

## MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES SHADOW REPORT TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

### Annexes

**1)** *The PNG government has signed up to and ratified many of the United Nations' (UN) international human rights instruments that monitor and help safeguard the rights of women and children. Several articles in these Conventions are relevant for realizing or monitoring improvements in the lives of those affected by sexual and family abuse, including: protecting people from torture, cruel and degrading treatment (Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights); ensuring the right to health (Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights); pledging to take steps to eliminate discrimination against women with relation to health care (Article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women); and taking into consideration the special needs of rural women, in particular their access to health facilities (Article 14b of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women). The PNG Government has also ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

### **2) Patient Story**

*Joanne<sup>1</sup>, a severely malnourished mother, attended an MSF-run family support centre in the national capital district with her 10-month-old baby girl. While Joanne had been out begging, trying to find food for them to eat, the child stayed with its biological father. However, when Joanne returned, the baby was intensely distressed and could not be soothed. The following day the baby developed a fever and Joanne noticed that the girl's genitals were swollen and bruised. Joanne immediately suspected the child's father as he had already sexually abused Joanne's eldest daughter. Joanne had sent that older daughter away to live with distant relatives in another province, as in the capital district there had been no community or state-supported options within with to place her.*

*Joanne expressed deep feelings of hopelessness regarding her ability to do anything regarding the new discovery of the father's sexual abuse of her baby. MSF staff tried to get Joanne and her baby into provisional safe housing. However, each of the handful of small safe houses in the capital reported that they were already full. Joanne had no other choice than to return to her home with her child.*

*When Joanne returned to the family support centre for her baby's follow-up treatment, a room in a safe house had become available. Both she and her child moved into the facility. However, with financial assistance not provided in the safe house, Joanne faced another impossible choice: safe house rules insist that children cannot be left unattended, which meant it was impossible for Joanne to try to find a job, or to beg for money or food to survive. Defeated and out of options, Joanne felt she had no other option than to return with her child to her abusive partner.*

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<sup>1</sup> Name has been changed to protect the patient's identity.