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Developing Operational Policies on Gender-based Violence in Peru: Impact of the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG) Workshop

Peru

OCTOBER 2009

Gender-based Violence in Peru

Gender-based violence (GBV) is pervasive in Peru. Nationally, 41 percent of women ages 15–49 who have ever been in a relationship report physical abuse by their husbands or partners.[1] Ten percent of women interviewed as part of *ENDES Continua 2004–2006*, the national Demographic and Health Survey, reported that they had been forced to have sexual relations with their husband or partner in the last year, and 68 percent of women stated that their husband or partner exercised some type of control over them, such as psychological or physical control.

Keenly attuned to the gravity of the situation, the government of Peru has been addressing GBV for many years. In 1993, policymakers created a normative framework for prevention of and protection against family violence. The government further strengthened its policy framework against family violence by establishing provisions for law enforcement against sexual violence. In 1996, the government created the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES), which instituted emergency women's centers to help women access police intervention, legal assistance, and health and psychological care.

In 2002, MIMDES and four other ministries (Education, Justice, Interior, and Health) formed the Inter-Ministerial Committee on GBV and worked together to create the National Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women, which mandates the development of protocols for an integrated response to women who experience violence.[2]

To parallel the legal provisions to prevent and protect against GBV, the government of Peru also established new healthcare system responses to address GBV and launched a major policy effort in 2001. As part of the National Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women, the National Guidelines for Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health Care direct all state-sponsored services to design and apply mechanisms, instruments, and procedures to continuously improve the quality of services for women who experience GBV. In particular, the guidelines required that 100 percent of health services provide GBV-related services for survivors by 2007.

In 2005, the former Minister of Health, Dr. Pilar Mazzetti, publicly voiced her concern about GBV. Following her statements, the Ministry of Health (MINSA) and the USAID/Peru Mission made a formal request to the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG) and the USAID Office of Women in Development (WID) to design and facilitate a workshop to provide practical tools for scaling up GBV programming in the country. With its legacy of addressing GBV, MINSA served as a strong ally for the local partners of USAID and the IGWG facilitation team, providing political support for an even more focused effort to address GBV in Peru.

[1] Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI). 2007. *Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar (ENDES) Continua 2004–2006*. Lima, Peru: INEI.

[2] The plan was approved under Supreme Decree N° 017-2001-PROMUDEH and was developed by the Inter-Ministerial Committee, chaired by PROMUDEH and comprising representatives from the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, and Interior.

Our Approach

In February 2006, the IGWG and WID conducted a two-day technical workshop in Peru on gender analysis as a principal component of developing GBV programs. The 31 participants included key stakeholders—government officials, NGO and civil society groups, and women's organizations—involved in implementing GBV protocols in healthcare settings. The workshop began with a discussion of key gender and GBV concepts. Participants analyzed definitions of gender terminology, arriving at a working definition of GBV in the Peruvian context. Representatives from the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Health, and Women and Social Development helped orient participants to the current policy environment by describing their GBV prevention and response activities. Participants analyzed the current opportunities and constraints in GBV programming and used gender integration approaches to assess their programs.

Immediately following the two-day workshop, the IGWG-WID team provided technical assistance to 20 representatives from several different divisions of MINSA who sit on the Intrasectoral Commission on GBV. The Commission is a government body comprised of representatives from MINSA as well as the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Education, and Women and Social Development and is charged with implementing the National Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women, through the work of the various government ministries represented on the Commission. The technical assistance focused on how to effectively implement existing policies to improve health services for those affected by GBV. Outputs of the workshop and technical assistance included two plans directed at MINSA: (1) a Revised Annual Operational Plan for the Intrasectoral Commission and (2) a Contingency Plan for carrying out urgent activities. The Commission internally approved the Contingency Plan in March 2006 and the Operational Plan in mid-2006.

Results and Outcomes

The IGWG-WID workshop and technical assistance were catalysts for several policy changes that have improved the response to GBV in Peru:

- Establishment of the Intrasectoral Commission on GBV, which identified and prioritized themes and prepared operational and contingency plans
- Development and approval of the Intrasectoral Commission's Operational Plan Against Violence Toward Women 2006–2008
- Commitment of six regional governments to incorporating the theme of violence into their local development plans—as a result of the Intrasectoral Commission's six regional workshops
- Inclusion of CARE Protocols for Addressing Violence Against Women in the Intrasectoral Commission's Contingency Plan
- Printing and dissemination (to public sector clinics) of flowcharts for in-patient and outpatient care for treating cases of violence against women
- Intrasectoral Commission's development of a Technical Guide for Integrated Care on GBV for use in public health service delivery
- Intrasectoral Commission's development of a new training-of-trainers manual on use of the CARE protocols for GBV (MINSA regional trainers currently are using this manual, which the ministry approved in 2006 and published as an official document for training health sector personnel to strengthen their response to GBV)

This brief was produced for review by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by staff of Task Order 1 of the USAID | Health Policy Initiative. The authors' views do not necessarily represent those of USAID or the U.S. Government. Task Order 1 is funded by USAID under Contract No. GPO-I-01-05-00040-00, beginning September 30, 2005. Task Order 1 is implemented by Futures Group, in collaboration with the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WRA), and Futures Institute.

For more information please contact:

Health Policy Initiative, Task Order 1
Futures Group
One Thomas Circle, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005 USA
Tel: (202) 775-9680
Fax: (202) 775-9694
Email: policyinfo@futuresgroup.com
http://ghiqc.usaid.gov
http://www.healthpolicyinitiative.com