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Policing and Gender Violence in Vanuatu

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Abstract

Gender violence is one of the greatest challenges to peace and security in Pacific Island Countries. The persistence of this problem is often linked to the limits of state-based policing authority. It is argued that this approach fails to grapple adequately with hybrid systems of regulatory authority in Pacific Island Countries that include customary and faith-based forms of authority. Feminist inquiry into the difficulties Pacific women face in securing justice when they are the victims of gendered crimes frequently highlights the gendered failings of state and customary systems of justice, finding that both systems reflect and further entrench the subordinated status of women. This paper addresses the tension between the apparent limits of state-centred models of policing and the shortfalls of hybridised structures of regulatory authority. It reports a theoretically informed empirical study that investigated how ni-Vanuatu women understand gender violence and the role that police can play in its prevention. Using participant research and photo elicitation surveys, we asked 1) how does the authority of policing agencies operate when addressing violence against women in relation to other sites of international and local sociocultural authority in the Vanuatu context, and 2) how do women understand and value policing authority relative to other sites of regulatory authority? We found that, while police in Vanuatu operate in the context of constructive complementarity with other forms of authority, women valued police, identifying them as the key source of regulatory authority that could provide help if their partner became violent or if they were threatened.

Keywords

Gender violence; policing; Pacific Island countries; hybridity.

Introduction

Gender violence has long been recognised as one of the greatest challenges to peace and security in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). Recent studies conducted in Samoa, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga and New Caledonia suggested that 40–70 per cent of women experience violence at the hands of intimate partners and family during their lifetimes (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre 2013; Ma'a Faffine mo e Famili 2012; Ride and Soaki 2019; Salomon and Hamelin 2010; Secretariat of the Pacific Community [SPC] 2006, 2009a, 2009b; SPC and United Nations Population Fund 2001; Vanuatu Women's Centre [VWC] and Vanuatu Statistics Office 2011). Years of reform addressing state and community responses to this issue have made little difference to prevalence rates (Bull, George and Curth-Bibb 2019).

The persistence of this problem is often linked to the failure of policing. Researchers have drawn attention to ambivalence towards, or alienation from, formal policing authority in some Pacific Island contexts. Writing about Solomon Islands, Geoff White stated that Pacific Island populations generally view state-based systems of authority as a 'distant presence' with an 'uncertain relevance' (2007: 6). This arguably affects how Pacific peoples understand the authority of state-based institutions of justice; in addition to being under-resourced and geographically limited, they may also be viewed as 'foreign' or imported entities that lack local legitimacy (Forsyth 2009).

Research has been critical of externally driven programs of policing reform that are based unproblematically on assumptions about state monopolisation of the means of force in PICs (Dinnen and Allen 2013; Dinnen and Macleod 2009; Greener 2009; Harris and Goldsmith 2010; Hughes, Hunt and Curth-Bibb 2013). It is commonly argued that this approach fails to grapple adequately with the ways regulatory authority functions in Pacific Island societies and the factors that may potentially constrain policing legitimacy (Dinnen and Allen 2013; Dinnen and Macleod 2009; Greener, Fish and Tekulu 2011). In such contexts, informal sources of regulatory authority, whether customary or religious, are said to contribute to a system of 'regulatory pluralism' (Dinnen and McLeod 2009: 335). Such a system may be more efficient and capable when managing social order and even dispensing appropriate forms of justice than reliance on state-based law and order mechanisms alone.

Some scholars have used the concept of hybrid authority structures to convey the idea of 'constructive complementarity' between formal state security agencies and other informal sources of regulatory authority (Dinnen and Peake 2013: 572). Such work celebrates the productive opportunities associated with the recognition of regulatory pluralism that works 'with the grain of local beliefs and practices … linking the authority of state with that of local social orders' (Dinnen and Peake 2013: 572). Further, it cautions that such opportunities can be lost to would-be police reformers who fail to adequately take account of 'the multiple actors involved in policing activities and dispute resolution in countries characterised by high levels of legal and normative pluralism' (Dinnen and Peake 2013: 570). Such appeals to the hybridity paradigm highlight the futility of attempting to enforce state-based approaches to policing and justice informed by Western assumptions regarding norms, rights and the primacy of formal rule of law [RoL] systems—without consideration of existing norms and practices. Advocates of this view have explained that the 'delivery' of liberal templates of state-centric order involves 'a meeting of profoundly different lifeworlds and worldviews, [and] the collision, interaction and entanglement of different understandings of socio-political order' (Boege and Curth 2011:15). Recognition of 'local strengths' is one proposed way of navigating this type of entanglement.

However, there is evidence that the hybridity paradigm is limited in adequately protecting women from gender violence (Dinnen and Watson 2019). Feminist inquiry into the difficulties Pacific women face in securing justice when they are the victims of gendered crimes frequently highlights the gendered failings of state *and* customary systems of justice, finding that both systems reflect, and further entrench, the subordinated status of women. Customary approaches to dispute settlement in PICs tend to involve public meetings, known regionally as 'custom courts', where complainants present their grievances against alleged offenders before the community. Then, the matter is deliberated upon publicly, and local tribal

chiefs or elders reach a consensus about the validity of the complaint and an appropriate form of customary punishment.

In these forums, holders of power in the community are typically older men, who tend to dominate the decision-making processes, and the participation of women and youth can be limited. This works against the interests of women who pursue complaints of gendered violence in customary courts and are made to feel that 'they are not free to talk' or 'their word is not good enough' (Garap 2000: 163). Alternatively, in many Pacific Islands contexts, church leaders may be the first authority figures outside the familial setting that women contact when seeking advice about their personal exposure to violence (Ride and Soaki 2019). However, these leaders tend to offer advice that is informed by conservative religious doctrine, which celebrates feminine docility and obedience and the continuity of marital vows. Even in contexts where women suffer repeated exposure to conjugal violence, they may be advised to 'suffer' this violence with Christian forbearance rather than look for a means of escape (Hermkens 2011).

For these reasons, there is some support for the view that state systems of justice might offer greater potential for addressing the needs of women who endure gendered violence (Forsyth 2009: 125; see also Salomon 2003; Zorn 2010). This does not mean that that the value of custom or faith-based regulation is dismissed but signals that navigating between the two is by no means straightforward. For example, in some contexts, members of state policing agencies may treat matters of family violence brought to their attention in ways that reinforce longstanding norms about family integrity and the appropriateness of gendered family violence that aims to discipline females (George 2017b). Consequently, the state institution may operate in a way that is highly influenced by customary or religious invocations that aim to uphold men's authority and limit women's ambitions.

This paper addresses the tension between the apparent limits of state-centred models of policing and the shortfalls of hybridised structures of regulatory authority. We do this by drawing on work that has demonstrated the value of rethinking critical formulations of 'policing by strangers' (Bull, George and Curth-Bibb 2019). Using George Simmel's (1950, 1971) description of the stranger, which is able to accommodate the contradictory experience of what it means to engage in an interaction with someone who is spatially close and socially distant, it is possible to shift away from the wholly negative interpretations of this phrase that are commonly associated with forms of colonial and postcolonial domination. For Simmel, the stranger is a social type that can adopt a perspective that is simultaneously that of an insider and an outsider: a type that is defined in terms of social distance, rather than an essentialised identity determined by membership of a particular social or cultural group. Strangers are characterised by types of social distance that can be mediated according to context, and they offer different patterns of thought and possibilities for social change. This permits a theoretical framing of state-based policing that is more nuanced in its account of how officers might develop a professional ethic that can respond effectively to gender violence even in systems characterised by regulatory hybridity. Bull et al.'s (2020) analysis of the role of women police in the context of Tuvalu Police Service has provided evidence of this possibility.

Here, we report a theoretically informed analysis of empirical data collected as part of a pilot study conducted in 2017 that investigated how ni-Vanuatu women understand gender violence and the role police can play in its prevention. Using an innovative methodology that combined participant research with the use of photo elicitation surveys, we asked 1) how does the authority of policing agencies operate when addressing violence women in relation to other sites of international and local sociocultural authority in the Vanuatu context, and 2) how do women understand and value policing authority relative to other sites of regulatory authority? We found that, while police in Vanuatu operate in the context of constructive complementarity, women valued police and most often identified them as a source of regulatory authority that could provide help if their partners became violent or they were threatened. Our research demonstrates how women's perception of police aligns with Simmel's conceptualisation of the stranger. Based on this evidence, we propose that this interpretative framework offers a pathway to reform that could be productive for future policy innovation and practice. Our analysis begins with a brief

outline of the research context and our innovative research methodology, before detailing and discussing some of the results of this work.

Vanuatu as a Research Context

Today, Vanuatu is spread across more than 80 islands (65 inhabited). It has a relatively small population of approximately 300,000 people (World Population Review 2021), of whom more than 70 per cent spend the majority of their lives in a rural village context. Its foundations, as a society and a state, lie in French and British colonial ambitions at the end of the 19th century that produced a governing protocol called the Condominium. This arrangement provided for joint laws on certain matters but also empowered the two colonial powers to establish their own bureaucracies and govern by their respective French and British laws for other matters, such as police forces, currencies, hospitals and schools (Forsyth 2009). This geography and history contributed to linguistic plurality. There are approximately 105 vernacular languages spread across many islands. Bislama, a pidgin with a vocabulary of predominantly English origin but also including words from vernacular languages and some French, emerged as a linguistic solution to this diversity. Today, Bislama is the only national language and is the most widely spoken of the three official languages, followed by English and French.

As Vanuatu pushed towards independence in the late 1960s and 1970s, diversification and centralisation of the economy, expansion of the civil service, the rise of tourism and the collapse of the price of copra stimulated urban migration; as a result, working in town became the only way to earn a cash income (Forsyth 2009). Today, there are two main urban centres. Port Vila, the largest and the national capital, is located on the island of Efate with a current population of approximately 36,000; Luganville is on Espirito Santo, the geographically largest island, with a population of a little more than a third of this size (approximately 13,000 residents) (World Population Review 2021). Despite urban migration, home island origin continues to provide a strong source of social identity for ni-Vanuatu people, especially those living in urban areas. Consequently, there is a limited sense of nationalism, and, according to Forsyth (2009), state government tends to be seen as a remote concept with little impact on everyday life. Island-based identity is a powerful source of social norms that shape the organisation of residence, ritual, recreation, exchange and exercise of authority. Notably, no women currently sit in Vanuatu's parliament, and only five women have held parliamentary seats since the country's independence in 1980 (Pacific Women in Politics n.d.).

Efforts to build a national identity for all ni-Vanuatu where they occur tend to celebrate both Kastom and the practice of Christian faith as phenomena that unite and define Vanuatu as a country and ni-Vanuatu as a people. Institutions such as the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and the Malvaatumari (Great Council of Chiefs) are key local institutions committed to ensuring that Kastom retains respect and authority in Vanuatu. Government projects such as the promotion of a Kastom economy in Vanuatu have been established to limit the homogenising cultural impacts of economic globalisation in this context (Reganvanu 2007). However, support for these kinds of ventures is not unanimous. Local feminist critics such as the late Grace Mera Molisa have described the consequences of efforts to yoke postcolonial identity, Christian faith and custom in Vanuatu as a form of ongoing colonial violence experienced by ni-Vanuatu women. Molisa spoke clearly about the phenomenon of violence against women in her country, labelling its acceptance as a violation of 'the human right of women to human dignity' enabled by an 'oppressive macho status quo' (Molisa 1987: 13–14; Jolly 1994). These observations demonstrate the contested nature of postcolonial nationhood in this context and the various sites of authority that women are required to navigate if they seek protection or assistance due to their exposure to violence.

Methodology

Our project investigated how women understand and value the authority of state policing agencies when it comes to protection from and prevention of violence. We explored how police operate in relation to other sites of international and local sociocultural authority in the complex regulatory context found in Vanuatu. To investigate these questions, we used an image-based survey study. Our sample population

comprised Francophone women from different Island communities who were accessed through George's collaboration with members of the Union Femmes Francophone d'Océanie Vanuatu, who represent different Island community groups. We adopted a participant research methodology where our research partners were first introduced to the photo elicitation survey (described in more detail below) and then coached regarding how to deliver the survey, collecting written results that were returned to us for cleaning, translation into English and analysis. The survey was delivered in French or Bislama.

The photo elicitation survey was based on photographic images prepared in collaboration with local women's groups and a professional photographer. These images did not depict actual scenes of violence, but rather situations where women appear vulnerable to various types of violence (e.g., emotional, physical or sexualised violence in the home, in other social settings and as they move publicly through their community). Survey questions asked informants to reflect on the accessibility of various sources of regulatory authority and who (if anyone) the subject in the photo might be likely to approach in response to particular experiences of violence. They were also asked to expand on how police might be able to assist in such situations.

George previously employed this practical research method in her study of women's attitudes to gender violence in research on gender violence in Bouganville (Papua New Guinea), New Caledonia and Fiji (George 2017a, George 2020). She found that images featuring local actors in local settings were particularly useful for translating concepts, ideas and questions across culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. They were also helpful in generating discussion of issues that may be sensitive or possibly traumatising for women informants. Crucially, photo elicitation seemed a productive way of managing participant trauma. As a strategy, it encouraged a depersonalised discussion about the factors that generate insecurity and how participants felt they might be managed (George 2017a).

The development of the survey conducted in Vanuatu was more explicitly focused on policing than George's earlier work. Nevertheless, both studies were informed by an initial review of academic studies, grey literature from multilateral and national development agencies, nongovernment organisations, media accounts of violence in the region and even accounts of violence present in cultural mediums (e.g., literary writing, television and other media). This provided vital insights into the types of situations that might see women exposed to violence as part of their daily routine and into some of the particular scenarios that are understood to generate gendered forms of violence in contemporary Pacific Island societies. Informed by this earlier study, our subsequent inquiry broadly addressed the potential for violence (and safety) in relation to disputes linked to the themes represented in the scenarios listed in Table 1 below (Please see *Appendix A* for scenario images).

Table 1: Scenario description

Theme	*Scenario*
Gendered expectations about domestic labour and caring responsibilities	1
Women's management of finances	2
Male socialising outside the home	3
Female socialising outside the home	5, 6, 8
Girls socialising outside the home	4
Women's capacity to safely move independently in the community	5, 6
Women's and girls' capacity to safely move independently in remote contexts	4, 6
Women's sexual autonomy	7, 10
Suspicions over conjugal fidelity	8
Women's paid labour outside the home	9
Men's labour inside the home	9

The images used in this study to explore participants' views on policing were constructed to mediate between being too abstract and thus confusing for study participants and too stereotypical, which would lead respondents to reflect similarly and perhaps restrict broader deliberations on the 'unobservable' institutional factors that shape experiences of violence or safety. The survey used open-ended questions to address each scenario, asking respondents to assess whether they felt the woman in the image was safe, explain why they identified insecurity and who they felt was responsible for generating it, suggest what actions the women could take to improve her security and, finally, if—and how—formal policing agencies might be able to help. Responses were given unique identifiers linked to the specific scenario and respondent; for example, responses for scenario 1 from respondent 3 and scenario 2 from respondent 5 are signalled in this paper as S1R3 and S2R5, respectively. The project was granted University of Queensland Institutional Human Research Ethics Approval (number: 2014000386).

Our local research partners eagerly embraced the work and collected data during 2017. They seemed to encounter no difficulties in administering the surveys. There was some variation in the quality of the information recorded by different participant researchers. Nevertheless, the sample of responses returned was large enough for patterns to be detected, and significant qualitative insights to be generated into particular themes.

Participant researchers gathered 42 responses from women who were linked to the two largest islands. Twenty-eight identified their current place of residence as either a 'suburban' area of Port Vila or a village on Efate; and 14 identified a (Francophone) village some distance from the main urban centre on the island of Espiritu Santo (population of 1,300). Several participants who were living in Port Vila had strong links to communities on islands beyond Efate, demonstrating the trend for people to migrate from outer islands to Port Vila for work. When describing their family situation, 10 described themselves as single, three as not married, four as in a couple, 21 as married, one as divorced and two as widowed. In terms of employment, 15 identified themselves as gardeners, 10 as students, six as cleaners and three as self-employed; the remainder were a primary school teacher, cook, housewife, accountant, secretary, worked for a private enterprise, were retired or had no occupation.

Results

This section of our paper begins with a brief overview of how our participants interpreted the various scenarios before describing their views regarding the accessibility and utility of various sources of authority who might offer assistance to women in terms of either protection from or prevention of violence in each case.

Understandings of Violence Against Women

In each of the scenarios, our participants identified the vulnerability of women to violence as a possible or even likely outcome. They indicated that, in relation to a woman's behaviour within the home, the threat posed to the woman was by her husband or partner. In scenario 1, which depicted a man walking into an untidy domestic setting where a woman was lying down, it was said that her 'husband' would be 'very angry' or 'furious' and could 'confine' her, 'beat her up', become violent or verbally abuse or threaten her—he may even 'leave her', or if 'they keep going the woman will be raped'. Scenario 2 involved an image of a woman returning home with shopping (possibly not groceries) to a man who appears accusing and is pointing his finger. Respondents explained the cause of anger and subsequent violence as the woman's laziness; not doing housework, wifely duties or cleaning; wasting money on her needs; disobeying her husband by spending money; going out alone; not asking permission to spend money or go out; or, alternatively, that the man wanted to know where the money came from.

Conversely, in scenario 9, which depicts a woman returning from work to a man lying on a couch reading the paper, she was described as being at risk of violence because she confronts her lazy partner or spouse. Her problems arise 'if she complains'; 'if she works late, she does not do her duties as a housewife: cleaning,

cooking, washing etc' (S9R23); or 'if he is jealous of his wife because she works, he will get angry and beat her up' (S9R28). Other respondents offered the following accounts of why she was vulnerable:

> Because she is giving too many orders to her husband, too much to do and she is stopping him from going out. (S9R29)

> Too much moral lecturing, she works and he does nothing, her husband can hit her and there is no one to protect her. (S9R30)

Scenario 3 provided a clearer context in which the women might be understood to be regulating her partner's behaviour. In this scenario, a young woman stands between one young man and a group of other men of similar age who are drinking alcohol; she was perceived by participants as preventing him from joining his friends. For example, they said the woman is 'stopping her husband going out with his friends' (3-35), explaining that this causes him to 'lose face' in front of his friends, and 'he will in the end physically abuse her' (S3R11). As others explained: '...his friends could influence or push him to beat his wife. He could also beat her [so as] not to be humiliated in front of his friends' (S3R19), and 'she is not protected, her husband can hit or kill her because he has been drinking' (S3R30).

The final scenario that must be discussed in the context of gendered relationships within the home addressed sexual autonomy. This involved an image where a woman lying in bed with a man refuses his advances. Participants identified this as a 'refusal' of sex, explaining that her 'husband can attack her' (S7R1); 'he can be violent because of his wishes or his sexual desires' (S7R7); 'it is possible that he rapes her, she could be a victim of rape' (S7R10); and 'she is in danger because her partner can force her with violence or he can go to someone else' (S7R20). One respondent explained that:

> In Vanuatu partners/spouses think they have the right to a woman's body. If she says no, then he can punch her. He will force himself on her, thus committing rape because he thinks he owns her. (S7R11)

This participant also highlighted the tension in this scenario concerning sexual autonomy, saying 'she does not want sex, man says it is his property through the bride price payment' (S7R11). She further explained that 'because the partner can rape her when she says no because in Vanuatu paying bride price makes men think the woman now belongs to them to do as they please' (S7R11).

Other respondents signalled normative beliefs surrounding fidelity: 'her partner will believe there is someone else and she will be beaten up' (S7R18). These normative views around fidelity were also expressed in relation to scenario 8, which depicted an image of a young women in an outdoor location texting, with a male person looking over her shoulder. Respondents felt that the young woman would be in danger because her partner, husband or boyfriend could become angry and violent through jealousy, 'because she cheats on [him] with another guy' (S8R9); 'the partner is very suspicious and can become violent with her if she admits that another man is communicating with her' (S8R11).

Other scenarios included in this study involved the ability of women and girls to move about in the community, and their safety in different urban and remote environments. Scenario 4 was an image of a young women dressed in a fashionable way, with tailored fitting clothes, waiting for a bus alone on an urban street. Participants felt that that she was vulnerable to unwelcome attention 'because she is too attractive with her clothes, in addition she is alone so she is not safe' (S4R9); 'she is in clothes that will attract attention and she can be sexually abused or raped' (S4R12). In this case, the threat was from strangers rather than her partner, spouse or boyfriend: 'she can be raped by a group of men because she is alone' (S4R33), and 'she is alone and can be taken away in an unknown car or raped' (S4R37). Similar concerns were expressed regarding two other scenarios (4 and 6) that depicted a girl and a woman, respectively, walking along an empty road, with few houses or signs of development in the frame. In both cases, the girl or woman was described as being at risk of sexual assault or rape or being beaten by a man.

Relatively few participants provided responses relating to scenario 10, which addressed women's sexual autonomy by depicting two women who represented a same-sex couple. However, those who did frequently commented that this behaviour was not tolerated and is against the law, against custom or against religion or God. The presumption was made that the women depicted had husbands, and it was said that 'what they are doing … brings shame to their husbands' (S10R30); 'the husband can kill his wife because it is forbidden' (S10R15). Alarmingly, other comments condoned sexual violence by a 'real' or 'true' man against these women as a means of 'fixing' the situation.

Constructive Complementarity: The Prevention of Violence

These responses provide normative and cultural contexts for understanding violence against women in our study site and our analysis, which addresses the following research questions: 1) how does the authority of policing agencies operate when addressing violence against women in relation to other sites of international and local sociocultural authority in the Vanuatu context, and 2) how do women understand and value policing authority relative to other sites of regulatory authority? To address the first question, respondents were asked to reflect on the accessibility of various sources of regulatory authority and which ones (or who) the subject in the photo might be likely to approach (if any) in response to particular experiences of violence. Participants identified a range of supports and authorities that women could approach, ranging from formal state authorities to nearby residents or passers-by. We divided these into four categories: those linked to RoL and associated with the state, other types of authority, family and non-related others. Table 2 provides details of the scope of these categories based on the results of our interviews.

Table 2: Who could help women who are vulnerable to violence?

State or RoL–based authority	Police, Family Protection Unit, law, judiciary, prison, Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC), Department of Women's Affairs (Vanuatu Women's Bureau), VWC Counsellors, ombudsman
Other authority	Chief, pastor, doctor, hospital
Family	Parents, close family, sisters, cousin, mother or father, husband, partner, boyfriend, relatives, close relatives, husband's family, family who are nearby
Non-related others	Friends, female friend, close friends, neighbour, husband of neighbour, woman neighbour, nearby resident, nearby household, village, passer-by

Note: The relationship between these civil society and non-criminal justice entities and RoL authority is explained below.

Table 3 provides details of the distribution of categories of authority in relation to the scenarios described above.

Table 3: Distribution of authorities from whom women who are vulnerable to gender violence can seek help

Scenario	N	State or rule of law		Other authority (Chief/pastor)	Family	Non-related others
		Police	Other			
1	41	20	12	15/1	25	10
2	40	23	15	11/1	7	17
3	41	23	17	10	12	7
4	39	34	9	6/1	4	11
5	39	24	11	8/2 (medical)	9	11
6	39	24	4	5	10	12
7	36	20	19	4/1	5	4
8	38	20	11	7/1	21	4
9	35	19	13	9/1	9	7
10	38	5	15	2	2	

Table 3 demonstrates that, in all the scenarios considered in this paper, participants most often identified the police as a source of regulatory authority to whom a woman could look for help if her partner became violent or she were threatened. It is also clear that police are viewed as a source of protection for women in conjunction with other formal and informal sources of authority and support. In this way, Table 3 provides an overview of the relationship between formal state security agencies and other sources of regulatory authority in the Vanuatu context. It allows us to draw some preliminary conclusions about how women in everyday contexts assess the accessibility and value of law enforcement institutions relative to other sites of regulatory authority and, crucially, how this might change according to the particular circumstances in which women are exposed to violence. For example, police were cited to a slightly lesser extent as a source of help where violence erupted in the context of scenarios 1, 7, 8 and 9. These were scenarios that depicted gendered expectations within domestic or intimate settings. Scenario 1 portrayed gendered expectations about domestic labour and caring responsibilities, and scenario 9 depicted those regarding women's paid labour outside the home and men's labour within the home. Scenario 7 addressed women's sexual autonomy, and scenario 8 depicted suspicions over a woman's conjugal fidelity. Conversely, a clear preference for police was evident in scenario 4, which depicted a young girl alone and vulnerable to attack from strangers on an empty road. This distribution trend perhaps reflected the view expressed by some participants that police should not be involved in conflicts within the family (see the discussion regarding police and trust below). While the numbers identifying police might be slightly lower in scenarios 1, 7, 8 and 9, this was often combined with an increased appeal to the VWC and Vanuatu Women's Bureau (VWB). Both are organisations whose authority in relation to the prevention of violence against women is firmly rooted in RoL and, as our analysis below explains, have a blurred relationship with police.

The VWC is an independent civil society organisation that coordinates a national program of violence prevention and response services, including counselling, helping women seek medical attention when required, assisting victims of violence to file police reports and press charges and providing free legal advice and representation It works closely with the police force, particularly the Family Protection Unit, offering courses on domestic violence, counselling training and even providing financial support to the police, when necessary, so that officers and victims may travel to Efate to give evidence in court hearings on particularly violent incidents. Key informants told us that, at times, the VWC provides fuel so police can attend callouts in relation to family violence. This is confirmed in the VWC's 2014 annual report that details expenditure in relation to assisting 'clients to access justice, including the payment of fuel for police to serve Family Protection Orders (FPOs) and funds to make arrests on outer islands' (VWC 2014). Further, the VWC funds legal assistance, the payment of court fees and state prosecutors' training. It is a member of the Ministry of Justice Human Rights working group. The VWC's advocacy work involves lobbying the government to provide a stronger legal and institutional framework for protecting women's rights and promoting gender equality.

These types of activities demonstrate the close relationship between VWC and state policing and legal authorities. The sometimes blurred relationship between police and the VWC was evident in one response to the question about how police could assist the vulnerable women depicted in scenario 1. The participant explained that they would be helpful 'if he (the husband) is really violent, but in some other cases, it would be rather … the Family Protection Unit Centre which would investigate about this kind of life' (1-8). The Family Protection Unit is the unit within Vanuatu Police Service that is responsible for responding to violence against women.

The other service to which respondents frequently referred was the Department of Women's Affairs (Department of Women's Affairs 2015). It included the gender protection cluster which was described as a working group that addresses issues for women, people with disabilities, children and the elderly. One of its four key strategies is increasing public awareness of *human rights and gender equality*.

When describing the range of sources of protection or help that a vulnerable woman might seek, respondents most often listed the police in addition to the VWC or the VWB (Department of Women's Affairs). Indicative responses are listed below:

She will go for help to the police by filing a complaint to the Women's Centre. (S3R20)

Women's Bureau, the law for women could protect her, she could make a complaint regarding her rights as a woman. (S2R36)

The Women's Bureau to make him [her husband or partner] understand all the rules and laws on the rights of women. (S7R37)

The Women's Bureau, the law for women could protect her, she could make a complaint to the police. (S1R36)

She could go to the Women's Centre to speak about her problem. The Centre will take care of the protection order. (S9R19)

While women frequently linked the VWC or VWB with the police, they also sometimes included seeking help from the custom chief. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of this combined identification: the regular combination of police with VWC or VWB, the less regular inclusion of the custom chief and, finally, the lower rate of citing the police together with the custom chief as the source of help. On six occasions, participants cited pastors (religious leaders) as a source of assistance.
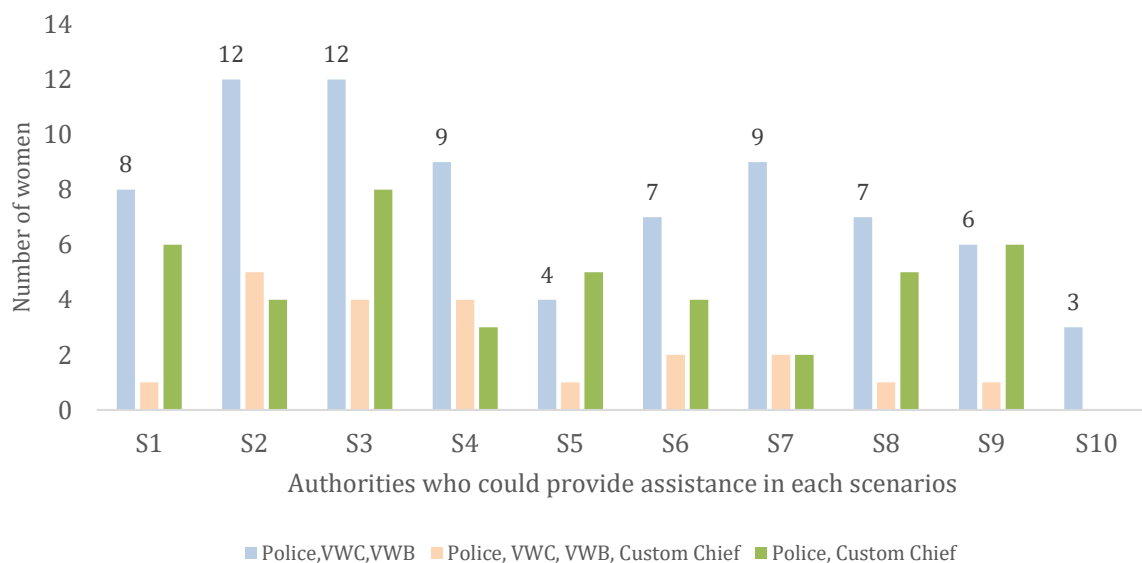

Figure 1: Frequency of women seeking help from different authorities.

This analysis demonstrates that, while there is evidence to support claims of the 'constructive complementarity' between formal state security agencies and other sources of regulatory authority, women in Vanuatu understand the police and sources of authority founded in RoL and rights-based principles as key in preventing violence against women. This leads to our second research question: 2) how do women understand and value policing authority relative to other sites of regulatory authority? To address this, we asked women about how police might be able to assist or respond to the needs of vulnerable women in each of the scenarios. The next section details the outcomes of our qualitative thematic analysis of participant's responses to this question.

How can the Police Help?

Six themes emerged from our thematic analysis of how police might assist women in preventing violence against them. These were *protecting* and *defending* women from violence, solving and investigating cases

of violence, mediating conflict between intimate partners, being able to intervene or assist when other sources of authority are unable or unwilling, the role of police and the law in the protection of rights and police as trustworthy regarding handling or resolving such cases. The way women understood the capacity of police varied across scenarios.

The most frequently mentioned capability of police regarding violence against women across all scenarios was their ability to protect or defend women. This was achieved through enforcing the law, arresting perpetrators, taking offenders into custody, limiting violence, enforcing a protection order, simply being present in the community as deterrence or offering women reassurance. Many of our respondents focused on the role of police in protecting women and preventing and limiting violence. They typically explained that 'the police would be helpful to protect her to prevent her partner to raise his hand on her' (S1R7). There was less focus on arrest, although it was mentioned in cases of serious violence. For example, 'if she is physically hurt, the police will arrest her husband for punches and wounds' (S1R21). When the threat of violence came from other men in the community, respondents more often expressed the view that arrest and punishment were in order. Nevertheless, they also maintained the view that police had a protective role to play, stating that 'the police are there for everyone to save and protect them' (S6R28), or that they are there to 'help' and 'protect'. (S6.R30)

Some participants were clearly of the view that police should not intervene in conflicts within the family, saying that their job is to 'correct injustices which are concerning people who *do not* belong to the same family' (S1R18). This view was frequently voiced in relation to scenario 7, which portrayed refusal of sexual advances. Further, in scenarios 1 and 2, which referenced gendered expectations about domestic labour and women's management of finances, a significant number of participants indicated that the role of police intervention was to reinforce discriminatory gender norms. In each scenario, several participants blamed the woman, stating that she had 'not done her duties such as cleaning the house' (S1R15) (11 others were of a similar view); 'she did not listen to her husband and spent too much money' (S2R4); she had to 'be told that she has to stop spending money uselessly' (S2R9); and that 'the woman has to change' (S2R13).

The second capability of police that participants identified as helpful was their *investigative* power and potential for *solving* cases. In a few instances, these powers were referred to in the context of domestic and family violence (DFV). For example, in scenario 1, police were considered helpful 'because by asking questions they could find the issues and solve it' (S1R9). More often (in 22 responses), they were viewed as vital in scenarios 4–6, which addressed the safety of women and girls when socialising outside the home and their ability to move safely and independently in the community. Police were perceived as helpful because they 'investigate to get information about the situation' (S4R8); 'they can do everything necessary to find the individual' (S5R35); and they 'would be helpful for her after being threatened, they will look for those people' (S6R14). In the context of DFV, represented in scenarios 1–3 and 7–9, the value of police was described more in relation to assistance through solving family problems and calming and *mediating* volatile situations. Sixteen responses highlighted the value of the police as mediators, for example:

> She could go to … the police for help to be protected and to calm the situation; to avoid any misunderstanding between both of them. (S3R5)

> It is possible they [police] can mediate the problem between the husband and the wife. (S7R29)

> The police would be helpful, because by asking questions they could find the issue and solve it. (S1R9)

One of the main appeals of the police, across all scenarios, was their relationship to the law and their ability to *act when no-one else, or no other authority, could or would*. They were the ultimate backstop: 'they are the only ones for an urgent situation' (S5R32). Police were cited as helpful because they are 'the only means to stay safe' (S5R4). For example, regarding scenario 8, which depicts a young woman suspected of

infidelity, several participants were of the view that 'only the police can help her' (S8R38, S8R41). In short, the police were identified as the authority to seek out if: the VWC was closed, the chief does not manage to solve the issue or the women does not have anyone to protect her. Confirming this, in the context of scenario 3 (depicting a young woman trying to intervene in relation to a group of intoxicated young men), one woman said: 'the police would be helpful if the customary chief or the women's bureau are not able to resolve the problem it causes' (S1R37; similar views were expressed by S1R34 and S8R37 in other scenarios involving intimate partner relationships). The ability of police to act when no-one else would was particularly apparent in relation to scenario 10, which addressed women's sexual autonomy in relation to a same-sex couple. Participants acknowledged that 'only the police if they are conscious of human rights issues. The family, community and Vanuatu's population may not help them but condemn them' (S10R11). Although in this context, the police were also identified as upholders of cultural norms: 'yes, the police work with the law, and can find a way of stopping this kind of life that is unacceptable to people' (S10R28).

Our participants viewed the police as playing a vital role in relation to the protection of women's rights: *human rights*, more generally, and the right to protection that they understood were expressed in *various laws*. This was identified in more than 30 responses that described how police were able to assist because violence 'is against human rights':

> The police know all the rights of women that must be respected by men. (S7R41)

> They can help if her partner does not respect or follow women's rights. (S8R40)

> Because they represent the law. (S9R38)

The final, and perhaps surprising, theme that emerged from our analysis across several scenarios, both those involving DFV (scenario 8) and the vulnerability of women and girls in the community (scenarios 4–6), was trust. Below, we discuss how research has documented that women are reluctant to seek help from police in other PICs because they can be perpetrators of gender violence in their own relationships and in the course of their professional duties. Nevertheless, our participants said that police could help because they could be *trusted* to provide protection (scenarios 5, 8 and 12). More detailed responses described how police could help because:

> They are men you can *trust* to manage family situations. (S3R38).

> Police are *men* with authority and respect. They can be *trusted* and can put the offender in prison. (S4R38)

> They are *men* that can be *counted on* and you can *confide* things to them. (S6R41)

The view that the police can be trusted to manage family situations contrasts starkly with some participants' assertions that police should not be involved in family matters. The other comments above signal how police authority is valued because it can be '*counted on*'. That said, the gendered nature of these statements, which describe police as 'men', warrants much deeper consideration; it is also likely that this reflects the very small number of women who take on the profession in Pacific Island Countries (Bull et al. 2020).

This analysis must be interpreted with a number of caveats in mind. First, one of the qualifications mentioned concerning the utility of the police was their availability in relation to insufficient 'manpower to deal with those kinds of complaints', as well as problems of proximity and access to resources, including fuel for vehicles and wheels or tyres on vehicles (scenarios 1, 4 and 10). Second, in several cases, it was said that 'police don't deal with matters between people in the same family' (scenario 1), or when it is a 'home case' (scenario 9) or a private matter that is not the concern of police (scenario 7). Finally, as mentioned previously, some respondents indicated that the risk of violence was potentially provoked by

the potential victim. They thought that the police should correct the women by reminding her of wifely duties or instructing her on her behaviour or style of dress. Further, in the context of scenario 10 (involving a same-sex couple), participants said that when 'police come to help, if the woman is married, [the police] has to think about her marriage [and give] [a]dvice … respecting her husband and children' (S10R13).

Clearly, for some of our respondents, the limits of policing are pragmatic and relate to resourcing, proximity and, perhaps, priority. For others, their perceptions of the value of policing reproduced discriminatory gender norms. This poses a counterpoint to research findings from other Pacific Island contexts that have been critical of the fact that police adopt a marriage guidance role when approached by women who bring complaints of violence to their attention, counselling those women about the importance of protecting the integrity of their marriage and their families (George 2017b). Responses of this sort suggest some level of community support for such action by police. Nevertheless, in the greater proportion of instances, the police were identified as the relevant interveners who had utility in preventing violence against women through authority embedded in the state and RoL.

Discussion

Our analysis demonstrates the complex and uneven nature of gendered social relation in Vanuatu, which continues to reinforce norms of behaviour for women and men that undermine women's participation in society and their access to justice when it comes to violence against them. It highlights how these norms are evident both in the home and in public spaces. Women were identified as vulnerable to violence in the home or intimate partner relationships when their behaviour contravened gendered expectations—specifically, expectations that women assume a subservient role in domestic and family duties and limit autonomous activity in economic, social and community life. These results provide insight into how violence against women is understood by women in Vanuatu society and provide a context for our analysis that aimed to explore 1) how the authority of policing agencies is perceived to operate when addressing violence against women and girls in the Vanuatu context, and 2) how women understand and value policing authority relative to other sites of regulatory authority.

In relation to the first question, women frequently identified the police as a source of regulatory authority to whom a woman could look for help if her partner became violent or she was threatened. The police were the authority most consistently identified in this context. Moreover, police were viewed as a source of protection for women in conjunction with other sources of authority and support—for example, the VWC, the VWB, custom chiefs, pastors, families and neighbours. Therefore, there is evidence to support the idea of 'constructive complementarity' between formal state security agencies and other sources of regulatory authority in this Pacific Island context (Dinnen and Peake 2013). However, it is notable that the authority of the non-police authorities that were most often appealed to was strongly coupled with RoL principles. For example, a central concern of the VWC is access to justice for women and children who are victims of violence. To achieve this, the VWC works closely with formal agencies of the criminal justice system—police, prosecutors and courts—at the everyday operational level (even to the extent of providing fuel or ensuring serviceable vehicles for family violence callouts). In more strategic terms, the VWC also lobbies the government to provide a strong legal and institutional framework for protecting women's rights and promoting gender quality. This close relationship was evidenced by the tendency of respondents to link police and the VWC (and the VWB) together as sources of help to whom women could turn and in their propensity to, at times, conflate the roles and responsibilities of these organisations.

Beyond establishing how the authority of policing agencies might operate in the context of constructive complementarity—that is, in relation to other types of authority that can provide security when addressing violence against women—our second concern was to understand how women value police and what role women thought police could play regarding responding to and preventing violence against women and girls. We note that what we have captured represents how women imagine police could help, rather than how they have helped. This paper does not provide an evaluation of police responsiveness but rather a consideration of the protective or preventative potential of police from the perspective of women. Some of our respondents were evidently aware of the shortfalls of police regarding their limited reach,

lack of resources and, sometimes, willingness. They described how police help depended on proximity, availability of fuel or vehicles and perceptions of the nature of the relationship between the victim and offender. However, our thematic analysis of responses in relation to our research questions about how police might be able to assist with the prevention of violence against women was productive in that it identified six key areas of police activity nominated by respondents as significant in the context of gendered violence. Police were identified as being able to protect and defend women from violence, investigate and solve cases of violence, mediate conflict between intimate partners, intervene or assist when other sources of authority are unable or unwilling to do so and enforce the law and protect women's rights. They were also considered helpful because they were 'trustworthy' in relation to handling or resolving such cases. These six themes highlight some potential virtues of policing and how they might be understood through Simmel's conceptualisation of the 'stranger' (Bull, George and Curth-Bibb 2019) in the context of gender violence.

Simmel describes the stranger as a member of a group in a spatial sense but not a member in a social sense—a person who may be in the group but not of it (1950: 402–403). Unlike other sociological conceptualisations, Simmel's account of the stranger does not refer to a fixed identity or categorical difference; rather, the stranger is constituted through relationships that mediate remoteness and proximity. Moreover, this status is changeable according to social context. Constituting the stranger in this way acknowledges that space can be understood both as a physical site and as a repository of social and political relations—always under construction and, therefore, never closed to novel possibilities. Someone can always become a stranger by entering into a particular relationship with a group. Furthermore, the distance of the stranger is always contextual because it can be understood only through those things that constitute proximity among members of a group: in this case, Kastom and the practice of Christian faith as phenomena that unite and define Vanuatu as a country and ni-Vanuatu as a people. The significance of context is clearly evident when we consider the dual status of local police who are insiders as members of the population and outsiders because they are police. Embedded within their professional and personal comportment is a familiarity with both guiding cultural norms and practices and the authority of RoL.

In Simmel's analysis, distance is not opposed to proximity, and it does not represent a negative condition. It gives the stranger capacities such as mobility and objectivity. The stranger's 'objective' attitude regarding social issues is possible because they are simultaneously included in the life of the group and also somewhat indifferent towards the events of the group. The stranger is not bound by roots to the particular constituents and dispositions of the group; therefore, they are able to be more 'objective'. Here, 'objective' refers to 'an attitude that does not signify mere detachment and non-participation, but is a distinct structure composed of remoteness and nearness, indifference and involvement' (Simmel 1971: 145). In the context of policing in Vanuatu, this offers the possibility that members of local policing agencies are familiar with and able to navigate other forms of authority—such as faith-based or customary authority—that, along with RoL, shape and regulate everyday life. Where necessary, they are able to step outside these structures enforcing the RoL when other regulatory authorities fail or are found wanting. According to Simmel (1950), this allows strangers to perform special tasks that no-one else in the group is capable of or willing to perform. In our study, across all scenarios, one of the main appeals of the police was their relationship to the law and their ability to act when no-one else, or no other authority, could or would. The police were said to be particularly helpful if the 'customary chief or the Women's Bureau are not able to resolve the problem' (S137), and because they are the 'only ones that can protect her' (S4R28).

Additionally, Simmel's stranger possesses virtue as an arbitrator. Indeed, one-third of our respondents valued the role of police as arbitrators, identifying their value as mediators who could 'calm the situation' (S3R5) by 'mediat[ing] the problem between the husband and the wife' (S7R29). From Simmel's perspective, a stranger can function as an arbitrator because they have something in common with both groups. This forms a kind of reference point with respect to them; 'what is common to both parties (the basis, that is, of their conflict as well of their possible reconciliation) must somehow be inherent in the arbitrator, or must at least be accessible to him' (Simmel 1950: 221). As Karakayli (2006) has explained, while the arbitrator is uncommitted to any group of contestants, they are not a stranger to the system of beliefs or standards that control the situations in which they are called upon to operate. Taking this into

account, police knowledge of competing or complementary authority structures and normative frameworks in the Vanuatu context may be an asset, or even essential, in the resolution of the conflict.

Here, we should add a caveat because the fragmented subjectivity of police personnel (Bull et al. 2020) might also undermine the prevention of violence. The international literature on the policing of violence against women has shown how commitments to gender reform in policing are challenged by informal operational cultures. Officers' capacity to assess and understand a gender violence scenario can be shaped by broadly held social prejudices that may be generally gender-discriminatory or discriminatory to particular groups (Gover et al. 2011). Research has demonstrated how police in PICs can be perpetrators of gender violence in their own relationships and in the course of their professional duties (Chandler 2014; Macintyre 2012; McLeod and Macintyre 2010). McLeod and Macintyre (2010) reported the difficulties experienced by policewomen in Papua New Guinea who are married to policemen, citing one woman who explained that her 'husband comes home drunk early every morning and rapes me' (74). Further, Jenkins (2010) has described how women in PNG were generally afraid of reporting crimes to the police—they were told that their complaints would be investigated in exchange for sex, but not otherwise, and there was a widespread perception that policemen are often responsible for the rape of women on police premises.

Nevertheless, there exist examples of how these norms have been challenged. In Bull et al.'s (2020) study of perceptions of women police in Tuvalu, both community members and police identified a particularly vital contribution that women officers can make to the Tuvalu Police Service response to gender violence. They described how they could respond to female victims (and offenders) in ways that their male counterparts cannot. In particular, they outlined how women police are able to accommodate traditional and customary norms in the line of duty. As women—and as 'strangers within'—they can navigate the hybrid authority structures that regulate everyday life in Tuvaluan society in ways that meet the needs of women dictated by religion or custom, while simultaneously operationalising the RoL. In Kiribati, a program delivered in cooperation with cultural and religious authorities but based on RoL principles directly addressed police as perpetrators. For example, the slogans 'culture is no excuse for abuse' and 'religion is no excuse for abuse' were explicitly deployed to promote and reinforce the RoL in the face of competing customary or religious authority and change how these factors are viewed in normalising violence against women (Bull, George and Curth-Bibb 2019). This demonstrates that police authorities can also work with culture and faith to enhance their own capacity and responsiveness to gender violence when cases are brought to their attention. Indeed, according to Simmel, this type of tension between insider and outsider, proximity and distance, is not something that should be resolved. The social category of stranger has potentially both destructive and constructive consequences because the stranger can offer different patterns of thought and open a door for social change (Skoric et al. 2013). This was evident in our study—some participants' responses affirmed the role of police in reinforcing gendered norms that contribute to violence, whereas others valued them as a source of authority that could herald change by being the only ones able to work against or counteract such traditions.

In this vein, Simmel suggests that the stranger is more likely to be accepted as a confidant; they enjoy greater freedom from convention and are not restricted in their actions by 'habit, piety and precedent' (Simmel 1950: 405). This provides scope for change, for 'strangers' to go against 'the grain' of local custom or belief (Dinnen and Peake 2013). Simmel further observed how, consequently, the stranger figure may have particular authoritative and investigative capacities that benefit their role as a regulator of social order. Overwhelmingly, women in our study valued the role that police played regarding the protection of women's rights, investigation and enforcement of the law. Their value was that 'they represent the law' and that they could be trusted to enforce it, although limits were identified regarding capability, including serviceable vehicles, accessibility and proximity. Regarding scenario 8, which involved questions about conjugal fidelity, respondents said 'we can trust the police to protect her' (S8R31). Regarding scenario 10, which concerned women's sexual autonomy in the context of a same-sex couple, they said, 'only the police [can help] if they are conscious of human rights issues. The family, community and Vanuatu's population may not help but condemn them' (S10R11).

From this perspective, police are both insiders and outsiders who can be perceived as having particular effectiveness or objectivity that is valuable in regulating crimes of gendered violence. Notwithstanding Vanuatu's diversity, as described in the introduction, they are insiders because they are ni-Vanuatu, sharing respect for local beliefs, cultural and normative practices, and perhaps even holding competing—Kastom or faith-based—authority roles. However, by also being outsiders, with state power to enforce laws that criminalise gender violence, they are simultaneously situated in the unique position of being able to challenge those gendered expectations that fuel gendered dispute and eventual violence and take action against perpetrators in ways that other authorities cannot. Therefore, they are uniquely positioned to navigate the hybrid regulatory framework characteristic of PICs; this can potentially enhance their capacity to respond and prevent gender violence in new and novel ways. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Carrington et al. (2019) that demonstrate the utility of this framework for understanding policing in the Global South. These authors argued that the success of women's police stations in Argentina in preventing and reducing violence against women is linked to the ambiguous location of women police in the criminal justice domain. They are insiders because they belong to the same gender as victims, sharing an awareness of the culturally located experience of violence—this sense of connection enhances women's willingness to confide in them. However, by also being outsiders with state power to enforce laws that criminalise gender violence, women police are situated in the unique position of being able to challenge local norms that underpin gender violence and take action against perpetrators (in ways that other authorities cannot). Carrington et al. (2019, 2020) concluded that it is the unique formal and informal regulatory framework of women's police stations that enhances their capacity to respond to and prevent gender violence in new and novel ways. These framings of police authority generally, in addition to the particular roles that women police officers might play in the regulation of gender violence, require more investigation in Pacific Island jurisdictions (Bull et al. 2020).

Conclusion

Some studies of policing in Pacific Island contexts have argued that the capabilities of institutionalised police services are compromised because Pacific Island populations generally view state-based systems of authority as a distant presence with uncertain relevance. Postcolonial police scholars have rightly highlighted the potential for reform programs supported by international interventions (like those in PICs), characterised by policing by strangers, to reproduce power relations resembling past forms of colonial domination. Such criticisms are often justified in the realm of what Brodeur (1983, 2010) has referred to as 'high policing', which is concerned with securing the interests of the state and political elites (Bowling and Sheptycki 2012: 16). However, they may be less convincing in the context of 'low policing'—the array of roles, functions and work routines addressing the maintenance of a safe population—and gender violence in particular (Bull, George and Curth-Bibb 2019).

The material generated using our innovative research strategy provides a important source of original in-country data, allowing us to draw conclusions about how women in everyday contexts assess the accessibility and value of law enforcement institutions, and policing in particular, relative to other sites of regulatory authority and, crucially, how that might change according to the particular circumstances in which women are exposed to violence. Our thematic analysis of responses to questions about how police might be able to assist with the prevention of violence against women identified six key areas of police activity nominated by respondents as important in the context of gendered violence. Police were identified as being able to protect and defend women from violence, investigate and solve cases of violence, mediate conflict between intimate partners, intervene or assist when other sources of authority are unable or unwilling to do so, enforce the law and protect women's rights. They were also considered helpful because they were 'trustworthy' in relation to handling or resolving such cases. These six themes highlight the potential virtues of policing and how these might be understood through Simmel's conceptualisation of the 'stranger' (Bull, George and Curth-Bibb 2019) in the context of gender violence.

Our reformulation of 'policing by strangers', drawing on Simmel—who conceptualises strangers as a contextually specific status of being simultaneously insiders and outsiders—opens up new ways of thinking about policing gender violence in environments characterised by regulatory pluralism. It avoids

placing state policing authority in opposition to complementary forms of social regulation and is able to accommodate the tension that may arise concerning both how they do their job and public expectations of them. This is key because it provides an alternative framework for thinking about the constructive possibilities of how 'policing by strangers' might open a door for social change, along with consideration of how police personnel might be better trained to navigate the relationship between RoL and other forms of regulatory authority to achieve safer outcomes for women.

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Appendix A: Scenario photos

SCENARIO 1: Gendered expectations about domestic labour and caring responsibilities

SCENARIO 2: Women's management of finances

SCENARIO 3: Male socialising outside the home

SCENARIO 4: Women's and girls' capability to safely move in remote contexts; girls socialising outside the home

SCENARIO 5: Female socialising outside the home; women's capacity to safely move independently in the community

SCENARIO 6: Female socialising outside the home; women's capacity to move independently in the community; women and girls' capacity to safely move independently in remote contexts

SCENARIO 7: Women's sexual autonomy

SCENARIO 8: Female socialising outside the home; suspicions over conjugal fidelity

SCENARIO 9: Women's paid labour outside the home; men's labour inside the home

SCENARIO 10: Women's sexual autonomy