

Violence Against Women and Children

8.1 Despite laws protecting women, sexual violence against women continues.

Incest rape, sexual harassment, wife battering and abuse in intimate relationships remain an everyday fact in the lives of many women in Mindanao and in remote barangays outside the reaches of the law. Culturally-sanctioned practices such as bride abduction, forced marriage, and payment of bride price persist.

8.2 Most perpetrators of violence against women and children are closely related to the victims, most notably their parents (usually the father or stepfather), husbands, live-in partners, boyfriends or relatives.

Contrary to the notion that rape and physical abuse are inflicted by strangers, the most likely sources of violence against women and children are people who are familiar to them, usually family members and intimates. The recent passage of R.A. No. 9262, otherwise known as Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, is intended to protect women and children from abusive relationships.

8.3 Trafficking and prostitution continue to be the most insidious, if not most pervasive, form of violence against women and children.

Because of poverty and government's inability to protect the welfare of its citizens, many women and young girls have become tradable goods in the sex market.

8.4 Because of lack of access to education and lack of economic support from their families, many children remain on the streets, where they learn survival tactics and are introduced to high-risk trades.

Children whose families do not have the resources to support them end up on the streets, where they learn street survival and engage in high-risk behavior which includes drug sniffing, shoplifting, picking pockets, drug pushing and engaging in unprotected sex. Street life is more risky for girls than boys, as they often get raped or sold by their boyfriends who pimp for them, become pregnant or contract sexually transmitted diseases.