

Women Safety Audit Findings

Risks Factor Towards Women's Wellbeing

Venue: Ministry of Public Works Office, Dili, Timor-Leste

A safe space for women is a place where women have a secure and inclusive access to their fundamental rights, information, and services. In supporting the National Action Plan for Gender-Based Violence 2022-2032, the Joint Programme Together for Equality (T4E) implemented by UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA and IOM joined the efforts of the government of Timor-Leste in preventing and responding to Gender-Based Violence. One of the programme strategies is preventing violence against women before it occurs through creating a safe public space for women.

Women Safety Audit (WSA) is a widely used audit tool to increase awareness and protection for women and girls. The tool was first developed in Canada following the

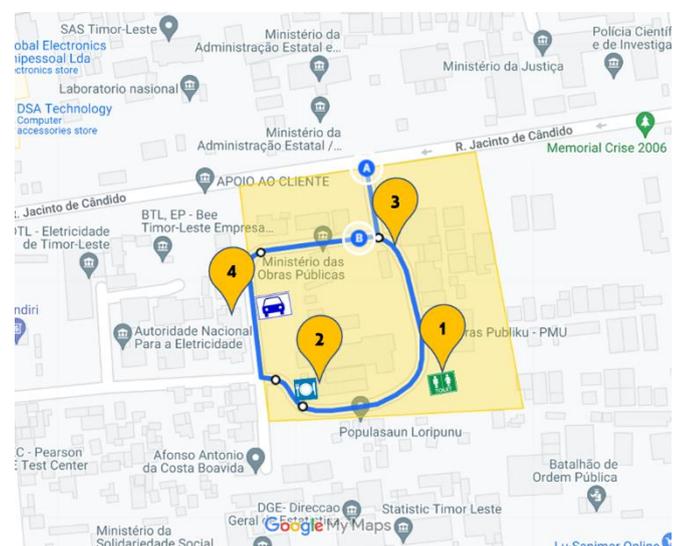
recommendations of the 1989 report on violence against women and has further been developed by UN-HABITAT. The audit helps identify factors that may lead to increased VAWG as well as provide recommendations to make public spaces safer for women and girls.

Under the T4E Programme, 16 public spaces and 8 public institutions in four target municipalities (Dili, Baucau, Covalima and REAOA) will be audited using the WSA tool. The WSA is facilitated by Rede Feto (Women's Network) with technical support by UN Women through the T4E with financial support by KOICA. In this project, this tool was used to assess and explore the risk factors associated with safety of women in public spaces and aimed to identify risk factors to safety as well as proposed with recommendations and estimated cost to improve safety, inclusivity, and accessibility of public spaces.

Safety Audit Walk Spots

The Ministry of Public Works (MoPW) Office is situated in Caicoli. The north side is the Office of the National Commission for Election (CNE), the south side is community residence and the west side is the Bee Timor-Leste Empresa Publika (BTL, E.P.) There one entrance, the main entrance is on Rua Jacinto Cândido. The audit walks conducted at four spots within the MoPW: 1) Toilets 2) Temporary Canteen 3) Walkway between the entrance to the buildings and 4) the main parking area.

Location



Safety factors assessed



Lighting



Openness



Visibility



People density



Walk path



Security



Gender diversity

The Findings

High risk factors



Poor security

85% said that the temporary canteen is not comfortable, referring to the food selling counters at the canteen is too high and inaccessible by persons with disabilities.

80% of the respondents stated that the toilets are unsafe as it is no separation for male and female and no toilet for persons with disabilities and difficult to access as it is far away from office buildings.



Lack of Gender inclusivity

30% indicated that the temporary canteen is unsafe and is a male dominant area, for example men gathering around the canteen for smoking, women therefore feel insecure to access the canteen.



Poor or no lighting

40% stated that the office parking area is unsafe and not conducive due to limited or absent of proper light in parking areas.



Inaccessible walk path

62% of the respondents showed that the connecting walk paths inside the Ministry are unpaved which posted risks for safety especially for persons with disabilities to move around.

Recommendations

Immediate actions

- 1 Improve toilets conditions by having a separate entrance for female and male toilets, construct toilets for persons with disabilities equipped with ramp and handrails and ensure adequate lighting to increase safety and accessibility.
- 2 Improve conditions of the walk paths and lighting between buildings and car park areas.
- 3 Ensure safety and accessibility of women and persons with disabilities in the design and construction of the new permanent canteen.

Long term recommendations

Raise awareness and promoting learning on prevention of sexual harassment and gender-based violence with all the Ministry staff and its Implementing Partners.

Costing*

Estimated cost to implement immediate actions for the Ministry of Public Works to enhance safety, accessibility and set a good example of gender sensitive infrastructure is **\$ 211,000**.

- 1 Renovation toilets to increase safety and accessibility for women and persons with disabilities cost is \$75,000**.
- 2 Improving the connection of the footpaths between buildings and increase lighting in the Ministry and parking areas is \$136,000**.
- 3 Calculation of cost will depend on the approved new design.

**Cost presented is estimated, the calculation is conducted with support from the Ministry of Public Works planning team.*

***Budget for 1 and 2 have been allocated in the Ministry's 2023 Annual Action Plan (AAP).*