

## **Background and Details on Key Findings on the Family Violence Landscape**

### **Findings from comparisons of data from the social service agencies, and PPO applications**

From 2016 to 2020, 76% of applications for PPOs were filed by females, while the remaining 24% were filed by males. During this time, a majority of PPO applications (70%) were made by persons against their spouses or ex-spouses, 11% were filed by parents against their children or children-in-law, and the remaining 20% were filed by siblings, children, Guardians, or other relatives<sup>1</sup>. While not all PPO applications are successful (they may be withdrawn or dismissed), this suggests that spousal violence constitutes most of the family violence cases, although other forms of familial violence remain of concern.

A review of the data from PPO applications, FVSCs/ ISIFPSC, and FSCs suggested several other risk factors including staying in one- or two-room flats and attaining secondary and below educational level, that might increase the likelihood of a person having contact with the PPO system or experiencing family violence compared to the general population.

### **MSF and NCSS' 2020 joint study on the Intergenerational Transmission of Criminality and Other Social Disadvantages (INTRACS)**

The study covers approximately 50,000 ever-married individuals born in 1980 and 1985. As the analysis uses population administrative data<sup>2</sup>, the findings are representative of two cohorts of ever-married individuals, who were aged 35 and 40 in 2020. This study may be expanded to include more birth cohorts in the future.

Of the approximately 50,000 ever-married individuals born in 1980 and 1985, 831 individuals have filed a Personal Protection Order (PPO) application, while 630 individuals have ever had a PPO application made against them. Not all PPO applications were successful, as some could have been withdrawn or dismissed by the Court.

The INTRACS study found that the following groups were statistically more likely to apply for a PPO, or have a PPO made against them:

- a. Persons who had prior contact with child protection and welfare system;
- b. Persons who previously applied for a PPO;
- c. Persons who had prior contact with the criminal justice system; and
- d. Persons with highest qualification attained of Primary & below and Secondary.

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

<sup>2</sup> Administrative data are existing data on hand that had been previously collated by MSF and NCSS for the purposes of programmes or schemes administration, and are not drawn from a survey of selected respondents.

## **Key Findings from Focus Group Discussions**

The Taskforce conducted two focus group discussions (FGDs) in August 2020 and January 2021 with more than 80 stakeholders in the family violence landscape, to understand perspectives and discuss ideas to address family violence in Singapore.

Key findings are reflected below and were aligned with findings from the INTRACS study.

### **August 2020 FGD**

The August 2020 FGD was focused on addressing family violence in Singapore. Participants at the discussion included stakeholders from FVSCs, crisis shelters, FSCs, hospitals, and NGOs. At the FGD, participants called for:

- Greater public awareness and a more in-depth understanding of family violence. This could involve analysis of family structures, understanding the impact of financial stressors, living environments, and the ability of individuals to manage conflict.
- The need to strengthen the quality of help (e.g. by social workers and Police first-responders) and networks of support available to both survivors and perpetrators.
- The introduction of legal levers, such as Court-ordered mental health assessment and treatment for perpetrators.

### **January 2021 FGD**

The January 2021 FGD was focused on strengthening perpetrators' rehabilitation. Participants at the discussion included key stakeholders and community partners who work closely with perpetrators of family violence, such as frontline responders, SSAs, psychologists, legal representatives, Police officers and prison counsellors.

Participants at these engagements shared observations that family violence was often correlated with factors including life stressors such as financial difficulties, unstable employment, marital conflicts, and parenting and caregiving stress; breakdown in communication at home; and drug and alcohol addiction. Ideas on how to strengthen perpetrators' rehabilitation included:

- Strengthening of perpetrator-centric support services, such as the introduction of targeted intervention. This includes providing support to perpetrators with mental health issues that contributed to their violent behaviour.
- Encouraging perpetrators to seek help by enabling them to understand why their violent behaviour is unacceptable, building a common understanding of family violence, and more actively reaching out to perpetrators to offer help.
- Helping perpetrators understand that their abusive behaviour is unacceptable by building a common understanding of family violence, including what constitutes violent and non-acceptable behaviours among survivors, perpetrators, family members, young children and communities.