

**Community Prevention
of Family Violence in Thai Society:
Concept, Strategies
and Continuing Work**

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OVERVIEW OF RESPONSE ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

State of the art:

Family violence in Thai society

social structure : gender inequity

VAW : 44 percent of women

Family Violence: Community Prevention and Lessons Learned

Initiative and its development :

CEDAW

women's & child's NGOs

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
communities

Family Violence: Community Prevention and Lessons Learned

Recruitment of Volunteers :

NGO

Volunteers

Family Violence: Community Prevention and Lessons Learned

Working Concept :

Women and Development

human right

gender-based violence

Family Violence: Community Prevention and Lessons Learned

Volunteers :

Small group

Women

Conflicts of interest

Family Violence: Community Prevention and Lessons Learned

Implementation :

disseminating knowledge
coordination

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson learned

- 1) civic awareness
- 2) men's involvement
- 3) community's involvement.

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Working Process

Identify and outreaching community:
participation

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Working Process

Awareness Building and Community

Analysis :

Meaning of VAW

Magnitude

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Working Process

Recruitment of Volunteers :

participation

Non-stigmatization

Women and Men

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Working Process

Work Performance Required Consultants :

Community

Hospital

Academic

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

outcomes

Roles of Volunteers :

Preventive

Supportive

Role model

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Output of the project :

FV decreasing

Public issue

Other violence

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

Summary and Analysis

Thank you

**Community Prevention of Family Violence in Thai Society:
Concept, Strategies and Continuing Work
Abstract**

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Violence against women (VAW) in Thai society, especially family violence (FV), is a problem that has been ignored without corrective interventions due to the socio-cultural structure, meanings and values on femininity, which are gender biased. Since Thailand became involved in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, some Thai communities have become more concretely involved in the prevention of and solving the problem of family violence. Most of the work was initiated by a number of women's non-governmental organizations, thus enabling the development of various concepts, strategies and working mechanisms, which results in different ways of working and continuing work in agencies concerned.

This article is a part of action research to find a working pattern regarding the prevention and resolution of the problem of violence against women carried out in a community in the Northeast of Thailand. The lessons learned earlier from other communities have been developed to serve the community as a working model for the prevention and solution of VAW and FV problems. This project has been undertaken since 2001 by Mahidol University in close conjunction with the government sector and a community. There are two important parts of the findings: (1) a comparison of results in communities that have different working concepts, strategies and methods; and (2) application of lessons learned from other areas to develop a working pattern with latitudinal concepts and deconstruction of gender and structural violence concepts, resulting in an adjustment in thinking and working, which is found evolving all the time in the community.

Community Prevention of Family Violence in Thai Society: Concept, Strategies and Continuing Work

This article is part of the action research conducted by the Center for Health Policy Studies, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Mahidol University in a community in northeastern Thailand with the objective to develop a working model for the prevention and solution of the problem of violence against women (VAW) and family violence (FV). The study of this project was conducted by the use of the working model which had been developed from the lessons previously learned from the studies of other communities for prevention and solution of the FV problem.

OVERVIEW OF RESPONSE ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

1.State of the art: Family violence in Thai society

Thai society is not different from other societies where FV prevails. In the context of the Thai history in the social, cultural and legal spheres, it shows the existence of gender-inequity, which is a primary contributing factor to FV(Mulder,1999; Garcia-Moreno,1999).

The social structure dominating ways of life and sexuality of the Thai people ranges from social beliefs to unequal treatment of baby boys and baby girls in the society. In the days of old, the parents would put pencils in the cradle of the male baby when he was born, but if the baby were a girl they would put thread and needles instead. This way of practice has been passed down from generation to generation until it becomes a social value which expects women to be sweet, gentle, docile and reserved in the private domain rather than active in the public sphere. Throughout their lives, women are likely subject to influences of many other social values and teachings which cause them to believe that their existence and integrity largely depend on their spouses. This sort of teachings is clearly given in some proverbs. Some of them even appeared in many parts of the country in the form of literary works such as “Suphasit Son Ying”, a collection of exhortations to women, “Wetsantara Chataka”, dharma stories about the previous lives of the Lord Buddha before enlightenment, “Hit Sip Song Kong Sip Si”, the teaching of twelve customs and fourteen ways of practice by the northeastern part of the country given to a woman as a good wife. The society therefore expects all single women to be reserved. When married, they are required to attend the need of their husbands and praise them with respect. In the old days, if the married woman failed to observe any requirements of traditional norms as a good wife toward her husband, in some parts of the society she would be subject to certain punishments whose degrees varied according to the levels of her misconduct as a good wife (Sanchit, 2005). On her wedding day, the bridegroom would be asked by the most revered couple presiding over the wedding ceremony to prostrate before the feet of her bride as a token of respect and instructed her to do it on every holistic lent day as a gesture of asking forgiveness from her husband for any offenses that she might have made to him or not.(Choawilai, 2005). Although this teaching could hardly make it to the modern time, however the implication of the teaching is still obvious and can be felt through the status of a wife which is inferior to that of a husband. In addition, especially in the traditionally directed society, the husband is expected to be older than the wife.

The seniority system therefore becomes a mechanism for the husband to gain respect, submission and obedience from the wife (Purinsith,2004).

The overall picture of the problem shows that women are more likely the victims of violence than men. This finding which corresponds with that of the research on family violence by Archavinichkul whose work was regarded the country's first study on FV pointed out the magnitude of the problem is about the same with that of many countries across the globe; that is 44 percent of women were beaten at least once in their lifetime by their husbands or male companions, and 29 percent of these was also sexually abused (Archavinichkul et al., 2001).

When a woman faces a problem of FV, she is expected to absorb it submissively. The victim is also expected to put up with increasing pressure by resorting to the teaching as follows: "Make known not the fire from the inside to the outside, and bring not the fire from the outside to the inside" (Boonmongkon., et al 2005). This teaching ostensibly deters the wife from disclosing any family affairs to outsiders. Since Thai society gives a serious thought to face-saving, the victim of FV likely keeps the emerging problem going unreported either to protect the reputation of the family or to show the victim's tolerance towards her perpetrator or both. The protection of her husband is regarded one of the properties of a good wife as demanded by social standard. Thai society also enjoys playing around with the myth that only indecent women would not make good wives and therefore likely encounter FV when they are married. It strongly believes that the problem of a husband and a wife is likened to that of the tongue and teeth that they sometimes meet unpleasantly, which is not unusual. Apart from these, religious teachings can serve as a mechanism to provide consolation to the wife with better understanding of her misfortune to have married an irresponsible husband resulting from her karma or previous deed. She must pay back in the present life to extinguish pain and make extinct the rebirth cycle of karmas for the next life (Friend of Women foundation,1996).

From the social perspective, FV is regarded as a personal problem in which the outsider should not interfere. Law imposes punishments on the husband and the wife for inflicting any physical harm towards each other equally the same with the strangers doing harms to others as if the society did not either acknowledge FV or were ignorant of its existence. Strangely but true, rape does not include a marital rape. It is not a mistake to say that Thailand has never provided any assurance for the prevention of FV problem in a real sense though the equality of man and woman was guaranteed in the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand and many other acts of Parliament on education. In practice, however, there is an unequal treatment between men and women in the society. For these reasons, social values, customs and law are instrumental in distorting FV problem whose magnitude are kept growing. FV becomes a serious problem of the socio-cultural structure whose existence is not recognized by the society (Moonmongkon., et al 2005).

2.Family Violence: Community Prevention and Lessons Learned

2.1 Initiative and its development

Currently, various civic groups of Thailand are working on FV in different ways. About 20 years ago, women's non-governmental organisations firstly worked on the issue. The emergence of VAW problems in the society and global movement, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), had induced and drawn the attention of NGOs to the respond to

the issues. So most of the concepts of working on FV were related to human rights and gender perspective.

Women's and children's non-governmental organizations had worked on FV for a little while before they expanded their work into several communities. After the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, according to a survey conducted by Mahidol University in 2003, it was found that there were 19 preventive communities on VAW scattering across country in many district and rural areas. NGOs provided training and formed volunteer groups in communities for dealing with the prevention of VAW, educating people in communities, reporting events and coordinating help for violence victims with relevant organizations, which mostly were the organizations initiating the work in the communities. NGOs were usually initiators and trainers of community volunteers.

In Thailand, there is only one community organization whose staff and members have formed a group of volunteers to work on VAW, which has been run for about 30 years. However, they have got other NGOs as their trainers or consultants in their operations.

2.2 Recruitment of Volunteers

Most communities working on VAW applied a volunteer-centered approach. For the recruitment of volunteers, the NGOs would coordinate with the community leaders and also the leaders from both private and government sectors. However, once the volunteers were formed, the NGOs would contact them directly instead of community leaders whose role was no longer important in the prevention program. They would be coordinated not as often as before by the NGOs. As the number of volunteers was very small, the NGOs regarded the acceptance of the role of volunteers by the community as strategically important for implementation. They would normally use various approaches to introduce volunteers and their role in the program which included regular monthly meeting, activity between the NGOs and volunteers and presentation of training certificates to participants, etc.

2.3 Working Concept

The introduction of VAW into the community development program was based on various concepts: Women and Development, human right concepts, and gender-based violence.

Most NGOs and volunteers followed gender-based concept in their work. However, their staff who might not be clear about gender concept. They took gender as issues concerning male and female without giving a proper regard to their relationships and the use of their power. Accordingly, they could not either create good understanding among the community members on the gender-based issue or convince the community members of the existence of inequity between men and women prevailing in the community. Since the NGOs never approached the community members with FV issue before, nor any process for preparation had ever been made for their awareness, the FV problem has, therefore, never gained a momentum in the community.

2.4 Volunteers

Volunteers were found to be important variables to the level of cooperation in the community. Since the working process worked with small group of people, they would normally form themselves into factions especially when conflicts of interest were involved in various forms such as per diem allowances, training or making tours of field study. Those that were left out would feel alienated and finally backed out or abandoned the project.

Apart from that, their capacities were found to have shortcomings in dealing with community members since they did not have clear understanding on VAW. They gave importance only to the working process and the procedure they had acquired from training instead of the VAW problem. Some VAW cases were committed repeatedly as a consequence of prejudgment they had formed on victims. In addition, the working gap among volunteers themselves seemed to get more widening. Those who had good connection with the NGOs would have a better access to information. They would find more channels and working concept which was more updated and extensive. Those who had no connection found themselves unable to propel their assignment to meet the deadline. For these reasons, only a small number of volunteers were seen working for the community instead of seeing many of them working together as a teamwork.

Since most volunteers were women, the community members, especially men, felt that they focused their work on feminine issues that did not concern them. In addition, there was a widening gap between men and women, the community members and the leaders. Some times these female volunteers were misinterpreted as bigheaded or stubborn at work. As a result, they failed to receive good cooperation from the community people because of this stereotype. To make it worse, there was also a sentiment against them from the family members especially when these women were not income makers. Their sentiment reflected an influence they had received from the gender-biased which confined the role of the women only to the private sphere.

With the above factors of the working concept and the process of working with the communities, the volunteers could not achieve their work on VAW and FV in a sustainable manner. Most communities were found to stop their operation when the NGOs backed out from this effort.

2.5 Implementation

The overall picture of the community work on VAW was a preventive approach, disseminating knowledge and information on VAW whose contents detailing types and forms of VAW. However, it was found that some of the messages sent to the communities were not compatible with their context, thereby failing to make them aware of the VAW problem, especially FV problem in the community where help was needed for prevention and solution for all walks of life in the communities. Some community leaders felt that this project would create more conflicts in the family rather than help solve the problem. In addition to the dissemination of knowledge and information, surveillance is considered another defensive mechanism to monitor contributing factors to VAW from people other than the family members such as strangers, illegal labor agents that lured women into sex industry, and darkness along the streets, etc.

There were two ways of disseminating knowledge and information by volunteers; that was informal and formal. The informal way was through conversation. The formal way was through the organizing of training and exhibition

which was preferred by volunteers as it showed “their performance in action” although the effectiveness of the dissemination between these two ways were just the same. Other aspects of work included coordination with the NGOs to organize activity or case referring. However, with regard to providing primary assistance to stop a FV incident, the responsibility still rest with the formal leader of each community such as heads of villages and sub-districts who were appointed by the competent authority to serve the community, not volunteers. The approaches of their assistance would be either forbidding or conciliatory rather than dealing with the root of the problem by themselves. Apart from the formal leader, there were relatives of a FV incident would interfere in the family as members of the extended family. From this case, it could be said that provision of help and counseling to a case could become one of the weak points of most communities in dealing with FV issues as volunteers viewed it as a sensitive issue. However, in actuality, Thai society took heads to non-interference into the personal affair or the private issue of other people. As often was found in the case of the wife who had been beaten by her husband, no one wanted to provide help for fear of being shooed away by the husband as it was the personal affairs between husband and wife. This also happened in many cases of robberies and FV incidents.

From the study of the works of the NGOs, a strong point was discerned that is their working concept to solve the problem through promoting the quality of life in the communities. Many projects were implemented side by side with the works on the community development in various areas such as economics, education and specific training on law, management and administration etc., to exploit the potentials of the community people to work as staff for them. Although most communities were found successful in improving their economy through an increase in employment, however they could not link FV with the economic issues. As a result of working concept were derived from working organizations, not from the communities, which gave more importance on earning a living. When the concepts could not be communicated to reveal such relationship, they could not integrate the economic issue into the family violence issue.

As a summary, the performance of volunteers would excite the community at the beginning of their performance. However, only a limited number of community people could recognize their work as defensive approach, distributing information and doing coordination work.

THE MODEL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LESSONS LEARNED

The Center for Health Policy Studies, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Mahidol University worked with a community hospital in the northeastern part of Thailand to conduct a research for the development of a working model to solve VAW problem. This research was aimed at improving a system to provide service to victims and those that are involved in this problem. One part of the research was to develop the prevention community on VAW. With the lessons learned form other communities used as a guide , it was found that in dealing with VAW the community must give a serious thought not only to a working concept and process but also to the structure of Thai culture, especially in the contexts of seniority system, face-saving, kinship and fraternity as they often became either obstacles or contributing factors.

As a result of this research, it was found that the following three points were very important when dealing with VAW: 1) raising a civic awareness of FV and the

need for addressing into the community members and reconstruction 2) A need for men's involvement 3) A need for community's involvement.

1. Working Process

1.1 Identify and outreaching community

To seek cooperation from the communities to participate in FV prevention, the research team started its work by seeking the project approval, and then inviting community leaders within the responsible area of the local responsibility to listen to the project. Almost 20 leaders turned up. They were asked if they wanted to join in the project on a voluntary basis. At first, only one community leader was interested. A team was sent for many times to the community to present a briefing to its members after finishing their day work at night. As a result, the community members were of the opinion that their community was absent from FV problem, but what they had learned from the team was something new which was beneficial to the community.

1.2 Awareness Building and Community Analysis

The lessons learned earlier from other communities suggested that communities always denied the existence of the problem of FV, especially incest. For this reason, this project was carried out with the process of allowing the study community to analyze itself through group discussions of villagers and community leaders to study the meanings of VAW of community, condition and types of the problem, including surveying the magnitude of the continuing problem and analyzing the study results together.

As a result of their analysis, they could provide the meaning and the scope of VAW according to the degrees of intensity and frequency of behavior. For male participants, VAW was viewed as a physical violence whereas female participants viewed it differently. They looked at it in terms of mental violence whose effect of which caused more enduring impact on the mind than physical one. Take a case of extramarital relationship for example, a man often took it for granted that his wife would be disturbed mentally if she learned of his extramarital relationship, but as long as he did not take the mistress out socially or had committed many love affairs behind her back, then she would not consider his misconduct violent or she might think that her husband did it out of her consent. However, during the course of study, it was found that no wife would give her consent to her husband to commit such extramarital relationships with other women.

The community members understood the meaning of VAW better after they had studied and analyzed information together. They acknowledged that people in the community could have different views.

Although, the community denied the existence of VAW problem at the initial stage, however after their joint study on the problem, they found by themselves that there was such FV problem in the community. Some gave an opinion that the number of FV cases in the community was lower than it was actually thought.

1.3 Recruitment of Volunteers

The next step after the outcome of the joint study and analysis by the community members was volunteer recruitment, which was open to all interested members. At the beginning, only 20 volunteers from the total of 400 community members came forward for volunteer training. Mostly they were women.

The training and its contents placed emphasis on volunteers' participation. Apart from giving fundamental knowledge on VAW with a special focus on gender-inequity and the social structure and values that gave rise to VAW such as law, the effect of sexuality on FV, etc. The volunteers were also assigned tactfully to bring forth issues, which could be their personal experiences or someone else's on VAW, with their impacts for discussion and analysis either under protection of privacy or with their consent. This training technique helped create the awareness of the community on FV and VAW whereas the volunteers learned how to deal with FV and VAW issues with more sensitivity on privacy and confidentiality of victims and those who were involved in the issues, and making sure that the act of violence would not be repeated to them.

As a result of the training, they had a better understanding on FV. Those who were perpetrators could be both male and female. They were products of the social structure, socialization, and encroachment of right. When the act of violence took place without being prevented or nipped at the bud, naturally it affected each and everyone in the community both directly and indirectly.

After following the community's suggestion not to stigmatize men as sources or perpetrators of violence in the family, the project had seen more men joining. At present one third of volunteers were men from the community. This had created joint collaboration between the volunteers and the community leaders. The community development has become a work in which the community people now are interested.

At present there are 70 volunteers working constantly in the project whose objective is well recognized by every family in the community.

1.4 Work Performance Required Consultants

From the recent study, it was found that the community members needed conceptual and academic support from any organizations that they could rely on to work with. Fortunately, the team had a local hospital, which had been working with the community from the start, at hand as a core unit to work with the community throughout this project. Researchers from Mahidol University were deployed in local areas to conduct their work according to the anthropological approach. They would either assess situation which were used for questioning volunteers. Accordingly, they could clearly understand the situation before finding joint solution. Thus, most works were carried out by volunteers and community which were core operators. When they gave new ideas to handle issues, they would be allowed to give explanation on how these ideas had been perceived. By doing this, the community was looked up to as a highly potential community. This was part of the effort to prepare the community ready when the time for all researchers to leave the **community arrives**.

Accordingly, the overall picture of the community development on FV portrayed the collaborative efforts among volunteers, the community and the research team of the local hospital and academic institutes. The volunteers were regarded as main operators in this project whereas the community took part in any activity held by them such as campaigns to VAW cease, participation in the volunteer training, etc.

A joint team work in this manner was regarded one of the strong points of the project. This was different from other communities whose project had been undertaken by only the NGOs and the volunteers.

2.Outcomes

2.1 Roles of Volunteers

The roles of volunteers were to provide knowledge to the community to prevent the problem and gave the initial aids to contain the problem from spreading. In this project, there was an adjustment in the process for dissemination of information and knowledge to the community by the community. The process was not the type of formal education or training activities but an informal one through daily-life conversations. Community members recognized the problem of FV through the evidence and discussions with the volunteers. Other ways were public relations via the community's broadcast station periodically, the community monthly meeting, their own observation during the visit to their community by other communities to see how the volunteers work. People from various local communities had started coming to see the working **model of the project**.

The visits had stimulated the community to have a better understanding about the project with the influence from outside the community. Then the community members could realize the importance of FV, thus enabling continuous program operation.

Meanwhile, having a chance to present their work locally and nationally or to be spokespersons of the community in other localities had been also an attributive factor of continuous work on FV. It had become a path of life of the community, rather than a project alien to their environment.

In connection with the project, the community actually initiated more activities. The volunteer group set monthly meetings, which could be run continuously especially during the first period. Experiences of helping the first violence victim made the volunteers determine a measure to help the victims as a whole group. The volunteers informed all community members that they would give a warning to those using violence for the first time and publicize their behavior to the public if they used violence for the second time. This was a social measure based on the face-keeping culture in Thai society. If the FV incident happened for the third time, they would inform the police of such act. Most previous help was given in the first measure because the incidents did not often occur. However, for severe cases such as assaulted victims with a need for medical treatment, it was usually the community leaders (village headmen) who would control the situation according to their formal duties and as volunteers.

With regard to assistance measures, volunteers also would talk separately with a husband and a wife. They talked to them about personal rights and the effects of their encroachments **according to law without pointing out who was right and who was wrong**.

In addition, the volunteer team and some community members collaboratively did analysis on the problem, revealing that the cause of FV was alcohol drinking of men, which made them loose consciousness and battered their wives. The men reasoned that the battering was done because their wives always grumbled about their behaviors. For this reason, the community initiated a club for reducing and refraining from drinking alcohol and grumbling about husbands by making a resolution to reduce the amount of alcohol gradually so that they could completely refrain from it.

The results of the club's operations revealed that it could not persuade many members to join the club; and there were not many drinkers who would encourage one another to refrain from drinking. It was found that female volunteers tried to reduce their grumbling about their husband because they realized that they were

volunteers and leaders who had to be a good role model. However, what they did was just reducing their sound volume of grumbling. This effort did not show much positive result and could not lead to any extension of activities, which made people no longer talk about the two clubs. However, it was found that the number of incidents was decreasing. In 2003, there were groups of visitors coming to study the community's work and then the history of the clubs was presented. The visitors replicated the concept and developed a project on refraining from alcohol and FV in their communities.

2.2 Output of the project

After four year of their performances, it was found that there was a constant change in the working model. At the initial stage of the project, all the volunteers showed a great enthusiasm and interest in their work. Because the project was a new phenomenon to the community, and at the same time the volunteers had the opportunity to handle a FV case in which the wife was battered by her husband in the community. The success of the case strengthened the confidence of volunteers in this project.

However, at present, it was found that with the accumulation of their experiences, volunteers were quicker to respond to FV cases. A good indicator of their satisfaction was the recognition of the community members on FV as a social problem that could affect anyone in the community, not a personal problem any more, and the acceptance of the principles of law which do not allow a person to harm anyone physically, not even they are husband and wife.

Although there were still cases of FV in the community, however, the people in community view that the problem had decreased and they always gave preliminary help to one another. The community members admitted that not only the number of FV but also other forms of violence such as in a new year celebration party had been reduced.

The community program for prevention of FV and helping victims had been extended from the issue of FV to other kinds of violence in the community. For example, community sanctions were utilized for the cases involving a man having a quarrel with his mother-in-law, a father battering his step son, and a girl having an extra-marital pregnancy. This was to create an understanding with the people in community to make them live in the community with no humiliation and conflicts within the community and unfair employment.

3. Summary and Analysis

The prevention and solution of VAW, FV the provision of assistance to those in need by the community are considered necessary and deserve a continuing cooperation since these problems exist in every community. If these problems are ignored without invention by the communities, they will affect not only one person but also everyone in the communities. With a view to the community context, the communities could do better than other external organizations which are not familiar with the ways of life in the communities and prefer rigid measures for implementation. As a result, those who were treated badly by their hard approach could not live in the community any longer despite their wish to stay at the same place.

Many communities could be developed after this community which has more potential than other external organizations or anyone in the community expect.

They should perform their work in accordance with the ways of life in the community and give more opportunities to anyone without discrimination against sex and stigmatization. Male involvement, community analysis and insight of the psycho-social roots of the issues are important factors of cooperation in response to the problem.

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Organizing working system of One Stop Crisis Center(OSCC) dealing with violence against women in community hospitals

GAPS IN WORKING ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THAI SOCIETY

The obstacles of working on violence against women were found at the level of policy, administrative and operation. Although in Thai society, there have been policies on the issue; the budget for the implementation wasn't sufficiently allocated, with the lack of staffs, their readiness, coordination of working plans of ministry-leveled agents and their clear operation level. At the operation level, the agents do not always know regulations of concerned sectors. The significant individual factors are managing knowledge and adjusting attitudes towards violence lacking realization and understanding about processes of the problem in part of gender-based violence and attitudes among professions (Boonmongkon et al., 2005; MOPH, 2004;Kraisuraphong, 2005; Sanhajariya, 2005).

An analysis on working on violence against women in Thai society suggests that most agents have focused neither on family violence in providing gender-based services nor empowerment people concerned with violence clearly. The previous work of OSCC was mostly medical based. There ere only two OSCCs defining violence against women in relation to gender-based violence and there were not many OSCCs that employed gender-sensitive, cultural sensitive or client-centered approach.They focused on the issue of integrated services and multidisciplinary work, However , in provincial hospitals, it is found that the service institutions' structure with a clear division into sections and a large number of staffs with strictly defined duties is another factor disabling comprehensively integrated services according to the goals. Thus, health service on violence against women has been found not yet satisfactory enough in policy or operation level (Boonmongkon et al., 2005). Furthermore, almost all OSCCs have not run preventive work or collaborative work with communities.

Mahidol University, with experiences of running projects to develop model of organizing integrated RH services in community level, found that smaller agents could provide better friendly comprehensive services and better access to the service clients' need than those with rigid structure because they would have more agility and closeness with communities. Accordingly, Mahidol University developed OSCCs in district level to study 1) what is the appropriate system, scope and concept of the services on violence against women at district level and the level of possibility to fill the gap of the present service system 2) how to develop service system to run the work according to the first goal.

METHODOLOGY

This research is action research employing feminist participatory with 3 components :1) Participation, this means make an agreement and ways of working together and setting the scope of roles and responsibilities, ways and goals of working 2) gender sensitivity means developing potential to deal with the problem, which “needs” an understanding about its condition, working context and system of the current service institutions, staffs’ concepts and attitudes to the problem and level of significance of violence against women in their views 3) specific context is adjusting and developing the process through analyses and criticism

The hospital of which its working model was a district hospital with 60 beds, responsible for the population approximately of 1000,000, which could provide secondary medical treatment and general operation. It had its own laboratory and 3-4 regular physicians (including the director). With Mahidol University’s research team, the hospital’s staffs used to conduct action research on comprehensive RH services. Accordingly, their work was gender-sensitive, cultural sensitive and client-centered to some extent.

OBJECTIVES

A project’s concept of the problem of violence against women is an assurance that violence against women is gender-based violence, which is structural violence that has been rooted unconsciously in the society for a long period of time. For this reason, the principle and main concept of the services should be gender and cultural sensitive, client-centered and based on human right perspective.

The desired outcomes are--the violence victims will be reinforced in their potential; given primary help to enable them to take themselves from the suppressed social structure, not just relieving from physical or mental illness in current situation; and given information that will enable them to make their own decision without unnecessarily considering as to if the it can solve the problem or not.

As for the service providers, they are expected to work while keeping their status, emotion and confidence in the system, their practice and values. Furthermore, they are expected not to feel guilty when victims of Violence against women cannot escape from the problem.

OSCC DEVELOPING PROCESS

Model development OSCC system in the project was as the same of that in other places, that is, it employed process of training, study trip, OSCC staff meetings and case conference among professions. However, it employed different concepts from those of other agents at least in two parts 1) Instead of learning mechanism of working procedures, it began with talking to make a mutual understanding about violence against women, thus resulting in its acknowledgement and creating attitudes to working in the same direction and desirable way. 2) It initiated working in the community while providing OSCC services, thus resulting in learning the possibility of the problem in the community, concepts and ways to deal with the problem from people in the community themselves, thus becoming the lessons from working in the community.

Accordingly, significant meanings relating violence against women in the project mutually understood are: 1)the violence victims can be of any sexes then family violence’s victims can be husbands or wives, 2) family violence, especially family violence is a public issues, 3) family violence is a social and health problem, and family Violence is violation of human rights.

OUTCOME

According to the above concept and mechanism of organizing the system, the OSCC was not only a one-stop crisis center but a network which has work coordination among agents of various professions and levels of operation, which will provide collaborative help to the cases according to each agent's role.

Comprehensive health service at OSCC

Based on knowledge, understanding and experiences of providing services in the OSCC, although the issue has not been announced as a policy yet, it can be listed as a policy as follows:

1. The hospital's staffs and service providers must account this issue a priority. The indicator is the protocol of the work, including setting patient flow system, staff teams, locations, data system and security system with layers of data access; preventing repeating violence during providing the services; transferring data within and among agents; and coordinating cooperation among professions.

2. The hospital's staffs in all levels must have introductory knowledge about OSCC and hold a concept that they must not treat the service users with re-victimization.

3. There must be 24-houred service and phone counseling services.

4. The services must be for free.

5. A principle of providing service is the service providers must respect the service users' decision.

6. The service providers must work with communities through coordinating help and campaigning for stopping violence against children and women. Although the project could work with only two pilot communities, for the past 4 years, it is found that there have been visitors from other communities having study trips in here to apply some models for their own communities.

Multidisciplinary approach

The principle of the operation is making a mutual agreement on the work, which must allow collaborative learning and mutual respect as humans. However, according to Boonmongkon et al. (2005), working of government sector did not allow other groups such as community to have much involvement in giving comments or developing work, which was then a weak point of working of the government sector. As for the project, principle of participation was proposed in all working procedures, thus allowing adjusting working processes in accordance with working in the field. The important issues that were found adjusted in the project are as follows:

Acceptance and adjusting goal

Preliminarily, when proposing the project, Mahidol's research team presented the scope of working on violence against women in the form of developing the service system to empower concerned people in all groups, including violence victims, perpetrators and affected people so that they could go back to live in their community, by focusing on family violence issues.

However, during the first period of the research, the research team proposed the three broad goals of working in OSCC in accordance with the working condition and potential capacity--1) Providing services to help children and women who are violence victims 2) Transmitting information to reduce the problem of violence against children and women 3) Allowing the community to have involvement in solving the problem

But, three years after the operation (2001-2004) when the staffs gained more experience, it turned to be that "solving the problem" could not deal only with violence victims alone but also with the violence users and community. Accordingly, the working frame of OSCC was automatically extended to the perpetrators, affected people and community. Furthermore, it is found that the work must be based on the concept of peace means allowing people in society to make a choice instead of law process with penalty and discriminating between right and wrong people. For this reason, working based on peaceful means is a way to promote their potential experienced and learned by the research team. The research team also created an understanding with the community and persuaded the community to give chances to people with failure, who may be men or women and children or adults.

Extending research team

During the first period of the operation, the agents that were formed as the OSCC network mainly consisted of hospital staffs but a certain period later, there were more agents involving the operation, which were teachers from secondary schools, social workers from the Provincial Child Protection Center, policemen under sub-district police stations, municipality officers, monks, officers in Local Administrative Organization and two communities in the district. Since 2001, the year of the operation, although the number of the participants has not been steady, throughout the operation, there were always representatives of each group joining the work. Sometimes, the monks presented their ideas on developing ways of working and preached people in the temple about violence issues.

From family violence of adults to sexual violence of adolescents

During the first period of working, the research team was hospital's staffs who were responsible for pushing working on family violence. After collaboratively working as a network through processes of monthly meetings to inform the situation, share working concepts and seek helping cases, other agents began to take more roles and adjust their working issues in accordance with their context.

The changes were more apparent two years after of the operation. At least three schools integrated the issue of sexuality, sexual violence and pregnancy in school age into network's working, with a project that had been already run by the government, that is Project "Friend Corner" whereas the hospital' staffs still worked on family violence and had more interest in sexual violence in adolescents together with the AIDS problem, which is an issue that the hospital had already seriously dealt with.

OBSTACLES AND WORKING BURDEN THAT MUST BE CONTINUED

In an overall picture, OSCC's operation was satisfactory for the network agents as can be seen that there were organizations outside the network that had study visits in here and applied the working models for their organizations and that the work of the OSCC became a case study that the Ministry of Public Health demonstrated to communities that would like to extend their work on OSCC in community level. However, there were still some issues that OSCC and its network had to run continually and adjust, that is:

Staff's attitudes to violence agents women—It is found that only some staffs could adjust their attitudes according to the way that was collaboratively determined or that they could adjust their attitudes only in some cases. Generally, members of the network who did not seriously work would view violence against women as hurting physical and mental parts. In addition, there were some staffs and some villagers viewing that those becoming violence victims due to their serious violation against social standards, such as a female student having an abortion or a wife assaulted by her husband while having out-marital sex, deserved the violence. They did not believe that a man would rape her lover. On the other hand, they viewed that the female case used the OSCC as a tool helping her to force her lover to marry her or ask for some compensation. And in the case that the staffs had a close relationship with the couple, not as relatives but for example, as colleagues, they would not interfere in the affair because of viewing that this was a personal affair.

Being unable to conduct continual follow-up or provide services to the violence victims to make them survive in the society according to their potential—A main problem is that the violence victims did not regularly get the services. The fact that there was a small number of staffs, who were heavily burdened, made almost all cases discharged from the OSCC because they could not conduct a follow-up on the cases. In some communities, although there were volunteers ready to give continual services, the cases refused to receive their help.

Different views of professions or classes of staffs—The issue was an obstacle of good services. For example, in the case that a doctor did not listen to a nurse's view or the fact that in each profession, there are distinctive concepts, points of view, regulations or restriction, obstructing smooth communication among professions. In some cases, this distinction disabled them to help the cases according to other professions' need, which brought about problems and conflicts, for example, between law agents and public health agents.

Making an understanding of cases' needs—Although the staffs had experiences of working with more than 200 service users, conditions of the problem and different needs of individuals sometimes made the staffs unable to reach the problem so that there were mistakes in the services.

Working with mass media—As for effective working on campaigning, mass media is an important agent that can create an understanding and arouse the working movement. However, the OSCC did not have much collaboration with mass media, especially local mass media because mass media had never been considered important since the early period of the operation. This problem is also because there were not many local mass media agents and they usually consisted of a plurality of professions with too much workload to provide sufficient help coordination to the network.

Lessons learned

A concept of working among staffs in professions is that they must respect and believe that they have potential to operate the work, which is as the same of the concept that they must believe that the victims can survive in the problem and the concept of feminist counseling.

The staffs' cooperative analysis will reveal the problem and result in an adjustment process of working in accordance with the continuing work. Accordingly, an adjustment of issues or ways of working in the project is an adjustment through the staffs' realization and experiences, which will lessen the resistance and increases help coordination.

Participation must be that from people in all levels and professions. Government and academic sector must realize that other professions or communities have their own ways of thinking, which needs mutual learning. And they also have to aware of exercising power, which may be unconscious directing due to having a higher social status.

CONCLUSION

The development of the OSCC working system in district level in the project responded that working on violence against women in Thai society can be developed in term of outreach and non-outreach working rather well although the staff ratio was not different from that in big hospitals. They could extend their work to concerned people, not only to violence users according to traditional concepts. Working process in the network system could allow smooth working and extending dimensions of the services to enable the problematic people to live in the society as other people in the community, rather than healing them in physical and mental part.

The attributive factors of the work are such as, attention of the staff, especially the OSCC administrators. If they are determined and set a fair administrative system, they can push the staffs to work in collaboration. In addition, this depends on latitudinal initiation process, which will result in involvement of all parts in term of creation, adjustment and development in accordance with the agents' working pattern; their understanding and realization of the condition of the existing problem; their continuous potential promotion; and their attention to their own life quality, which should not be judged only by the success in helping the violence victims.

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