

## Violence against Women and Its Impact on Community Development: A Case Study of Kisarawe District, Pwani Region

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### Abstract

Violence against women remains a persistent global and local challenge, despite efforts from various stakeholders, including governments and non-governmental organizations. Approximately one in three women worldwide, or 736 million, have experienced intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both.

This study aimed to investigate the impact of violence against women on community development in Kisarawe District, Tanzania. A descriptive survey design was employed, involving 100 respondents. Data was collected through structured and semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative and qualitative analysis was applied to interpret the data, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that violence against women has a profound impact on community development, particularly in terms of poverty. A significant 53% of respondents identified poverty as a direct impact of violence against women.

**Keywords:** Violence, Violence against women and Community Development

### Introduction:

Violence against women constitutes a global public health emergency of pandemic scale, with profound social and economic ramifications for countries and societies.

Violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (UN,2022).

Violence against women is one of the most frequent violations of human rights. Violence against women – particularly intimate partner

violence and sexual violence – is a major public health problem and a violation of women's human rights. Women in all countries, irrespective of status, class, age, caste or religion, experience violence in virtually all spheres of life, whether in the home, the school, at work, on the street, in government institutions, or in times of conflict or crisis (WHO, 2021).

Globally, WHO indicate that about 1 in 3 (30%) of women worldwide have been subjected to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. Worldwide, almost one third (27%) of women aged

15-49 years who have been in a relationship report that they have been subjected to some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner (WHO, 2024). In 2022, around 48,800 women and girls worldwide were killed by their intimate partners or other family members. This means that, on average, more than five women or girls are killed every hour by someone in their own family (UN Women, 2023). Violence against women has consequences for society as a whole. The perpetrators can be found in every social and economic milieu, and most of them are male. In societies shaped by patriarchy, violence against women is an expression of unequal power relationships between men and women. So the causes of this violence are to be found not only at the individual level but also, and particularly, at the structural level.

In Asia, violence against women (VAW) remains unacceptably high. The Asia-Pacific region is no exception in this regard. Over 37% of women in South Asia, 40% of women in South-East Asia and up to 68% of women in the Pacific have experienced violence at the hands of their partners. Across Asia, studies show that 30% to 40% of women also suffer sexual harassment in the workplace (UNESCO, 2021). In South Asia specifically, the prevalence of lifetime intimate partner violence is 35% higher than the global average. The reasons are complex and include a combination of socio-economic structures, patriarchal attitudes, and prevalent social norms that define gender roles. A South Asian country, including Nepal, Pakistan, and the Maldives issue of violence against women is very high (Raiser, 2022).

In Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, 42% of women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes. The impact extends far beyond individual survivors, with implications for the productivity and well-being of families and communities, often across generations (World Bank, 2023). In sub-Saharan Africa, 33% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, compared to 20%

of women globally. One in five (20%) in the region have experienced past-year violence, compared to 13% globally (WHO, 2021)

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is a pervasive issue in Africa, encompassing various forms such as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), early and forced marriage, and Sexual Violence in Conflict (SVC). These harmful practices are deeply rooted in patriarchal systems, where gender inequality, unequal power dynamics, and discriminatory social norms perpetuate violence against women and girls. Poverty further exacerbates women's vulnerability, making them more susceptible to violence (AU, 2021).

In Tanzania, 38 per cent of girls and women have experienced some form of violence by a partner in the past year, and a third of those who experienced the violence never sought help, 11 per cent told someone but never sought help, and only 54 per cent sought help related to the experienced violence (UNICEF, 2023). Violence against women remained to be rampant in Tanzania, 40% of all women aged 15-49 years have experienced physical violence, while 17% have experienced sexual violence. Of women aged 15-49, 44% have experienced either physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Spousal violence prevalence is highest in rural areas, averaging 52% while the prevalence in urban areas averages 45%. Almost 30% of girls experience sexual violence before the age of 18 (World Bank, 2022).

## **Literature review:**

### *Definition of Key Concept:*

#### *Violence*

Violence refers to the intentional or unintentional use of force whether physical or psychological, threatened or actual, against an individual, oneself, or against a group of people, a community, or a government (UNDRR, 2021). WHO defines violence as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of

resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (WHO,2022).

### *Violence against Women*

“Violence against women” as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of

such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Violence against women affects women everywhere. It impacts women’s health, hampers their ability to participate fully in society, affects their enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and is a source of tremendous physical and psychological suffering for both women and their families (UN, 1993).

### *Community development*

Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. It is a broad concept, applied to the practices of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens, and professionals to improve various aspects of communities, typically aiming to build stronger and more resilient local communities. Community development is a holistic approach grounded in principles of empowerment, human rights, inclusion, social justice, self-determination, and collective action (Connors, 2017).

### *Theoretical Framework*

The study used Feminist theory to understand the issues of women violence and its impact on community development. The term feminism refers to the advocacy for women’s rights on the grounds of political, social, and economic equality to men. The origins of feminist thought can be traced back to the late 18th century, particularly with the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792. Feminist theory is a framework for analyzing gender inequality and understanding the social structures that contribute to the oppression of women and other marginalized groups (Tong, 2009).

Feminist theory provides a powerful lens to examine the complex issue of violence against women and its impact on community development. This theory highlights the systemic inequalities and power imbalances that perpetuate gender-based violence, recognizing it as a social justice issue rather than an individual problem. By adopting a feminist perspective, I can delve deeper into the root causes of violence against women, exploring how societal norms, cultural practices, and institutional structures contribute to its prevalence.

Furthermore, feminist theory emphasizes the interconnectedness between individual experiences of violence and broader societal issues. It allows me to examine how violence against women undermines community development by limiting women's participation in economic, social, and political spheres. By analyzing the impact of violence on women's health, education, and employment opportunities, I can demonstrate how it perpetuates cycles of poverty, inequality, and social instability within communities

### *Empirical Review*

Tavassoli et al. (2022) conducted a study titled "A Research on Violence Against Women: Are the Trends Growing?" This study employed a quantitative bibliometric analysis and a qualitative content analysis to investigate violence against women. Using the Scopus database, the researchers analyzed research documents from 1986 to 2020. The findings revealed that a significant majority (82.84%) of women have experienced various forms of violence, including verbal, sexual, cyber harassment, and intimate partner violence. Furthermore, the study highlighted a growing trend of violence against women, particularly in regions such as South Africa.

Ouedraogo (2021) conducted a study titled "How Domestic Violence is a Threat to Economic Development." The study found a strong correlation between violence against women and economic activity. A 1% increase in violence against women is associated with a 9% decrease in economic activity. This negative impact is primarily driven by a significant drop in female

employment. The study highlights the multi-dimensional effects of violence against women on economic health, both short-term and long-term. Physical, psychological, and emotional violence hinders women's ability to work, leading to reduced work hours and productivity. In the long term, high levels of domestic violence can decrease female labor force participation, limit women's access to education and skills, and reduce overall public investment due to increased demand for health and judicial services.

Duvvury et al. (2021) in their study, "The impacts of violence against women on choice and agency: Evidence from Ghana and Pakistan," found that women who experienced violence suffered significant productivity losses due to both absenteeism and reduced work performance while present. These economic impacts extended beyond individual women to businesses and the overall economy. The study also highlighted the social and reproductive consequences of VAW, as women's choices, agency, and health were compromised. Notably, despite differing social and economic contexts, the underlying patriarchal structures and

gender norms in both countries contributed to similar patterns of VAW's impact on women's lives..

### Conceptual Framework

A conceptual frame work is a logically developed, described and an elaborate network of associated variables that have been identified through the process such as interviews, observation and literature survey (Miles and Hubeman, 1984). The conceptual frame work in this study consists of two variables which are independent and dependent. The conceptual framework illustrates the direct impact of Violence Against Women (VAW) on both individual and community levels. VAW, encompassing physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, negatively affects individuals' physical and mental health, economic well-being, and social relationships. Furthermore, it has detrimental consequences for communities, hindering economic development, social cohesion, health and well-being, and political participation. By understanding these interconnected impacts, we can develop effective strategies to prevent and address VAW and its far-reaching consequences.

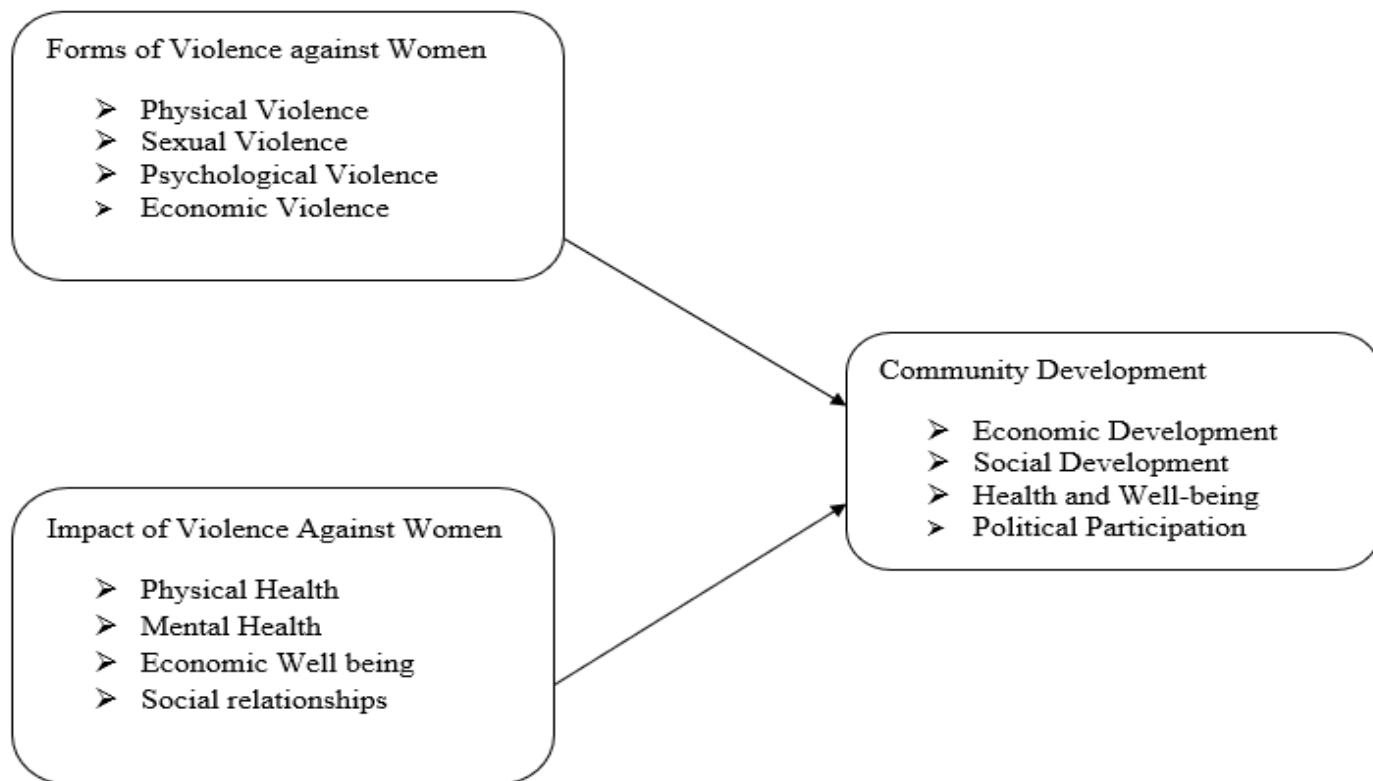


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework, 2024

## Research Methodology:

### Research Approach

A mixed-methods approach was employed in this study on "Violence Against Women and Its Impact on Community Development" to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex issue. This approach combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. This approach allowed the researcher to answer research questions using both structured and semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. By utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data, the study aimed to provide comprehensive and insightful answers to the research questions.

### Research Design

Research design is a process that allows the researcher to have an understanding of the significance of the research and the steps that are involved. A descriptive survey design was employed in this study to investigate the current state of violence against women and its impact on community development in Kisarawe District. This design allowed for the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings. By examining existing relationships, beliefs, processes, impacts, and emerging trends, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

### Study Area

Kisarawe District, a Tanzanian district in the Pwani Region, covers an area of 5,031 square kilometers. With a population of 159,226 (79,892 males and 79,334 females), predominantly Zaramo, the district's economy primarily relies on agriculture, with crops like cassava, coconuts, and cashew nuts. However, Kisarawe faces significant challenges related to violence against women, limited resources for victims, and harmful cultural norms. Understanding these issues is crucial for developing effective interventions to address violence against women, promote gender equality, and foster sustainable development.

### Study Population

The study population consisted of all adults aged 18 and older residing in Kisarawe District, Tanzania, totaling 159,226 individuals, comprising 79,892 males and 79,334 females. This demographic was chosen due to their assumed greater involvement in and impact on issues related to violence against women and community development.

### Sample

David (2009) describes a sample as the chosen items, units, or elements from which the researcher will draw conclusions. In this study, the researcher considered respondents from the selected area of study, which was Kisarawe District. The target sample was women who had general knowledge concerning women violence and those who were suffering from this problem.

### Sample size

Kothari (2019) describes sample size as 'the total number of items chosen from a population to form a sample'. The 159,226 the total population was used to determine the sample size for this study, which was 100 responders from the chosen sample. The sample size determination formula that was used was as follows;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$N = \frac{159,226}{1 + 159,226(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{159,226}{1,593} = 99.5$$

$$1,593$$

$$n = 100$$

Sample Size was 100 respondents

### Sampling techniques

Sampling techniques refer to the methods employed by researchers to select participants, locations, or items for study (Kombo & Delno, 2006). The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques to gather data from survivors of violence against women, key

informants, and specific population segments. This approach was necessary due to limitations like time, budget, and geographical constraints. By selecting a representative sample, the study aimed to draw generalizable conclusions about the broader population.

### **Simple random sampling.**

Simple random sampling is a method of probability sampling that ensures each individual in a population has an equal probability of being chosen for the sample (Babbie, 2014). The study used simple random sampling to select 100 households in Kisarawe district. This method ensured that each household had an equal chance of being selected, making the sample representative of the broader population. A complete list of households was created, and a random number generator was used to select the final 100 participants.

### **Snowball sampling**

Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are recruited through referrals from other participants (Marshall, 1996). Snowball sampling is a technique where researchers start with a few known participants and then ask them to refer other potential participants who fit the study's criteria. This process continues until enough participants are found. This method was particularly useful in this study to reach survivors of violence against women, who often form a hidden population.

### *Data Collection Tools*

#### *Questionnaires*

According to Goode (1980), a questionnaire was a tool designed to collect responses to questions through a form that respondents completed. It could also be understood as a collection of questions sent by mail or delivered in person to individuals selected for a survey or list. With this method, written questions were asked, and responders had to write their own responses without assistance from the researchers. There were two types of questionnaires available: closed-ended and open-ended.

### *Interview*

Young (1983) defined an interview as a systematic method by which one person entered more or less imaginatively into the inner life of another who was generally a comparative stranger to him. In this study, the researcher also used an unstructured form of interview due to its flexibility in questioning. The researcher used this kind of interview because it gave chances for both the researcher and respondents to discuss, and it saved time by providing full information that could be changed or adopted to meet the respondents' intelligence, understanding, or beliefs. The interview involved key informants who were social workers, gender desk officers, community leaders, and counselors.

### *Documentary Review*

Document review is a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. Documentary review is a research methodology that involves the systematic collection, evaluation, and analysis of existing documents to gather information and insights on a specific topic. It's a form of secondary research, relying on data that has already been collected and recorded. (Scott, (1990). Documentary review will be employed in this study to provide a comprehensive historical and contextual understanding of the research topic. By examining relevant documents such as [document types, e.g., policies, reports, news articles] and this can be explore from academic databases like JSTOR, Google Scholar, and your university's library. Government websites, industry reports, and reputable online archives, the aim to identify patterns, trends, and gaps in knowledge over time.

### *Data Analysis*

Data analysis involves the methodical use of statistical or logical techniques to summarize, interpret, and assess data (Gelman, 2013). The study employed both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. Qualitative data analysis, using thematic analysis, focused on uncovering hidden meanings in non-numerical data like interviews and open-ended responses. This

involved transcribing data, identifying key themes related to violence against women and its impact on community development, organizing these themes into broader categories, and interpreting the findings. Quantitative data analysis, using SPSS Version 16, involved examining numerical data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships between variables. This process included descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The findings were presented using frequencies, tables, and figures.

*Ethical consideration*

During data collection process the team to observed ethical guidelines that ensured security to the participants and their participation did not lead to any harm throughout the collection process. A researcher observed participants’ rights and content were considered. All research information from the respondent remained confidential and only been used for the research purpose. By prioritizing participant well-being and data integrity, the research team aimed to contribute to a better understanding of violence against women and its impact on the community.

**Results and Discussion:**

*Demographic characteristics of the respondents*

*The respondents Age*

The researcher interviewed women from different age groups; the group were divided into six categories. Women of Kisarawe District were asked this question to identify which age group is more exposed to violence against women. Findings to this question are dispensed below in Table 1

**Table 1: Age of respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid 18-25	6	6.0
26-30	14	14.0
31-35	31	31.0
36-45	37	37.0
46-55	5	5.0
56+	7	7.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: *Field data* (2024)

All 100 respondents answered the questions. The majority of respondents, 37%, were aged 36-45. Another 31% were between 31-35 years old, 14% were 26-30, 7% were over 56, and 6% were 18-25. While the 36-45 age group was most affected by violence against women, it's important to note that other groups also experienced this issue. This can be attributed to societal factors like cultural norms and perceptions. Given the diverse age range of respondents, the study provides a comprehensive view of violence against women.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) reports that globally, nearly one-third (27%) of women aged 15-49 in relationships have experienced physical or sexual violence from their partners. This equates to an estimated 641 million women. This global data aligns with the findings, suggesting that violence against women can occur across all age groups, though the specific experiences may vary

*Marital status of the respondents*

Regarding marital status, most respondents were married (59%), followed by single (23%). A significant number were divorced (12%), while 6% were widowed. The table below presents these findings.

**Table 2: Marital status**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Single	23	23.0
Married	59	59.0
Divorced	12	12.0
Widow	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: *Field data* (2024)

The study revealed that marital status can influence the prevalence of violence against women. Among the participants, 59% were married, 23% were single, 12% were divorced, and 6% were widowed. All groups acknowledged the existence of violence

against women and its connection to marital status. Importantly, the study found that married women were more likely to experience violence compared to single or divorced women. These findings are supported by Adak *et ail* (2021), who also revealed an increase in the rate of physical violence experienced by married women. Divorced women reported the highest rates of emotional violence (71.1%), followed by married and widowed women (33.0% - 42.9%). Additionally, divorced or separated women were most frequently identified as victims of economic violence, highlighting their vulnerability based on marital status. This evidence further supports the notion that married women are more likely to experience violence compared to other women.

*Occupation of respondents*

The occupation of respondents varied considerably. About occupation level of respondents selected it was found out that 45% were peasant, 30 % entrepreneur, 22.5 employee %, 2.5 other. Table 3 shows the details

**Table 3: Occupation of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Peasant	45	45.0
Employee	20	20.0
Entrepreneur	33	33.0
Other	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field data (2024)

This implies that the majority of respondents (45%) were involved in peasant farming, making this the most common occupation among the surveyed population. Additionally, 33% were engaged in entrepreneurship, 20% were employed in various sectors, and 2% were involved in other activities. These findings align with the predominant economic structure of rural areas in Tanzania, where agriculture is the primary sector. A study revealed that 98% of women in rural areas are

economically active, with 45% specifically employed in the agricultural sector. These results are supported by a study of Mmasa (2015) noted, the significant contribution of rural women to agricultural production and rural development in Tanzania is often underestimated, despite their dominant role in the sector. It would be an understatement to say that women compete more favorably with men in terms of their higher participation in agricultural activities and their contribution to household economy and food security.

*Violence against Women and Its Impact on Community Development*

The field results indicated that respondents noted impacts of violence against women on community development in these ways: 53% cited poverty, 19% cited loss of productivity, 15% cited loss of skilled workforce, 7% cited decreased participation, and 6% cited increased crime. Table 4.3 shows the details.

**Table 4. Violence against Women and Its Impact on Community Development**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Loss of skilled workforce	15	15.0
Loss of productivity	19	19.0
Increased of crime	6	6.0
Poverty	53	53.0
Reduced participation	7	7.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field data (2024)

The findings revealed that violence against women has a profound impact on community development, manifesting in several key areas. A significant proportion of respondents (5%) identified poverty as a direct impact of such violence. This suggests that women who experience violence may be unable to work, care for themselves or their



families, or engage in income-generating activities, thereby exacerbating poverty within the community. The study highlighted the loss of productivity (19%) and skilled workforce (15%) as significant consequences of violence against women. When women are victims of violence, their ability to contribute to the economy and society is diminished. This can lead to reduced productivity in various sectors, including agriculture, small businesses, and other industries. Additionally, the loss of skilled women from the workforce can hinder community development and limit opportunities for growth and progress. The findings also indicate that violence against women can contribute to increased crime rates (6 %) and decreased participation in community activities (7%). These results can be supported by Ndabarushimana (2022). Results revealed that 90 respondents out of 96, that is 93.7 percent said that gender-based violence causes poverty in the community. 48 respondents out of 96, that is 50 percent revealed a reduction in the workforce. 69 respondents out of 96, that is 71.8 percent revealed a low production while 72 respondents out of 96, that is 75 percent revealed increased health costs. The paper highlighted that the impacts of gender-based violence become a cycle that affects the entire community and nations from one generation to the other. Gender-based violence against women has far-reaching consequences for women, their children, and society as a whole as found in the study.

### **Conclusions:**

Violence against women is a serious problem that impacts community development. According to the research, violence against women can have significant impact for community development. The study confirms that violence against women is a societal problem with far-reaching implications. It has highlighted the interconnectedness between individual experiences of violence and broader community challenges such as poverty, reduced productivity, loss of skilled labor, increased crime rates, and decreased social participation. When women feel unsafe and marginalized due to

violence, they may withdraw from public spaces and community engagement, leading to a decline in social cohesion and civic participation. It's important to note that violence against women is preventable

### **Recommendations:**

Government and other stakeholders must collaborate to empower women economically. By encouraging women's participation in economic activities and providing access to financial resources, we can empower women to become financially independent, reduce their reliance on abusive partners, and increase their self-confidence. Improving women's access to loans and financial literacy training can be vital steps in this direction.

Raising awareness and encouraging education on gender equality are vital. Inclusive awareness campaigns should be executed to educate the public about the negative impacts of violence against women and challenge harmful gender norms and stereotypes. Media campaigns can play an important role in promoting gender equality and empowering women.

Strengthening legal frameworks and improving access to justice are vital components of addressing violence against women. Enacting and enforcing strong laws against domestic violence and sexual assault, establishing accessible and victim-friendly legal aid services, and training law enforcement and judicial officials to handle cases sensitively are essential steps

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