatment** (including violent punishment)
 - involves physical, sexual, psychological, emotional violence and neglect of infants, children and adolescents.
- ✓ **Bullying** (including cyber-bullying)
 - is unwanted aggressive behaviour by another child or a group of children.
 - involves repeated physical, psychological or social harm
- ✓ **Youth Violence**
 - among children and young adults
 - occurs most often in communities
 - includes bullying & physical assault & may involve gang violence

Types of Violence cont..

- ✓ **Intimate partner violence** (or domestic violence)
 - involves physical, sexual and emotional violence by an intimate partner or ex-partner
- ✓ **Sexual violence**
 - includes non-consensual or attempted sexual contact and acts of a sexual nature not involving contact
- ✓ **Emotional or Psychological violence**
 - restricting a child's movement, discrimination, threats and intimidation, rejection & other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.
- ✓ **Exploitation**
 - includes child labour, child trafficking, sexual exploitation, child prostitution, early or forced marriage, sex tourism and in many countries recruitment into armed forces

Impact of Violence

- Result in death
- Lead to severe injuries
- Impair brain and nervous system development
- Result in negative coping and health risk behaviors
- Lead to unintended pregnancies
- Contribute to a wide range of non-communicable diseases
- Has a huge economic impact on families, communities & entire country.

Risk Factors

- **Individual level**

- lower levels of education
- low income
- having disabilities or mental health problems
- harmful use of alcohol & drugs
- Hx of exposure to violence

- **Close-relationship level**

- poor parenting practices
- family dysfunction & separation
- early or forced marriage
- lack of emotional bonding between children and parents or caregivers

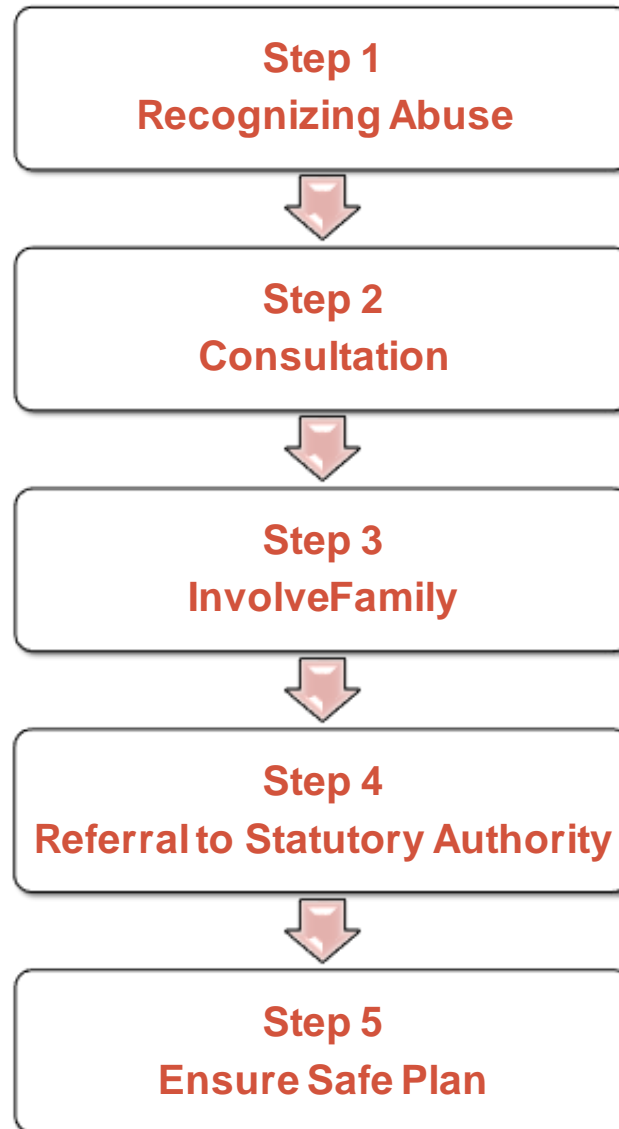
- **Community level**

- poverty
- high population density
- easy access to alcohol & firearms
- high concentrations of gangs and illicit drug dealing

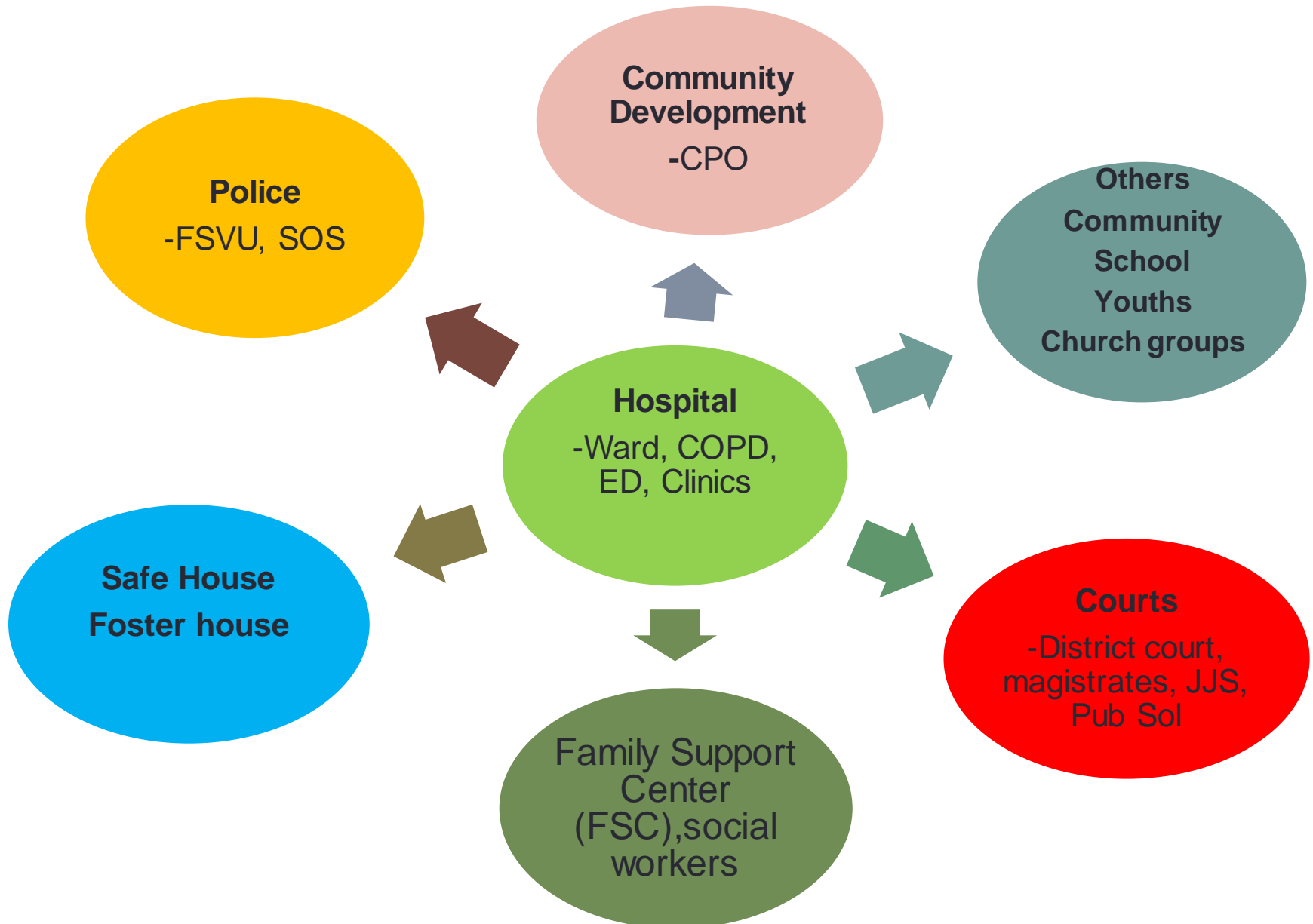
- **Society level**

- social & gender norms that create a climate in which violence is normalized
- health, economic, educational & social policies that maintain economic gender & social inequalities
- absent or inadequate social protection
- post-conflict situations or natural disaster
- settings with weak governance and poor law enforcement

Child Protection Flow Chart



Multidisciplinary Approach



Different Roles & Responsibilities

Family Support Centers

- Have been introduced by the health sector as a response to family & sexual violence
- ***Offer the following essential services***
 1. Medical First Aid (stabilizing immediate physical threats)
 2. Psychological First Aid (emotional stability)
 3. Prevention of HIV & other STIs
 4. Prevention of Unwanted or Unintended Pregnancies
 5. Prevention of Hepatitis B & Tetanus
 6. Counseling
 7. Para Legal Service e.g. IPO
 8. Medical Consultation
 9. Interagency referrals

Police

- Family and Sexual Violence Unit (FSVU), Sexual Offense Squad (SOS), Police Prosecutors office.
- ***Roles include:***
 - effect arrest
 - investigation of alleged crimes
 - apprehending suspects
 - bringing defendants before the courts
 - curbing law and order
 - mediations
 - preparing court documents & court proceeding
 - IPO and breaching of IPO/PO
-

Division of Community Development

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the Lukautim Pikinini Act and Policy
- Areas covered: welfare, child protection, co-ordination, support to apply for IPO/PO, visiting homes, coordinating stakeholders, training, lobbying for funding & monitoring GBV strategies
- Gazetted Child Protection Officer
 - responsible for overseeing the welfare & protection of children in the province.
- Any human trafficking, particularly children should be referred to CPO.

Juvenile Justice

- A Juvenile is a person who is aged between 7-18 years
- Crimes they commit range from pick-pocketing, car-thefts, drug abuse to sexual violence, physical violence & the use of firearms.
- A network of agencies that deal with young people whose conduct has come in conflict with the law.
- Juvenile Court Officers (JCO)
 - have power to enter places where children are detained, including police lockups; interview children; be present during interrogation; advice children on their rights; attend court & counselling.
- The focus of the JJS is to rehabilitate rather than to imprison and punish

Safe House

- Assist survivors to access medical assistance, refer to FSVU for support, counseling and provide shelter.
- Other roles include
 - dealing with domestic violence
 - counseling for survivors
 - workshops and training
 - community engagement programs

Legislations & Policies

- **Lukautim Pikinini Act (2015)**
- **Lukautim Pikinini Policy (2017-2027)**
- **Adoption of Children Act (1968)**
- **Juvenile Courts Act (1991)**
- **Criminal Code (Sexual Offences & Evidence) Act (2002)**
- **Civil Registry Act (1963)**

What is your role?

- Shared responsibilities
- Know your responsibilities regarding CP
- Early identification, intervention and prevention
- Have knowledge & understanding of child maltreatment
- Understand the different policies in place
- Provide all necessary documentation
- Record & Report child abuse
- Know referral pathways
- Support child and family
- Awareness

Recommendations

- Every Hospital (PHA) should have a Family Support Center with a child social worker
- Adolescent clinics established
- Training staff and volunteers on how to identify and prevent child abuse
- Train DCH, MMED candidates on Child Protection/ Child Abuse
- Implement CP policies and procedures to protect children from intentional or unintentional harm.
- Develop guidelines on specific programs strategies & intervention that can be implemented at the child, family, community and government level to protect children
- Create an information database so that all services can share information esp. data on CP
- Each province should establish PFSVAC

Thankyou...



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