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YOUR POSTCARD

FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA

"I'm sleeping here [at the women's shelter]. It's about 2 months now.

"[Since] I was small — I was 10 or 9 years — I have been abused by my uncle. Physically, and almost sexually molested.

"I came to the police station and I put in a report about how he treated me ... They just gave him a warning not to come near me and threaten me ... just stay away from me and I will complete my education and be successful in life.

"[The police] told me to come to the counselling at [Oxfam partner] Lifeline. I came down to get some counselling from the head counsellor — the woman.

"She was counselling me, and I told her that I had no place to [go] ... So, they told me to come and stay here for quite a while and just ... complete [my school] term.

"I feel more comfortable living here. I feel like I have no problems anymore ... It feel[s] like home.

"[They] counsel us. Like they ask us every day ... how we feel, like how are we doing with stuffs here. Usually, we tell them how we are feeling. And they give us more encouragement, ... They usually build up our confidence ... They are really nice.

"Many of the teenage girls like me, and also even boys too, they face such problems like [me] but they can't come out due to the fear that they have in them.

"But I want to tell them that they can come out, from that fear, and that violence and abuse. They can come out. They can stand on their feet and ... they can go to the law, or to the police, or to people like Lifeline and get counselling."

"RUTH", MOROBE DISTRICT, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Ruth's name has been changed to protect her identity.



FAST FACTS

Capital: Port Moresby

Population: 6.56 million (CIA Factbook)

Area: 462,840 square kilometres

Currency: Kina

Languages: Tok Pisin, English, Hiri Motu, plus about 836 indigenous languages

Life expectancy: 69.2 years women; 64.6 years men (CIA FACTBOOK)

Adult literacy: 59.4% women; 65.4% men (CIA FACTBOOK)

Population living below national poverty line: 39.9% (WORLD BANK)

Women who have experienced some form of violence: 68% (PNG Department of Health)

Women subjected to rape: One in three (PNG Department of Health)

Population living in rural areas: 87.4% (UNDP)

Population without access to clean water: 60.3% (CIA FACTBOOK)

Carbon emissions per person: 0.5 tonnes (UNDP)

Female seats in parliament: 2.7% (UNDP)

Oxfam's areas of work: elimination of violence against women; men and boys behaviour change; natural resource management and advocacy; water; sanitation and hygiene; GROW campaign.

