



## NeNaMu: Adapting a violence prevention curriculum in Timor-Leste

To prevent violence against women and girls in Timor-Leste, the Nabilan Programme set out to adapt, translate and implement Stepping Stones<sup>1</sup>, a well-known evidence-based model. Nabilan partnered with the Prevention Collaborative to work on the adaptation, drawing on elements from other models to complement Stepping Stones. The outcome is NeNaMu, a programme and curriculum in Tetum, one of the country's official languages. Lessons from NeNaMu offer guidance for other groups seeking to work in partnership to adapt, test and implement violence-prevention training models.

### ABOUT THE NAME

The team abbreviated a Tetum phrase, “Neon Nain ba Mudansa”, to name the programme NeNaMu. It cannot be translated into English directly but is understood to refer to perceptions of both the heart and mind, explaining how positive change can happen.

**“In the very beginning, I thought, ‘This is just a curriculum that we take from the Salamander Trust and then implement in our project’, but I soon realised, ‘Oh no!’ We had to look at our context and what is the problem we want to address, and also we needed expertise about transformative–affective programming. ... The reality is that we needed the process.”**

–Helio Afranio Soares, Nabilan, Timor-Leste

### GOAL

Nabilan wanted a violence-prevention training programme for Timor-Leste in the Tetum language that would:

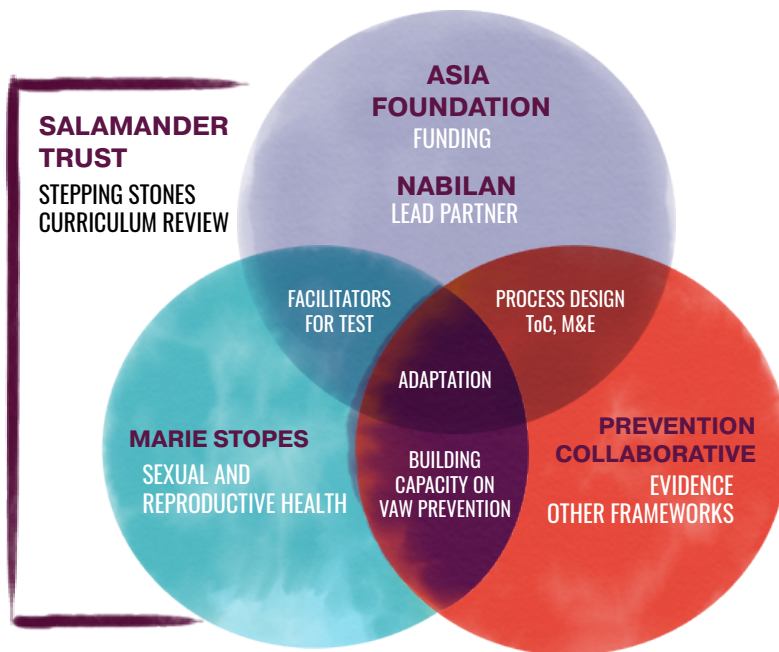
- ▶ be contextually relevant
- ▶ be understood and digestible
- ▶ involve the right people, at the right time
- ▶ link to services
- ▶ connect and engage with communities
- ▶ be delivered in appropriate and effective language, writing style and format

### PROGRAMME

NeNaMu involves young men, older men, young women and older women, mostly in separate groups, to work through the same materials. The groups then come together in a structured way to listen to each other's experiences and consider changes at the community level. At subsequent meetings with the wider community, NeNaMu participants share their learning as a first step towards collective action.

## PARTNERSHIP

Nabilan partnered with Marie Stopes Timor-Leste, a strong local organisation with similar values, an experienced team of facilitators, experience of engagement with young people, and a focus on sexual and reproductive health. Joining as a partner, the Prevention Collaborative contributed process design and familiarity with a rich evidence base on violence prevention. The three organisations went on to adapt, translate, and test a violence-prevention curriculum for the country. Nabilan and Marie Stopes Timor-Leste will pilot NeNaMu in Dili, the capital city, before implementing in other locations.



## PARTNERS

- **Nabilan initiated**, funded and led the adaptation partnership.
- **Marie Stopes Timor-Leste** partnered in adapting the curriculum and in training and testing sessions.
- **Salamander Trust**, the organisation that developed Stepping Stones, facilitated intensive training at the start, and reviewed the Theory of Change and session summaries. They continue to provide valuable advice and support<sup>2</sup>.
- **Prevention Collaborative** contributed to process design (adaptation and testing); identifying supplementary resources; and developing a Theory of Change and M&E framework, particularly for tracking the progress of couples.

## SOURCES

### STEPPING STONES

The team chose **Stepping Stones** as the basis for NeNaMu because:

- Strong evidence from many countries shows that it is effective
- Positive impact on both violence prevention and sexual and reproductive health outcomes made Stepping Stones ideal for the partnership between Nabilan and Marie Stopes Timor-Leste
- Nabilan implementing partners were excited to try the group-based curriculum model
- The implementation timeline is shorter than others

### SASA! TOGETHER

The team included and adapted sessions from **SASA! Together** to complement Stepping Stones material because:

- SASA! focuses directly on violence from various angles
- Nabilan had already adapted and implemented SASA! in rural areas and in Dili, as KOKOSA!
- 'Power' concepts were particularly useful and well understood in the community

### MARIE STOPES TIMOR-LESTE

- The team included content that Marie Stopes and Nabilan already use in Timor-Leste, to enrich the material, fill gaps on sexuality and sexual and reproductive health and provide alternative training content more appropriate to the context

### Indashyikirwa

The team included and adapted sessions from **Indashyikirwa** (implemented by CARE Rwanda) to complement Stepping Stones material because:

- Nabilan wanted to understand the potential impact of the peer-group sessions on couples
- An evaluation in Rwanda found Indashyikirwa's couples-based model and activities to be appropriate and effective
- Indashyikirwa also integrated the concept of power

# STEPS

## 2019 | December

### PROJECT BEGINS!

### IN OUR VOICES

"As an organisation, [Marie Stopes] had to have some internal advocacy about why is it so important to invest in these long term projects because it was quite different to everything else that we do."

## 2020 | January — March

Familiarise team with original curriculum and core components.

Training and facilitation practice:

- with Salamander Trust on Stepping Stones
- with Prevention Collaborative on VAW

Review Stepping Stones curriculum in depth; identify adaptation needs; make changes, adding elements from Indashyikirwa, SASA! Together, Marie Stopes and TAF approaches.

Form steering group committee.

### IN OUR VOICES

"Early on, we all participated in Stepping Stones training ourselves, so we got to experience as individuals a transformational change. And that was fantastic, for us to really understand what we were doing and how valuable it could be."

## 2020 | April — September

Review, re-write and translate the curriculum.

Develop Theory of Change and M&E processes.

## 2020 | October — December

Practise facilitation skills.

Review curriculum and referral pathways.

Develop M&E processes.

Community engagement.

### IN OUR VOICES

"We had as many real-life practice sessions as possible... It gave our team the chance to practice activities and interactive skills in a safe environment, observed by a very experienced trainer from the Nabilan team. ... We would get feedback on what went really well and what we could do better next time, so we had quite a big build-up even before the curriculum testing phase."

## 2021 | January — February

Facilitator Training of Trainers.

M&E Training.

### IN OUR VOICES

"We made a big investment in documenting the testing: we engaged M&E teams who observed and took notes for every session, and conducted group and individual interviews weekly, to learn about the curriculum from many perspectives: Does it make sense? Are the participants learning? Are facilitators meeting their objectives?"

## 2021 | March and October

Curriculum pre-testing (interrupted for six months by Covid).

## 2021 | March — October

Update the curriculum.

Facilitator discussion sessions (online).

# LEARNING

## Partnership

It takes work, energy and time to bring together different partners – including donors – with different skills and experience. Sustainability depends on continuity in the values of partner organisations when new leaders and staff join. Flexibility is essential to success and impact.

## Accessibility

It is tempting to load written materials with ideas, evidence and guidance, but the team was alive to the self-defeating risks of including too much reading and analysis for facilitators to manage. Short text, videos with subtitles and audio tracks are effective alternatives to dense text.

## Facilitators

The team identified many skilled female facilitators inspired by feminist values but finding male facilitators of a similar calibre was a challenge. Nabilan will run intensive NeNaMu courses for potential facilitators to meet this gap, as well as providing training for specific target groups.

## Documentation

Working on something complex with many different partners over a long period of time requires thorough documentation to ensure that rich discussions, conclusions and plans are captured.

## M&E

The team engaged an external organisation to undertake M&E, working in Tetum language. The results were rich in data and detail, but thin on analysis and interpretation – a blow-by-blow rather than filtered account. How to strike the best balance between observation and analysis? This remains a question.

## Responsiveness

The team adjusted to the context as they went along. Rather than recruiting facilitators from the community during the pilot phase, as planned, they decided to deepen the skills and confidence of Marie Stopes and Nabilan facilitators. Future training of trainers (ToTs) for peer facilitators will last several months.

## Participants

Large numbers of young men and women were keen to join the testing cohort as individuals; to identify older and cross-generational participants will require new strategies. Incentives such as travel and phone allowances enabled participants to attend sessions and keep in touch with the team.

## Mitigating risks

Disclosing violence involves risks for both participants and facilitators. The team ensured that immediate support was available as well as referrals to services. The core facilitation team had appropriate training, social work accreditation and access to external psychosocial support, as well as daily team debriefs, self-reflection and care.

## PROCESS OUTCOMES

The adaptation process yielded a culturally appropriate violence-prevention training curriculum in Tetum that has been carefully pre-tested. Along with this primary outcome, the process resulted in:

- ▶ strong national and international partnerships
- ▶ real buy-in and ownership by Timorese organisations and facilitators
- ▶ new and strengthened facilitation skills and methods, enthusiastically adopted
- ▶ new (in addition to adapted) content and activities
- ▶ anecdotal and observed impact on both the team of facilitators and on the testing cohort
- ▶ rich questions for M&E follow-up
- ▶ insights to inform final pilot design

## Notes

1. Welbourn, A. (2016) Stepping Stones and Stepping Stones Plus: A training package on gender, generation, HIV, communication, and relationship skills, Rugby, UK: Practical Action Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3362/9781780448916>
2. Salamander Trust have developed some guidelines for adapting Stepping Stones: Gordon G. with Welbourn A., Trust (2017) Guidelines for Adapting the Stepping Stones and Stepping Stones Plus Training Programme on Gender, Generation, HIV, Communication and Relationship Skills. Salamander Trust. Accessible here <https://steppingstonesfeedback.org/resources/adaptations-adaptaciones/>



Prevention Collaborative works to strengthen the ability of key actors to deliver cutting-edge violence-prevention programmes informed by research-based evidence, practice-based learning and feminist principles. For more information go to [www.prevention-collaborative.org](http://www.prevention-collaborative.org)

©2021 Prevention Collaborative and Nabilan.

Suggested citation: Prevention Collaborative and Nabilan: NeNaMu – Adapting a violence-prevention curriculum in Timor-Leste (Case Study); 2021. Authored by Annie Holmes. Edited by Tania Ghosh.

Designed by Ana Lucia Nustes.

Partner websites: [Nabilan](#), [Stepping Stones](#), [Marie Stopes Timor-Leste](#) and [The Asia Foundation Timor-Leste](#)

Cover photo by: Marie Stopes Timor-Leste