

Legal Updates on the Reporting System for Violence Against Women and Children through Strengthening Victim Protection Mechanisms Based on Access to Justice and a Victim-Centered Approach

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the minimal reporting of victims of violence against women and children in the legal protection system in Indonesia and to formulate legal reforms to the reporting system based on access to justice and a victim-centered approach. The research problem stems from the high number of violence against women and children that is not proportional to the number of reports received by law enforcement officials due to weak victim protection, a culture of victim blaming, victim trauma, power relations, low gender sensitivity of officials, and a reporting system that is not yet integrated and not based on a trauma-informed approach. This study uses a normative juridical method with a legislative approach and a conceptual approach through a study of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the Law on the Crime of Sexual Violence, the Child Protection Law, the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, the Law on the Protection of Witnesses and Victims, and various international legal instruments such as CEDAW and CRC. The results of the study indicate that the Indonesian criminal law system still tends to be offender-oriented, with victims not recognized as the primary subjects of legal protection. Therefore, legal reform is needed through the development of an integrated victim protection mechanism based on a digital reporting system, a trauma-informed reporting system, automated identity protection, mandatory legal and psychological assistance, strengthening the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Unit (PPA) and the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK), and the implementation of victim-centered justice to create a reporting system that is more responsive, safe, inclusive, and oriented toward victim recovery and human rights protection.*

Keywords: legal reform, victim reporting, violence against women and children.

Introduction

The phenomenon of violence against women and children in Indonesia reveals a sharp increase and has become a structural issue that threatens the protection of human rights and the quality of the rule of law. Annual data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women through Annual Notes (CATAHU), data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection's, Information System for Monitoring and Evaluation of Women and Children Protection (SIMFONI PPA), and reports from the Indonesian National Police (Polri) show an increasing trend in reports of sexual violence, domestic violence (KDRT), sexual

exploitation, human trafficking, and online gender-based violence or digital violence that continues to grow along with advances in information technology (Siregar, 2025). UNICEF also identifies women and children as vulnerable groups most impacted by violence based on power relations and social inequality. The situation demonstrates that violence against women and children can no longer be treated as an ordinary crime, but rather as an extraordinary crime due to its multidimensional impact on victims, including physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences, as well as the loss of dignity and sense of security in social life (Sitawati, L., & Wuryaningsih, 2019). On the other hand, violence against women and children is also a hidden crime and an iceberg phenomenon because the facts that appear on the surface through official reports are believed to be much smaller compared to the real incidents experienced by victims in society. In fact, constitutionally, the state has an obligation to protect every citizen as regulated in Article 28G paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that everyone has the right to protection of themselves, their families, their honor, their dignity, and their sense of security from the threat of fear. In addition, Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia guarantees that every child has the right to survival, growth, and development, and to protection from violence and discrimination (Kurniasari, et al., 2017). However, in practice, the significant number of cases of violence is disproportionate to the number of reports received by law enforcement officials, indicating the continued weakness of the legal protection system and access to justice for victims.

The lack of reporting of victims of violence against women and children is a fundamental problem in Indonesia's law enforcement system, preventing the state from obtaining a true picture of the extent of violence occurring in society. The phenomenon of underreporting indicates that many victims choose to remain silent, reconcile with the perpetrator, withdraw their reports, or never access legal mechanisms at all due to fear, trauma, threats from the perpetrator, economic dependence, unequal power relations, and a persistent culture of victim blaming within social circles and law enforcement institutions (Djamaludin et al., 2025). In many cases of domestic violence and sexual assault, the perpetrator is someone close to the victim, such as a husband, family member, teacher, or someone in a dominant relationship with the victim. It leaves the victim in a subordinate position and unable to report the incident. This situation is further complicated by child victims, who are psychologically and socially dependent on adults. Family pressure, shame, and fear of exposing the family's shame often hinder reporting. Consequently, the dark number of crimes in cases of violence against women and children is extremely high (Sidik, I. A., Suherman, 2024). In fact, Article 5 of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence (UU TPKS) affirms the victim's right to treatment, protection, and recovery from the moment the crime occurs. Similarly, Article 10 of Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 13 of 2006 concerning Witness and Victim Protection grants victims the right to receive security protection, assistance, information on case developments, and restitution. However, these norms have yet to be fully realized, as the reporting system remains focused on formal evidence and does not place victims at the center of recovery and protection efforts (Sidik, I. A., Suherman, 2024).

The problem of underreporting should not be understood merely as an assumption based on the observation that the number of reported cases is lower than the actual

occurrence of violence. The existence of underreporting may be identified through the disparity between prevalence-based data and administrative data generated through formal reporting mechanisms. National surveys and studies concerning violence against women and children demonstrate that a substantial number of victims experience violence without necessarily accessing formal criminal justice institutions. This disparity indicates that official case records do not fully represent the actual incidence of violence. Therefore, although this study employs a normative juridical method and does not attempt to calculate the precise number of unreported cases, empirical statistical data are used as contextual evidence to demonstrate the structural gap between the occurrence of violence and the accessibility of formal reporting mechanisms. The problem addressed in this study is consequently not only the incidence of violence itself, but also the inability of the existing reporting system to transform victims' experiences into accessible, safe, and legally recognized claims.

The weaknesses of the reporting and victim protection system in Indonesian positive law can be examined through the dimensions of legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture. Historically, Indonesian criminal procedure has been more systematically structured around the processes of criminal investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and punishment, while the procedural needs of victims have largely been regulated through separate and sectoral legal instruments (Wibowo et al., 2026). Although Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, and the legislation concerning Witness and Victim Protection recognize various forms of victim protection, these provisions remain dispersed across different legal frameworks and institutions. The procedural framework has therefore not yet fully established an integrated mechanism connecting reporting, emergency protection, medical assistance, psychological recovery, legal assistance, evidence collection, and institutional coordination. Accordingly, the term *offender-oriented* in this study does not imply the complete absence of victim protection, but refers to the historical imbalance in which the criminal justice process has been more institutionally structured around the handling of criminal offenders than around the integrated procedural needs and recovery of victims (Rahmawati, 2024).

Philosophically and theoretically, legal protection for victims of violence against women and children must be understood as part of the legal state's obligation to guarantee access to justice and respect for human dignity. From a legal protection perspective, the state must not only punish perpetrators but also ensure victims' security, recovery, and access to substantive justice. Victims should not be positioned merely as evidence in a criminal proceeding, but rather as legal subjects with constitutional and human rights that must be protected (Suryamizon, 2017). The concept of access to justice emphasizes that access to justice extends beyond access to court, including access to reporting, legal aid, rehabilitation, restitution, psychological services, identity protection, and social recovery. In this context, a victim-centered approach is crucial, placing the victim's needs and safety as a top priority throughout the legal process. This approach demands respect for the victim's dignity, guarantees of identity confidentiality, protection from threats from the perpetrator, reduction of secondary trauma, and victim involvement in the legal decision-

making process. This concept fundamentally differs from offender-oriented justice, which has been dominant in the Indonesian criminal justice system. Normatively, the principle of victim-centeredness is reflected in Article 3 of the TPKS Law, which emphasizes the principles of respect for human rights, non-discrimination, the best interests of victims, and justice. However, the implementation of this norm still faces structural and cultural barriers, thus not fully providing victims with a sense of security in reporting (Mestika, 2022).

Another crucial issue is re-victimization in the reporting and law enforcement process for victims of violence against women and children. In practice, victims often experience a second round of suffering due to negative questions from authorities, repeated interrogations, distrust of victims' statements, and pressure to mediate with the perpetrator. In this context, the legal process, intended to protect victims, can instead become a further burden of suffering. Re-victimization not only impacts the victim's psychological well-being but also reinforces the public's fear of reporting due to the perception that the legal process will humiliate and complicate the victim. The patriarchal culture in law enforcement also reinforces the unequal power relations between authorities and victims, particularly for women and children who are socially vulnerable. Despite Article 66 of the TPKS Law explicitly prohibiting law enforcement officials from engaging in actions that demean victims and requiring case handling that respects victims' rights. Furthermore, the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power emphasizes that victims must be treated with compassion and respect, and protected from intimidation or additional suffering during the legal process (Djamaludin et al., 2025). Thus, revictimization demonstrates the failure of the legal system to deliver justice oriented toward victim protection and trauma recovery.

Based on these various issues, legal reforms are needed to improve the reporting system for violence against women and children, integrating legal protection, access to justice, and a victim-centered approach comprehensively. These legal reforms should be directed at reforming the legal substance, institutional structure, and culture of law enforcement through the establishment of an integrated reporting system based on digital reporting, one-stop service, automated identity protection, emergency reporting, mandatory psychological support and legal aid, and standardized victim-centered procedures at every stage of the legal process. Institutional strengthening of the LPSK (Witness and Victim Protection Agency), the Women and Children Protection Unit (Unit PPA), safe houses, and national data integration are also urgently needed to create an effective and accessible victim protection system. Comparatively, several countries such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and South Korea have developed reporting mechanisms based on trauma healing and victim assistance that could serve as models for legal reform in Indonesia. Moreover, international instruments such as CEDAW, CRC, the Bangkok Rules, and the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power establish a normative foundation obliging states to create legal systems that support victims and ensure substantive access to justice. This research is important because it has novelty in the form of legal reform ideas for a trauma-based reporting system and an integrated victim protection mechanism that is not only oriented towards punishing perpetrators, but also places victims as the center of legal protection, recovery, and respect for human rights in a modern state based on law.

Methodology

This research employs a normative juridical research method, emphasizing the study of legal norms, legal principles, the synchronization of laws and regulations, and legal doctrines related to the reporting system for violence against women and children from the perspective of legal protection and access to justice. The approaches used in this research are the regulation and the conceptual approaches. The legislative approach is carried out by examining various regulations related to the protection of victims of violence, including the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning the Protection of Witnesses and Victims, as well as various international legal instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Meanwhile, a conceptual approach is used to analyze the concepts of legal protection, access to justice, victimology, victim-centered justice, trauma-informed approach, and the theory of the rule of law as a theoretical basis in building legal arguments regarding the urgency of legal reform of the reporting system for violence against women and children. The legal materials used consist of primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and tertiary legal materials, which are analyzed prescriptively using legal interpretation and legal argumentation techniques to produce legal reform formulations that are able to strengthen victim protection mechanisms based on access to justice and a victim-centered approach in the Indonesian legal system.

Result and Discussion

Legal Analysis of the Low Reporting of Victims of Violence Against Women and Children in Indonesia's Legal Protection System

The low reporting of victims of violence against women and children in Indonesia is a very serious legal issue because it directly impacts the suboptimal legal protection for victims and the weak effectiveness of criminal law enforcement. The high number of incidents of violence is not directly proportional to the number of reports received by law enforcement officials, thus indicating a gap between the existence of legal norms and the implementation of victim protection in the field. From the perspective of a state based on the rule of law, this condition contradicts the mandate of Article 1 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which affirms that Indonesia is a state based on the rule of law and is obliged to guarantee the protection of human rights for every citizen without discrimination. Furthermore, Article 28G paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms that everyone has the right to protection of themselves, their families, their honor, their dignity, and to a sense of security from the threat of fear for doing or not doing something that constitutes a human right. In the context of child protection, Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia explicitly states that every child has the right to protection from violence and discrimination. However, in practice, women and children, as vulnerable groups, often experience structural barriers in accessing justice due to weak reporting systems, distrust of authorities,

and a social culture that persists in blaming the victim. As a result, violence against women and children develops into a hidden crime and an iceberg phenomenon, as many cases are never officially recorded in the criminal justice system (Hidayat et al., 2020).

Normatively, Indonesia already has various regulations that protect women and children who are victims of violence. Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence (TPKS Law) is a progressive legal instrument that places victims at the center of legal protection. Article 3 of the TPKS Law emphasizes that the handling of criminal acts of sexual violence is carried out based on the principles of respect for human rights, the best interests of the victim, non-discrimination, justice, expediency, and legal certainty. Furthermore, Article 5 of the TPKS Law provides victims with the right to receive treatment, protection, and recovery from the time the crime occurs. In addition, Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence also regulates the rights of victims to receive protection from their families, the police, the prosecutor's office, the courts, advocates, and social institutions as stipulated in Article 10. In the context of child protection, Article 59 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection affirms the state's obligation to provide special protection to child victims of sexual crimes and violence. In addition, Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Witness and Victim Protection provides victims with the right to receive security protection, identity confidentiality, medical assistance, psychosocial rehabilitation, and restitution as stipulated in Articles 5 and 6. However, despite these regulations, victims remain reluctant to report, as the implementation of legal protection continues to face structural and cultural barriers (Abdurrahman, 2021)

One of the major factors causing the lack of victim reporting is the persistent culture of victim blaming and social stigma against victims of violence, particularly sexual violence and domestic violence. In many cases, victims are blamed for the violence they experience because of their dress, behavior, relationship with the perpetrator, or other moral reasons. The patriarchal culture that places women in a subordinate position often causes victims to be seen as those who tarnish the family's reputation if they report the violence they experienced. As a result, many victims choose to remain silent, withdraw their reports, or resolve cases informally outside of legal mechanisms. The condition contradicts the principles of human rights protection and the principle of non-discrimination as stipulated in Article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which guarantees the right to recognition, guarantees, protection, and fair legal certainty. In addition, Indonesia, as a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), through Law Number 7 of 1984, has an obligation to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, including discrimination in access to justice. However, in practice, patriarchal social constructs still influence the mindsets of both society and law enforcement officials, resulting in victims often experiencing stigma, social pressure, and even intimidation when attempting to report. This situation places women and children in a structurally vulnerable position and makes it increasingly difficult to obtain effective legal protection (Prastini, 2024).

In addition to cultural factors and social stigma, psychological trauma, power relations, and economic dependency are also major causes of underreporting in cases of violence against women and children. Many victims do not report because the perpetrator is someone close to them, such as a husband, family member, teacher, boss, or someone with economic and social dominance over them. In cases of domestic violence, for example, victims are often economically dependent on the perpetrator and therefore fear losing their livelihood if they report the violence. Child victims also face more complex obstacles because they are psychologically dependent on adults and often do not understand that they are victims of a crime. In this context, the high number of dark crimes demonstrates the failure of the legal system to create a safe and accessible reporting mechanism for victims. In fact, Article 18 of the TPKS Law stipulates that victims have the right to receive temporary protection from the moment a report is received by law enforcement officials. Similarly, Article 69A of the Child Protection Law affirms that child victims of sexual violence have the right to reproductive health education, social rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and protection during the legal process. However, the weak implementation of these protections means victims continue to feel unsafe reporting due to fear of threats, intimidation, or pressure from the perpetrator or their social environment (Sodah, 2023).

Another problem contributing to the low level of victim reporting is the weak implementation of legal protection in law enforcement practices, which are still offender-oriented. The Indonesian criminal justice system is fundamentally focused on punishing the perpetrator and establishing formal evidence, often placing the victim's interests on a secondary level. During case investigations, victims often experience re-victimization through negative questioning by officers, repeated interrogations, slow case handling, and the disclosure of the victim's identity, which exacerbates the victim's psychological trauma. In some cases, law enforcement officials even encourage mediation or reconciliation, even though the crime constitutes a serious crime against the victim's dignity and bodily integrity. It contradicts Article 66 of the TPKS Law, which prohibits law enforcement officials from demeaning, blaming, or intimidating victims during the legal process. Furthermore, Article 8 of the Witness and Victim Protection Law stipulates that victim protection must be provided from the investigation stage through the completion of the judicial process. However, the limited number of Women and Children's Service Units (PPA), the scarcity of psychologists and victim advocates, and the low gender sensitivity of law enforcement officers have resulted in suboptimal victim protection. Consequently, the legal system has been unable to provide victims with a sense of security and confidence to effectively use reporting mechanisms (Putra & Lubis, 2024).

The low reporting rate of violence against women and children reflects weaknesses in the legal protection system, unprepared law enforcement structures, and a legal culture that has yet to prioritize victims. Although Indonesia has various regulations that are quite progressive in protecting women and children who are victims of violence, the implementation of these legal norms still faces substantial, structural, and cultural obstacles. The offender-oriented criminal justice system means that victims are not positioned as the primary subjects who must be protected and restored. Therefore, legal reform is needed that

emphasizes not only punishing perpetrators but also enhancing victim reporting mechanisms through legal protection, access to justice, and a victim-centered approach. This reform should include the integration of the national reporting system, strengthening the protection of victim identities, implementing a trauma-informed approach, increasing the capacity of law enforcement officers, and providing psychological support and legal aid services that are easily accessible to women and children who are victims of violence. Thus, the legal system is expected to be able to create a safe, responsive, and recovery-oriented justice space for victims as part of human rights protection in a democratic state based on the rule of law.

Weaknesses in the Victim Reporting and Protection System from the Perspective of Access to Justice and Victim-Centered Justice

The weaknesses in the reporting and protection system for victims of violence against women and children in Indonesia essentially indicate fundamental problems in ensuring access to justice for vulnerable groups. Although Indonesia has various legal instruments governing victim protection, their implementation still faces substantial, structural, and cultural obstacles that make it difficult for victims to obtain safe and dignified legal access. From the perspective of a state based on the rule of law, access to justice is part of the constitutional rights of citizens as guaranteed in Article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that everyone has the right to recognition, guarantees, protection, and certainty of fair law, as well as equal treatment before the law. Furthermore, Article 28I paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia emphasizes that the protection, advancement, enforcement, and fulfillment of human rights are the responsibility of the state, particularly the government. However, in empirical practice, many victims of violence against women and children still experience difficulties accessing reporting mechanisms due to complicated procedures, fear of threats from perpetrators, social stigma, and low trust in law enforcement officials. Empirical data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women and SIMFONI PPA shows that many victims do not pursue legal proceedings because they feel they have not received adequate protection during the reporting and investigation process. It indicates that the legal system remains insufficient in ensuring a sense of security for victims, who are the primary focus of legal protection.

From a substantive legal perspective, the main weakness lies in regulatory disharmony and the absence of an integrated reporting system specifically governing victim-centered justice-based protection mechanisms. Various regulations, such as Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, and Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Witness and Victim Protection, do provide normative guarantees for victims' rights. Article 5 of the Witness and Victim Protection Law, for example, grants victims the right to receive personal security protection, identity confidentiality, medical assistance, and psychosocial support. Meanwhile, Article 68 of the TPKS Law requires law enforcement officials to defend victims from the reporting process through to trial. However, in practice, these regulations remain sectoral and have

not been integrated into a comprehensive national mechanism. The lack of national standards for victim reporting results in varying levels of service quality in each region. Some areas still lack Women and Children's Service Units (PPA), safe houses, or adequate psychological support services. Furthermore, there are no regulations explicitly mandating the use of a trauma-informed approach in the victim examination process, so the legal process often neglects victims' psychological well-being. The lack of an integrated digital reporting system also makes it difficult for victims in remote areas to access legal services quickly and safely.

Weaknesses in the legal structure are also a major factor contributing to the low effectiveness of victim protection in the reporting system for violence against women and children. In empirical practice, law enforcement officers still demonstrate a low gender sensitivity and a victim protection perspective. Many victims experience re-victimization due to negative questions from officers, repeated questioning, and officers who doubt the victim's testimony. In some cases, victims are even directed to resolve cases through mediation or peace settlements to protect the family's reputation and avoid lengthy legal proceedings. It contradicts Article 66 of the TPKS Law, which expressly prohibits law enforcement officers from blaming, demeaning, or engaging in actions that exacerbate the victim's trauma during the legal process. Furthermore, Article 10A of the Witness and Victim Protection Law also emphasizes that victims have the right to receive specialized treatment tailored to their needs. However, empirical reality shows that the number of female investigators and professionals, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and victim advocates, remains very limited, particularly in the regions. This limited human resources often results in victim examinations being conducted without an adequate psychological approach, which exacerbates the victim's trauma and reduces their courage to continue the legal process. The position demonstrates that the law enforcement system still predominantly uses an offender-oriented justice approach, which focuses more on proving criminal charges than on protecting and rehabilitating victims.

From a legal culture perspective, patriarchal culture and victim blaming remain major obstacles to establishing a victim-friendly reporting system. In many cases of sexual violence and domestic violence, female victims are positioned as the instigators of the violence, leading to social pressure not to report. Victims are often considered to bring shame to their families or communities if they bring the violence to the legal realm. This culture leads many victims to remain silent or withdraw their reports for fear of negative stigma from society. From a victimology perspective, this situation demonstrates that victims not only suffer from the crime they experienced but also experience secondary victimization due to social responses and a legal system that does not support them. It is despite the fact that Indonesia has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through Law Number 7 of 1984, which obliges the state to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, including discrimination in access to justice. Moreover, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified through Presidential Decree No. 36 of 1990, also requires the state to provide special protection to child victims of violence. However, weak changes in legal culture have

prevented the implementation of this international norm from being optimally implemented in law enforcement practices in Indonesia. As a result, women and children victims of violence still face significant social barriers to obtaining effective legal protection.

From the perspective of access to justice and victim-centered justice, a reporting system for violence against women and children should be established that places victims at the center of legal protection, not merely as evidence in criminal proceedings. Access to justice is not only defined as formal access to the courts but also includes access to legal information, identity protection, legal aid, psychological support, rehabilitation, restitution, and social recovery. A victim-centered justice approach demands that all legal processes take into account the dignity, security, and psychological needs of victims. In this context, the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power emphasizes that victims must be treated with compassion and respect, and protected from intimidation and additional suffering during the legal process. Likewise, the Bangkok Rules emphasize the importance of protecting women in the criminal justice system, including the need for a gender- and trauma-sensitive approach. However, empirical reality in Indonesia shows that the reporting process often places victims in unsafe, uncomfortable, and traumatic situations. Victims must move from one institution to another to obtain services, face lengthy bureaucratic processes, and often lack clear information regarding case progress. This situation demonstrates that the legal system has not fully implemented the principle of victim-centered justice in law enforcement practice.

Comparisons with practices in other countries show that Indonesia still lags in developing a victim-protection-based reporting system. Australia and Canada, for example, have developed an integrated victim assistance system that connects reporting services, legal aid, psychological rehabilitation, and victim protection into one integrated digital system with a trauma-informed approach. The Netherlands implements victim support services that assist victims from the reporting stage through post-trial recovery, while South Korea has developed an emergency protection system and an integrated service center for victims of sexual violence that can be accessed quickly and confidentially. These various practices demonstrate that victim protection is not sufficient through legal norms alone; it also requires the integration of institutions, technology, human resources, and a legal culture that favors victims. Therefore, the weaknesses in Indonesia's reporting and victim protection system must be viewed as a serious problem that requires comprehensive legal reform through regulatory harmonization, strengthening the integrated reporting system, implementing a trauma-informed approach, increasing the capacity of law enforcement officers, automatically protecting victims' identities, and developing a justice system oriented toward recovery and respecting victims' dignity as part of human rights protection in a modern state based on the rule of law.

Legal Updates on the Reporting System for Violence Against Women and Children through Strengthening Victim Protection Mechanisms Based on Access to Justice and a Victim-Centered Approach

Legal reforms must begin with a reformulation of the legal substance that firmly places victims at the center of protection within the criminal justice system. Although Law

Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, and the legislation concerning Witness and Victim Protection regulate various victim rights, these provisions remain dispersed and have not been integrated into a comprehensive national reporting mechanism. Therefore, legal reform is needed through the establishment of a National Integrated Victim Reporting System governed by a centralized coordination mechanism while maintaining decentralized service delivery. A designated national coordinating authority should be responsible for establishing national technical standards, ensuring interoperability, regulating data governance, and evaluating institutional performance. However, such coordinating authority should not replace the statutory authority of existing institutions: criminal reporting and investigation remain within the competence of law-enforcement institutions; protection measures remain within the authority of the legally mandated victim protection institution; medical and forensic services remain the responsibility of authorized health-care institutions; while psychosocial assistance, local case management, and service delivery are carried out by the relevant regional institutions and professionals. The proposed system is therefore based on the principle of one integrated system with multiple legally defined authorities.

Legal reforms must also be directed at developing a digital reporting system as a safe, fast, accessible, and victim-friendly reporting tool. The proposed platform should distinguish between confidential initial reporting, emergency reporting, and formal criminal reporting. Not every electronic submission should automatically be treated as a verified criminal accusation. Initial reporting should enable victims to obtain information, legal consultation, psychological assistance, and preliminary protection, while emergency reporting should activate an immediate risk assessment and referral mechanism. Formal criminal reporting should subsequently be verified and processed by the legally competent authority in accordance with applicable procedural requirements. To prevent impersonation, malicious reporting, unauthorized access, and data breaches, the platform should incorporate proportionate identity verification, secure authentication, role-based access control, encryption, audit trails, and periodic security assessments. At the same time, victim identity and other sensitive information should be protected by default from the moment a report is received. Access should only be granted to authorized persons whose professional functions are directly connected to the relevant case, while every access and disclosure should be electronically recorded. Disclosure should only be permitted on the basis of legal necessity, emergency protection, informed consent where applicable, or a lawful procedural order. The regulatory framework should further establish rules concerning data retention, anonymization, secure deletion, and administrative or disciplinary sanctions for unauthorized disclosure.

In addition to updating the legal substance, strengthening the law enforcement structure is an absolute requirement for creating a victim-friendly reporting system. Legal reform should therefore establish a National Competency Framework concerning gender sensitivity, victimology, trauma-informed practice, ethical interviewing, confidentiality, and the prevention of re-victimization. The minimum competency standards should be

formulated through an inter-institutional mechanism involving relevant law-enforcement institutions, victim protection bodies, health authorities, professional organizations, and academic experts. Certification should not necessarily be administered by a single institution; instead, police officers, prosecutors, judges, medical personnel, psychologists, and other professionals may undergo certification and periodic competency evaluation through their respective institutional or professional systems, provided that they comply with the nationally established minimum standards. Periodic evaluation and continuing education should be required to ensure that certification does not become merely an administrative formality. Serious non-compliance, particularly discriminatory treatment, unlawful disclosure of victim information, or conduct resulting in unnecessary re-victimization, should result in administrative or professional disciplinary sanctions according to the authority of the relevant institution.

Legal reforms must also strengthen victim protection institutions by optimizing the role of the Women and Children's Service Unit (PPA), the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK), safe houses, and social rehabilitation institutions in an integrated manner. Currently, there is still a disparity in services between urban and remote areas, resulting in many victims not receiving equal access to protection. Therefore, the state must require every local government to establish a crisis center for women and children integrated with the police, hospitals, and legal aid institutions. Concrete actions that need to be taken include increasing the dedicated budget for victim protection, building safe houses in every district/city, providing emergency transportation services for victims, and establishing mobile protection units to reach victims in remote areas. Furthermore, the LPSK needs to be strengthened by expanding its authority to provide automatic emergency protection for victims of sexual violence and domestic violence without lengthy bureaucratic processes. The state must also guarantee free legal aid and mandatory psychological support for victims, as mandated by Articles 5 and 6 of the Witness and Victim Protection Law. With this institutional strengthening, the reporting system will function not only as a legal administration mechanism but also as an instrument for comprehensive victim protection and recovery.

From a victim-centered justice perspective, legal reform must prioritize a trauma-informed reporting system as the ideal model for reporting violence against women and children in Indonesia. However, the proposed single-interview mechanism should not be interpreted as an absolute prohibition against any subsequent examination of the victim, since such an approach could conflict with the evidentiary needs of investigators and prosecutors, judicial requirements, and the accused's right to a fair trial. The mechanism should instead operate through a **primary interview combined with controlled re-examination**. Whenever legally and practically possible, the victim should undergo a comprehensive initial interview conducted by trained personnel using a standardized trauma-informed protocol, supported by appropriate documentation or digital recording for evidentiary purposes. Subsequent examination should only be conducted where there is a legitimate procedural necessity, such as the emergence of new facts, the clarification of material issues, prosecution requirements, judicial proceedings, or the protection of

procedural fairness. In addition, trauma-informed and victim-centered procedures should be evaluated through measurable standards relating to safety, privacy and confidentiality, informed participation, non-discrimination, the avoidance of unnecessary repeated questioning, and continuity of assistance. Compliance may be assessed through indicators such as the number of repeated examinations, response time, the availability of private interview facilities, the provision of legal and psychological assistance, complaints concerning victim treatment, and periodic institutional audits.

Legal reforms to the reporting system for violence against women and children must be directed at changing the legal culture of society and law enforcement officials to create an inclusive, responsive, and human rights-based justice system. Legal reform will not be effective if patriarchal culture, stigma against victims, and victim-blaming practices continue to thrive in society and law enforcement institutions. Therefore, the state needs to take concrete action in the form of legal education and a massive national campaign against gender-based violence through schools, universities, social media, religious institutions, and community groups. Furthermore, police and legal education programs should be designed around gender equality, victimology, and a human rights framework to ensure that law enforcement officers adopt a victim-centered perspective from the outset of their training. The government should also implement a national evaluation system to assess the quality of victim reporting services, using victim protection audits and an access-to-justice index for women and children. With these legal substance reforms, strengthening of the law enforcement structure, and transformation of the legal culture, the reporting system for violence against women and children in Indonesia is expected to be able to create substantive justice that is not only oriented towards punishing perpetrators, but also ensures protection, recovery, and respect for the human rights of victims with dignity.

Comparative experience from Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and South Korea should be used not merely as a general illustration of more advanced victim protection, but as a source of specific functional principles for legal adaptation. The relevant comparative lessons include integrated victim assistance, coordinated case referral, continuity of legal and psychological support, rapid emergency response, and mechanisms designed to reduce unnecessary re-victimization during legal proceedings. These practices should not be directly transplanted into Indonesia because differences in constitutional structure, institutional authority, geographical conditions, and technological capacity must be taken into account. Accordingly, the proposed legal reform adopts a selective adaptation approach in which foreign practices are used to identify functional principles rather than to replicate foreign institutions in their original form. To provide a clearer normative direction, the proposed national regulation should contain provisions concerning institutional coordination, differentiated reporting mechanisms, verification of digital reports, protection of victim identity and sensitive information, emergency protection and referral, psychological and legal assistance, standardized primary interviews and controlled re-examination, professional competency standards, institutional complaint mechanisms, periodic service evaluation, and administrative or disciplinary sanctions for officials who engage in unlawful disclosure or institutional re-victimization.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion, the lack of reporting of victims of violence against women and children in Indonesia is a serious problem influenced by a weak legal protection system, limited access to justice, and the suboptimal implementation of a victim-centered approach in the criminal justice system. Although Indonesia has various regulations, such as Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, and Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Protection of Witnesses and Victims, the implementation of victim protection still faces various substantial, structural, and cultural weaknesses. An unintegrated reporting system, weak protection of victim identity, low gender sensitivity among law enforcement officers, the practice of re-victimization, a culture of victim blaming, and limited psychological support and legal aid services make many victims reluctant to report. These conditions indicate that the Indonesian criminal justice system still tends to be offender-oriented and has not fully positioned victims as the primary subject of legal protection. Therefore, legal reform is needed through the development of an integrated digital-based reporting system, strengthening the trauma-informed reporting system, automated identity protection, mandatory legal and psychological assistance, and strengthening the institutions of the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Unit (PPA) and the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK) to create a more responsive, inclusive, and victim-centered justice system.

In this regard, it is recommended that the government should immediately undertake comprehensive legal reform by enacting a national regulation that establishes an integrated victim protection mechanism, combining the reporting system, victim protection, rehabilitation, and legal aid services into a single framework grounded in access to justice and a victim-centered approach. The government, along with the House of Representatives (DPR), also needs to harmonize various regulations related to the protection of women and children to prevent overlapping authority and inconsistent norms in law enforcement practices. Furthermore, law enforcement officers should be required to undergo education and certification based on gender sensitivity, victimology, and a trauma-informed approach to prevent re-victimization of victims during the legal process. The state also needs to expand the development of safe houses, integrated service centers, digital reporting services, and free legal and psychological assistance to remote areas so that victims can access justice quickly, safely, and with dignity. On the other hand, society needs to be encouraged to build a more victim-friendly legal culture through public education, campaigns against gender-based violence, and the elimination of stigma against victims of violence. With the synergy between legal substance reform, institutional strengthening, and legal culture transformation, the legal protection system for women and children victims of violence in Indonesia is expected to achieve substantive justice based on respect for human dignity and human rights principles in a modern state governed by the rule of law.

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