



# Mobilising Men in Practice

Challenging sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings

**Tools, Stories, Lessons**



# **Mobilising Men in Practice: Challenging sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings**

## **Tools, Stories, Lessons**

First published by the Institute of Development Studies in January 2012

© Institute of Development Studies 2012

ISBN: 978 1 78118 043 3

All rights reserved. Reproduction, copy, transmission, or translation of any part of this publication may be made only under the following conditions:

- with the prior permission of the publisher; or
- with a licence from the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd., 90 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1P 9HE, UK, or from another national licensing agency; or
- under the terms set out below.

This publication is copyright, but may be reproduced by any method without fee for teaching or nonprofit purposes, but not for resale. Formal permission is required for all such uses, but normally will be granted immediately. For copying in any other circumstances, or for reuse in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, prior written permission must be obtained from the publisher and a fee may be payable.

Available from:

Communications Team, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, BN1 9RE, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1273 915637 Fax: +44 (0) 1273 621202

E-mail: [bookshop@ids.ac.uk](mailto:bookshop@ids.ac.uk)

Web: [www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop)

IDS is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (No. 877338)

Photo on cover page:

Boda Boda bike outside Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Juja, Kenya

Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

Suggested Citation

Greig, Alan with Edström, Jerker (2012) *Mobilising Men in Practice: Challenging sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings*, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton: IDS



# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	1
<b>About this Guide</b>	3
<b>Background</b>	4
<b>Becoming Activists for Change</b>	8
Reflect on our journeys	9
Be a strong ally	21
Look at our privilege	27
Get and give support	35
<b>Understanding Institutional Violence</b>	43
Begin with an analysis of power	44
Look at the conditons as well as behaviours	49
Document the violence	55
<b>Taking Action for Change</b>	65
Identitfy priority issues	66
Design the campaign	73
Select strategies for action	77
Improve rights literacy of constituency	87
Change and monitor institutional policy	95
Change institutonal culture	101
<b>Further Reading</b>	107

---

## Acknowledgements

Mobilising Men has been the work of many people. The programme was originally conceived at the seminal 'Politicising Masculinities: Beyond the Personal' symposium, convened by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Dakar, Senegal in October 2007 and supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). With guidance from IDS Programme Manager Alan Greig and IDS Research Fellow Jerker Edström, Mobilising Men was developed in collaboration with its country-level partners in India (Centre for Health and Social Justice), Kenya (Men for Gender Equality Now) and Uganda (Refugee Law Project).

Many other people have provided invaluable support in shaping the programme and in drawing the lessons, which are described in this publication. We would like to thank Aminata Touré, Leyla Sharafi and Upala Devi in UNFPA for their support and substantive feedback, as well as UNFPA Country Office staff in India, Kenya and Uganda for their contributions to Mobilising Men in their respective countries. At IDS, Jan Boyes, Andrea Cornwall and Tessa Lewin supported the implementation of the programme, and Carol Smithyes and Gary Edwards provided editorial and design support to the production of this publication, which was drafted by Alan Greig, supported by Jerker Edström.

We are particularly grateful to UNFPA for supporting the Mobilising Men programme and this publication, and we thank Sida for their contribution to printing and distribution costs through the IDS Gender, Power and Sexuality Programme.

In India, we would like to thank Abhijit Das, Satish Kumar Singh, Archana Dwivedi and Lavanya Mehra of the Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ), the members of the India Country Reference Group as well as the Mobilising Men activists and mentors, including Anand Singh Shahi, Ganesh C Kadu, Jagdish Lal, Sandeep Barve, Dr Sanjay Singh, Sanjeev Kumar, Sanjoy D Jadhav, Dr Santosh Kumarr Giri, Vikas Dubey, and Anand Pawar.

In Kenya, our thanks go to: the MEGEN team of Njoki Wainaina, Alfred Makabira, Simon Kamunyu and Phil Otieno; the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) team,

---

particularly Professor Marion Mutugi, Udi Kamau and Muriu Njoroje, as well as Francis Bulimo, John Gacheru, Patrick Mwangi and Miriam Too; the Boda Boda team, including Aggrey Chegome, Raphael Njoroje, John Musau and Kennedy Wambua; the Survivors Support Team, including Njoroje Muriu, Joyce Wanjiru, Peter M. Kariuki, Antony Ndungu, Joseph Kabogo, Lucy Mumbi, Ruth Mwobobia, Salome Wandalo, Benson Karanga, Mary Muriuki, Peter Mbuthia, Jennnifer Onsando, and the Juja Division Officer Mohamed M. Abdi; and the members of the Kenya Country Reference Group.

In Uganda, we would like to thank Dr Chris Dolan, Salome Atim and Mathias Nyanzi of the Refugee Law Project, members of the Uganda Country Reference Group including Ann Mutavati (UNFPA), Faith Bothuwok (African Centre for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims), Willy Mukendi (Amnesty International Uganda) and Jean Kemitare (Raising Voices), as well as the members of Refugee Law Project's (RLP) Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Persecution Advisory Committee in Kampala and the activist teams in the refugee settlements of Kyaka 11 and Kyangwali.

Additional readings and online resources on men, masculinities and gender equality can be found on page 107.

Alan Greig and Jerker Edström

## About this Guide

Calls for greater male participation are now a commonplace in work on sexual and reproductive health and rights. The need to engage men in efforts to prevent sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and promote sexual health and gender equality is well accepted. But we know less about the optimal forms of such engagement, particularly when it comes to moving beyond a focus on changing individual men's attitudes and behaviours. Such a focus is critical of course, but gender inequalities, and the violence that maintains them, are not simply a matter of individuals and their behaviours; they are maintained by the social, economic and political institutions that structure all of our lives. What can men do to work with women in challenging the institutionalised nature of sexual and gender-based violence?

The Mobilising Men programme is developing and documenting answers to this question. Through exploring ways of engaging men as gender activists within the institutions to which they belong, Mobilising Men is working to better understand what it takes to confront sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings. Since early 2010, the Institute of Development Studies, with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has partnered with civil society organisations in India, Kenya and Uganda to develop the programme. These partners at country level have identified, recruited, trained and supported teams of male activists to work with women in developing campaigns to challenge and change the policies and cultures of specific institutional settings that enable and enact violence against women.

Mobilising Men in Practice brings together stories and lessons from this work, as well as some of the tools used by the Mobilising Men partners in India, Kenya and Uganda. It is intended to inspire and guide others who are committed to engaging more men in efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence within the institutions in which we live our lives.

## Background

The Mobilising Men programme began in late 2009 with country-level assessments and has been operational in India, Kenya and Uganda since early 2010. Within India, Mobilising Men is being led by the Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ), established in 2006 with the mission to promote human development, gender equality, human rights and social justice. CHSJ has focused its activities on three main sectors: university campuses, where SGBV is known to be widespread; local government, which play a key role in the enforcement, or lack thereof, of the Domestic Violence Act; and human rights work with Dalit communities, which hitherto has failed to adequately address the gendered nature of violence against them. A total of 18 male activists have been recruited from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Pune University (both students and faculty), from *Panchayats* (decentralised local government administration systems) in Uttarakhand as well as political parties in Maharashtra, and from the National Commission on Dalit Human Rights based in Delhi. For more information on the work of CHSJ, go to [www.chsj.org](http://www.chsj.org)

In Kenya, Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN) is the lead partner for the Mobilising Men programme. MEGEN was founded in 2002 as part of a regional network of men against gender-based violence under the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET). It was registered in Kenya as an autonomous national entity in 2005. MEGEN's Mobilising Men project has targeted issues of SGBV on university campus and within the transport sector. By basing its activities in one geographical site, Juja town outside of Nairobi, MEGEN has been able to implement linked campaigns across these two sectors. MEGEN has recruited ten activists in two teams, the first drawn from the Student Union, student groups and faculty of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), and the second drawn from two workers' associations of bicycle taxi riders (the Boda Boda riders) who service the students and staff in and around the university. For more information on the work of MEGEN, go to [www.megen.org](http://www.megen.org)

In Uganda, IDS is partnering with the Refugee Law Project (RLP), which was established in 1999 to provide legal aid to asylum seekers and refugees. RLP has focused its activities on the issues of SGBV faced by forced migrants, both in the formal settlements operated by the Ugandan government and within communities of forced migrants living in Kampala. To do so, RLP has recruited two teams of activists. In the settlements of Kyaka 11 and Kyangwali, RLP is working with ten members of a youth group known as COBURWAS (COBURWAS International Youth Organization to Transfrom Africa - [www.coburwas.org](http://www.coburwas.org)), founded several years ago as a self-help initiative by members from different communities of forced migrants in the camps. In Kampala, the activist team comprises the 12 male and female members of its SGBV Advisory Committee, which has representatives from each of the communities of forced migrants served by RLP. For more information on the work of RLP, go to [www.refugeelawproject.org](http://www.refugeelawproject.org)



**Mobilising Men Activists in Nainital District, Uttarakhand, Northern India**  
Credit: © Anand Singh Shahi 2010



Boda Boda biker outside Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Juja, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010



Activists John Gacheru and Aggrey Chegome at the Mobilising Men campaign planning workshop, Nairobi, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

# Becoming Activists for Change

**Reflect on our journeys**

**Be a strong ally**

**Look at our privilege**

**Get and give support**

## Reflect on our journeys

There are many reasons why people get involved in work to end sexual and gender-based violence. It is important to think and talk about these reasons and the experiences in our lives that have brought us to the point of wanting to take action. Such reflection and discussion is helpful because it helps to:

- Clarify our concerns about issues of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and our commitments to addressing them.
- Put our own experiences with SGBV in context, especially in relation to other issues/ experiences of privilege and oppression (intersectional analysis).
- Relate our own experiences to those of others and thus build relationships with others toward acting together to address sexual and gender-based violence.
- Share with others our concerns and commitments, which helps to reduce isolation and clarify the potential for a shared agenda of work.
- Relate our experience as individuals to the larger 'story' of privilege and injustice in our communities and the violence that reflects this.
- Identify sources of support and inspiration that we can draw on to help sustain us in the work.
- Alert us to the challenges of doing work on SGBV issues that may relate to our own experiences of violence in our past, and that we may need support in dealing with.
- Identify harmful patterns of our own behaviour that we may reproduce in our activism and that we want to make change in.

All these points are relevant to people of any gender identity taking on the work of challenging sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings. But reflection and discussion of motivations for doing this work and our personal journeys toward becoming activists for change are especially important for men. This kind of reflection and discussion is helpful for men in revealing previously hidden patterns of enacting male privilege, as well as acts of complicity with violence, that men may have been unwilling to talk about before. At the same time, many men

have their own experiences of being targeted by sexual and gender-based violence about which they are often reluctant to talk about because of prevailing norms of masculinity that insist on male invulnerability. Reflecting on our journeys to becoming activists for gender change can be an opportunity for men to open up to themselves and others about painful experiences in their past and to get help in dealing with these.

On pages 11-13, the Mobilising Men programme leaders in Kenya (Phil Otieno) and India (Satish Kumar Singh) and a female Mobilising Men activist from Uganda (Muhimundu Saalama) share their stories of becoming gender activists. On page 15 there is an Activist Life Mapping tool that can be used in a workshop setting to help participants explore and discuss their own journeys. A training activity tool on Why Should Men Change?, together with a handout on Men's Interests in Change, are included on pages 17 and 19 respectively, and can be used to support discussions with men about their motivations for getting involved in gender activism.

“ I got involved as a Mobilising Men activist after the thorough trainings by Refugee Law Project, which gave me much knowledge about what sexual and gender-based violence is all about. This training opened my eyes to how big this problem of violence is, and how it affects the community. I feel that I must use the knowledge and skills that I acquired at the workshop for the benefit of my community. ”

*Marcel Bahati, activist with COBURWAS youth group, Uganda  
(personal communication).*

## How and why did you first get involved as an activist in the struggle for gender justice?

*Having been born and bred in the slums, I witnessed a lot of violence and that made me resolve that when I grew up I had to do something to change the status quo. Men's attitude towards women was a matter of concern to me very early in life. I grew up seeing my mother struggling to ensure that we had a roof over our heads and food on the table. Even though my father was employed, many are the times when I heard him say that he did not have money. In 2003 after 30 years of marriage my mum and dad separated simply because my mum refused to let my sister be married before she had completed her college education. My dad was adamant that she should marry because he was eyeing the bride price that was to be paid for my sister. I sided with my mum to my dad's chagrin and he actually ended up disowning me. That same year in September, the African Women's Development and Communications Network (FEMNET) had a workshop on gender at the National Museum Of Kenya under their Men to Men programme (which crystallised into Men for Gender Equality Now- MEGEN). I was invited to that particular workshop by the Chairperson of MEGEN having worked together with him during the Constitution of Kenya review process. Since that time I have never looked back, having found a group of people who subscribed to the principles to which I greatly aspired.*



**Phil Otieno, Nairobi, Kenya**



*I started wanting to address sexual and gender-based violence issues because of my own personal experiences, which made me feel that this is a very unfair world that we live in. When I was 19 years old, my parents informed me that they had found me a husband and I was forced to go with him. I did not like him because he was very old. I was so unhappy but since the dowry had been paid and I was married off, I had to persevere. Through getting involved with Mobilising Men, I have come to learn that as a woman I have rights and I should not accept abuse. This brings*

*me happiness and peace. Knowing what I went through, I am able to be involved in stopping this menace of violence against women and disrespect for their rights.*

*I believe we must also get more men involved in this work. Getting men into groups and talking to them alone is helpful. It is important to not condemn them but help them understand that the way they were brought up is the problem and this is what we must deal with. It is about enabling them to understand that it is partially not their fault but a problem of cultural and religious teachings and rules. Discussing with men the cost of their privileges, especially in refugee life where often they can no longer provide for their family, is very useful because many men identify with this challenge. Many men feel a lot of pressure and some have ended up committing suicide or abandoning their families because they cannot provide for them. Yet this is just because gender roles have changed, and women now have more chance to earn money. For example, most refugee women sell Bitenge (African fabric) to help to feed their husbands and children. Also some shop owners do not trust men and often prefer to employ women. We need to talk to men, engage with them in counselling sessions and trainings, helping them realise their vulnerabilities and help them see the ways that the old gender roles are harming them as well as women.*

**Muhimundu Saalama, Kampala Uganda**

*I come from a middle class, upper caste (Thakur) family of Uttar Pradesh and was brought up in an atmosphere, which plays a crucial role in the perpetuation of customs and traditions, based on a very aggressive masculinity. During my student days, I started feeling discomfort with this expression of masculinity. I found that I was more of a shy, caring, gentle and non-aggressive male. The community where I was born and brought up was highly patriarchal as well as being dominated by caste - the two were closely linked. Issues of untouchability, caste and class disturbed me a great deal. Perhaps due to my masculine behaviour I had more friends from lower castes. I saw that girls were not getting attention in school and boys were always beaten for not doing hard work. Among my relatives, I saw that dowry was a very big issue and marriages even got cancelled where there was a dispute regarding dowry. Even when my younger sister got married before me in a traditional way, it was with a huge dowry. In my University, I saw that so many of my male classmates used abusive language and were involved in sexually harassing women, or 'eve teasing' as it is called. I felt uneasy about these issues but at the same time I also felt that I was not accepted or appreciated, by the boys but also the girls.*

*These experiences helped conjure in me a dream of a society free of social evils, exploitation and discrimination of any form. The struggle became very much a part of my personal life when I received serious threats because of my decision to marry outside of my caste. Initially, I was focused on issues of class and caste. But I became more aware of the links between these issues and gender justice when I got the opportunity to work with a rural community on issues of women's health, education and economic empowerment. This experience made clear to me the discrepancy sometimes between my broad dream of social liberation and my day-to-day life as a man. Subsequently, I joined an organisation working on women's empowerment issues, and this helped me understand gender issues and concerns better. I also came to know myself better as a man, and felt that the opportunity I was being given to question and discard harmful norms of masculinity was a rare one and should be available to all men. This strengthened my commitment to develop this work with men and help them break their emotional shackles so that they could play a constructive and effective role in a society where both men and women have an equal opportunity to live their lives.*



**Satish Kumar Singh, New Delhi, India**



Planning the Boda Boda campaign, Juja, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

## Tool: Activist Life Mapping

### Goal:

To look at and talk about the people and experiences that have led us to want to take action against violence and injustice.

### Steps:

Ask each person to draw their Life Map. Explain that this can be any kind of map: a timeline of life events; concentric circles representing different aspects of experience (family, relationship, work); linked images of people who have been significant etc. They can begin from childhood or from the time of a significant ancestor or historical experience, or from an event that was a turning point in life.

On their maps, ask each person to mark or show:

- Two people and two experiences that made them aware of the significance of gender in their lives
- Two people and two experiences that revealed the links between gender and violence in their lives

Break up into pairs or small groups of (three to five people). Ask each person to share their life maps with their partners, and talk about the issues and insights that drawing the map has highlighted. For those who are listening, remind people to be sure to listen well and pay attention to the issues and questions that are coming up for them.

Bring people back together as a large group. Open up a general discussion about the significant influences on us as gender activists by using the following questions:

- Who or what was most influential in raising our awareness of the impact of gender roles and gender inequalities in our lives?
- How have we benefited from these gender roles and inequalities? How have we suffered because of them?

- How have these gender roles and inequalities been related to our experiences of different forms of violence?
- Who or what has moved us to want to take action to prevent and stop such violence?
- How might our own experience and expression of gender (how we think/feel/act as men, women or people of other gender identities) affect, positively and negatively, the work that we want to do to stop the violence?
- What do we need to change about the ways that we think/feel/act in order to reduce the negatives and be more effective in our work to challenge sexual and gender-based violence?
- What can we learn from the example of those people who have inspired us to take action against sexual and gender-based violence?

Wrap up the discussion by sharing some of the key points about why it is important to reflect and discuss the reasons why we want to do this work and the experiences in our lives that have brought us to the point of wanting to take action.

**Notes:**

Asking people to think and talk about experiences of gender and violence from their personal histories may bring up some difficult or painful memories and feelings. It will be important to prepare the group for this by raising this as an issue at the beginning of the activity, and by reminding people at the end to take care of themselves, because such memories and feelings may only come up for them later. Depending on the relationship that you, as the facilitator, have with the group, it may be helpful to discuss issues of getting and giving support in terms of dealing with difficult memories and feelings.

## Tool: Why Should Men Change?

### Goal:

To identify men's multiple interests in joining the struggle for gender justice and practice skills in discussing motivations for change with other men.

### Steps:

Introduce the activity by explaining that one of the main questions asked about men's involvement in struggles for gender justice relates to men's interests in challenging a system of gender power that in so many ways continues to benefit men - in short, 'why should men change?'

Write up these six headings, one each on a separate piece of flip-chart paper and stick these papers up around the room:

- For the sake of the women in our lives
- For the sake of the girls in our lives
- For the sake of the boys in our lives
- For our own sake, as men
- For the sake of our community
- For the sake of our society

Invite participants to move from one flip-chart to another, writing all of the reasons that men should change and get involved in the struggle for gender justice that relate to the statement on that flip-chart.

When the charts are full, lead a general discussion on what participants have identified as men's main interests in changing harmful norms and practices of masculinity and joining the struggle for gender justice. Discuss the balance between men's interests that relate to their own lives and those that relate to women and children in their lives. Discuss the balance between the interests that relate to men's individual lives and those that relate to broader community and societal interests. Use the information in the handout to support this discussion.

Break into six smaller groups, and have each group choose one of the flip-charts to work with. Ask each group to prepare a role play, showing one man talking to another man or group of men, using the reasons listed on the flip-chart, to persuade them of the importance of men challenging harmful norms and practices of masculinity and getting involved in struggles for gender justice. Run the role plays. After each role play, discuss with the following questions:

- What worked well in terms of trying to persuade other men to challenge harmful norms and practices of masculinity?
- What did not work so well?
- Why do you think this is?
- What would work well in terms of talking to men in our communities about men's interests in challenging harmful norms and practices of masculinity?
- As gender justice activists, what do we need to work on (knowledge? skills? confidence?) in order to do a good job of talking to men in our communities about men's interests in changing harmful norms and practices of masculinity?

End the activity by summing up the discussion, highlighting the importance of holding out a positive vision for change in men's individual lives, as well as for their community and the society as a whole, as being key to exploring men's multiple interests in challenging harmful norms and practices of masculinity.

# Handout: Men's Interests in Change

## Relational interests:

As a group, men have a common interest in defending what they share in common as a group; that is, their male gender privilege. But men's lives are more complex than this. Their lives are shaped by more than just their gender identity; race/ethnicity, class, caste, sexuality, religion and nationality all influence how men identify their interests. In their families and communities, which are largely defined by these factors, men live in social relationships, many with women and girls: wives, partners, mothers, sisters, aunts, daughters, nieces, friends, classmates, colleagues, neighbours, and so on. It is the quality of these relationships that in large part determines the quality of every man's life. Men can see that their lives are damaged, too, by a system of gender inequality that damages the lives of women and girls with whom they are in relationship. It is clear that many men make sacrifices for their children, and want their daughters to grow up in a world that offers young women security, freedom, and opportunities to fulfil themselves. This is a powerful reason for many men to support gender equality.

## Personal well-being:

In many ways, men continue to benefit from political, economic and social systems that privilege the male. But these systems are also bad for many men's health and well-being. Health research continues to document specific problems for adult men and boys, among them: lower life expectancy; premature death from accident, homicide and suicide; high rates of occupational injury in industries such as mining, transport and heavy manufacturing (closely related to gender segregation in the workforce); and higher levels of drug abuse, especially alcohol and tobacco. Men's unwillingness to seek medical help when it is needed has been observed in many countries. These health issues are, in part, the result of men's adherence to gender norms that equate masculinity with toughness and invulnerability. Where unemployment is high, the lack of a paid job can be a damaging pressure on men who have grown up with the expectation of being a breadwinner. More generally, less rigidity in the norms of masculinity will allow men more options in how to live their lives and more freedom to fully express themselves emotionally, without having to put up a 'front' of invulnerability and suppress their emotions in order to stay 'in control'. This is likely to yield benefits in terms of mental health and psychological well-being.

---

This four-part framework for identifying men's interests in change is based on the paper presented by Raewyn Connell at the UN Expert Group Meeting on 'The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving gender equality', held in Brasilia, Brazil in 2003, [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/)

### **Collective interests:**

Men may also support gender equality because they see its relevance to the well-being of their community. In situations of mass poverty and under-employment, flexibility in the gender division of labour may be crucial to a household which requires women's earnings as well as men's. Men may recognise that they benefit in the long run from the growth in collective well-being that flows from the better education of women and from improvements in women's health. Men are likely to benefit from broad social and cultural changes associated with gender equality. It will also yield benefits in security. Violence, both between individuals and groups, is strongly associated with dominant norms of masculinity and gender inequalities in economic and political life. Men have an interest in challenging these norms and inequalities, and the violence that follows from them, for the sake of peace in their communities. Men's groups have already demonstrated this interest, in the support they have given to the women's movement in ensuring adequate implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which addresses the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

### **Human rights and social justice:**

Men also get involved in the struggle for gender justice, and seek to change harmful norms and practices of masculinity, simply because it is the right thing to do. Women and girls have the same rights as men and boys. Even when men cannot see personal benefits in gender equality, they still have a responsibility to promote greater equality. As long as any systematic gender inequalities persist, privileging men over women and promising future advantage to boys, those with such privilege have an ethical responsibility to do what they can to change the system. This responsibility may be more evident to those men who are working for social justice in their own lives, for example for economic or racial justice. They are increasingly recognising that their struggles are related to women's struggles for gender justice. Beliefs about domination and subordination that lie at the heart of gender inequality (the power of the male over the female, the masculine over the feminine) play a fundamental role in other forms of injustice by 'naturalising' relations of domination; for example, of rich over poor, or in some societies, of white over black.

## Be a strong ally

For many years, women have been leading the struggle against physical and sexual violence. It is essential that more men get more involved in this work to end the violence, especially because so much of this physical and sexual violence is done by men.

Yet, in joining the struggle to end the violence, it is important that men pay attention to how they are getting involved and in what ways their involvement is supporting women's existing and continuing efforts and leadership. There is a danger that men, consciously or unconsciously, will act out aspects of their male privilege and thus undermine the struggle against the gender inequalities which underpin so much of the violence.

To counter this danger, it is important for men getting involved in this work to think about what it means to be a good ally to women and women's organisations in their struggle against violence. In addition, given how much violence is directed toward lesbian, bisexual and transgender women because they do not conform to dominant norms of gender and sexuality (as is also the case for gay and transgender men), it is also important to think about what it means to be a good ally to such people and the organisations that support them.

“ We must also be conscious that we do not take over the gender struggle as men. We must always be conscious. The temptation is there, because of men's tendency to take over. We must be constantly vigilant and remind ourselves that this is a struggle that has to be led by women. The same as in the anti-apartheid struggle, it was black people who had to lead that struggle. ”

*Mbuyiselo Botha, Sonke Gender Justice, South Africa  
(personal communication)*

In these situations, men can be good allies in the struggle against physical and sexual violence when they:

- Are accountable for the ways they may act out their male privilege and work to change this when they get feedback on it.
- Work to earn the trust of those with whom they are working.
- Listen well, rather than rush to speak.
- Are open to feedback about how they are contributing or not to the work.
- Follow through on commitments made and be open about when this is not possible and the reasons for this.
- Use the influence that they may have to advance the struggle - through opening doors to resources, connections and support.
- Take chances - sometimes men don't get involved because they are afraid of making a mistake or saying the wrong thing. An ally is bold. When they mess up, they fix it and try again. It's always important to take a chance and reach out.
- Get support and remember that it is important to take care of themselves and not try and do it all alone. Above all, an ally is a peacemaker.
- Are patient and persistent – sexist attitudes and harmful gender norms will not change overnight as they have been with us for many years.
- Are humble – when men take on the role of being a positive example for others, there can be a temptation to be righteous and to see themselves as being right and other men as being wrong. This will put many people off. A positive example is also a humble example.

Three men from the Mobilising Men programme share their experiences of being an ally in the struggle for gender equality and against sexual and gender-based violence (see page 23). A training activity tool for exploring the qualities and practices of a male ally is included on page 25 and a story of allyship in action from a Mobilising Men activist in Kenya is included on page 26.

## What does being a 'male ally in the struggle for gender justice' mean to you, and what does it look like in your life?

*Men have to take responsibility to establish the understanding that gender-based violence is a social issue and that all stakeholders of society have to work for gender justice. It also means that men have to take leadership in mobilising men for gender justice. We have to be clear that when men demand a gender just society, it is not for women alone, but it is necessary for men also. Men need to work for themselves as well as for women and all other sexual minorities. Men need to support women's struggle and women's leadership, which will teach men to become followers of women and this will challenge the patriarchal norm in society. This does not mean that men will not take initiatives against gender injustice. Men as allies need to learn from the women's movement on gender justice struggles. Men also need to use women's groups as a mirror and learn to get feedback on their work from women's organisations. We have all seen the situation that men can be very progressive in their 'public' work and are a part of the social justice struggle but at the same time they are not very open to sharing their privileges in their private space. They are the controllers in their own family. I learned from my own experience that learnings from my private life need to be linked and used in my public work. Overall I can say that men need to take leadership of work with men and be a follower of women's organisations on the work with women in gender justice struggles. Taking a public stand on these issues is important for men because that creates its own pressure to take action - to walk the walk, as well as talk the talk.*

**Satish Kumar Singh, New Delhi, India**

*Being a male ally in the struggle for gender justice means the world to me. It means redress for past injustices, representation in decision-making bodies including justice and fairness in terms of distribution of resources. Remembering my sister's experience, who had been pressured by my father to marry before she had completed her college education, I swore to myself that I would want to transform society to make it a better place if not for anyone else but for my child. If only there was similarity in treatment (for both women and men), some of the problems currently faced by the human race will not be there. Almost on a daily basis, I engage with men on issues of gender justice, bearing in mind that most of the injustices are done by men against women. This does not in any way negate acts of injustices directed on men by women, but it remains true that men are the main perpetrators.*

**Phil Otieno, Nairobi, Kenya**



*While working with a feminist organisation during cases of violence against women, I found that many people, whether they were educated, employed or uneducated, were against feminism. They saw 'feminists' as persons who are 'man-haters' and who don't believe in cultural values and want to destroy the 'family'. They thought that gender-based violence and exploitation was a private issue that should be solved silently within the four walls of home and should not be taken to*

*the police nor shared with others in order to preserve the community prestige. I continue to argue against this and try to motivate other men to participate in social actions and became a partner in the struggle for gender justice. For example, I have organised several dialogues between the feminists and professors at the university campus so that they can understand the issue and how gendered attitudes and values not only affect adversely women but men and of course transgender people too. So, being a male ally in the struggle for gender justice means working on all the issues related to gender. It also means recognising that before doing so, one has to work on oneself too. Thus, walking the talk approach is a must; it means being the change you want to see in others. Doing this has opened new horizons for change in my day-to-day life.*

**Dr. Sanjay, Varanasi, India**

## Tool: Being a Strong Ally

### Goal:

To identify the qualities of being a male ally in the struggle for gender equality and against sexual and gender-based violence.

### Steps:

Ask each participant to think of a time when they have faced a difficulty in their life and someone else helped them to deal with it, by supporting their own problem-solving rather than trying to solve the problem for them. Ask participants to list the qualities that they made this person a good ally for them.

Invite participants to share their lists and discuss the meaning of being an ally and the qualities of being a good ally.

Read out the quote from Mbuyiselo Botha, of Sonke Gender Justice in South Africa (on page 21), and ask participants to discuss it, using the following questions:

- In what ways do you agree and in what ways do you disagree with this statement?
- In what ways do men have a 'tendency to take over'?
- What explains this tendency?
- How can men be more conscious of this tendency?
- How can men show leadership in the struggle against SGBV in ways that support and reinforce women's leadership?

Form small groups, and ask each group to identify the practices of a strong male ally.

Bring the groups back together and have them share their lists.

Lead a discussion of the key practices and qualities of a strong male ally, referring to the key points listed on page

## Story: 'If all men change, we will be free from violations'

John Musau is a Boda Boda bicycle taxi driver in Juja town, on the outskirts of Nairobi. He was recruited by MEGEN to join the Kenya Mobilising Men project because he was a leader of one of the Boda Boda associations in Juja. Following the initial training workshop for the project, he was asked what it meant to him to be an ally in the struggle for gender justice, and said:

"Before the training I was ignorant on some gender issues - so I did not pay attention to them. I could only look at others' experiences from afar, like one would watch a concert and not bother at all. But after the training, I have committed myself to be concerned and act on every issue which comes across me or that comes up in our Boda Boda sector and outside it. I have been shaped to become a good leader and counsellor. My knowledge is uplifted, and my skills and attitude of why I'm doing it is up to the standard.

When it came to decision-making at home, I used to just decide for myself and then inform my wife. But from the positive change I got from the training, and knowing what the law needs from me, I now involve my wife and call her for the plans we need to do or what we need to change and do it together and we are living happier than before as we now respect each other. Also, I no longer just let bad things happen. I have reported four domestic violence cases to the police and also been involved in giving support to survivors. I have been trained by MEGEN in supporting the survivor, so that he/she can make a good follow up to ways of handling himself/herself after experiencing a violent incident. I have come to understand that I have to encourage and support the survivor to get access to all the services that they need, starting with healthcare which is very important. This helps to ensure that service providers are doing all that they can to support the survivor.

I am no longer simply a passive bystander, but am getting involved in helping survivors get the services that they need and in making sure that perpetrators face justice. I'm looking forward to mobilising more men to know and respect human rights, so that we can create and live in a violence free zone. I'm working to change men's attitudes and give them the knowledge and skills on how they can avoid and prevent the kind of SGBV which occurs in our areas. That is my hope: that if all men change, we will be free from violations".

## Look at our privilege

In societies such as the UK and USA, racist policies and practices give advantages and benefits to white people - this is their 'white privilege'. All societies are organised to give advantages and benefits to 'straight' people simply because they are heterosexual - this is their 'heterosexual privilege.' Similarly, in most societies, patriarchal policies and practices give men advantages or benefits simply because they are male - this is their 'male privilege'.

Privilege can be defined as the systematically conferred advantages that individuals enjoy by virtue of their membership in dominant groups. In other words, privilege is the advantage or benefit that you get from belonging to a dominant group. We need to look at and talk about male privilege because so much of the violence that not only women but also men and transgender people experience is about maintaining a gender system that privileges the masculine over the feminine, as well as giving men power over women and people of other gender identities. In order to challenge this violence, we need to look at the many ways that men help to sustain the gender system by acting on their privilege. When we look more closely at male privilege, we can see that some of the most critical aspects are its:

- **Naturalness:** so many of the ways of thinking and acting that express male privilege appear to be the natural and normal order of things; they are just 'how the world is'.
- **Pervasiveness:** from the first day of our lives we are all steeped in these ways of thinking and acting and seeing the world, and male privilege can be seen at work in all of the different parts of our lives - home, work and community.
- **Invisibility:** as a result of its apparent naturalness and pervasiveness, the workings of male privilege are so taken for granted that they literally become hard to see, especially to those who benefit most from such privilege.
- **Institutional foundations:** one of the reasons that male privilege can be hard to see is because it is so deeply structured in the political, economic and social institutions that shape our lives - in our political institutions, our workplaces, our religious communities and our families.

- Cost to men: As people are increasingly recognising, male privilege can come at a cost to men. Men's domination of paid work and political power is a key source of male privilege, but it also involves costs for men in general and for some men in particular
- Benefits and costs are unevenly distributed: The benefits and costs of male privilege are often very unevenly distributed between different groups of men, based on their experience of other forms of oppression (for example, linked to class exploitation, racism, xenophobia, homophobia and disability injustice). It is clear that most people have experiences of both privilege and oppression. This is certainly true for most men.

All of these aspects of male privilege make it difficult to challenge. In particular, it can be difficult for many men to see the privilege that they do have, especially when the costs of that privilege are clear and so many men are targeted by other forms of oppression. Taking the example of a working class man of colour who is a citizen in the USA, it is clear that he is targeted by racism and class exploitation. He is also privileged by male power and his citizenship status.

At the same time, men's own experiences of injustice give them common cause with women in their communities who are similarly targeted. The fact that so many men have direct experience of being oppressed, whether because of class, ethnicity or age, for example, gives them some way to relate to women's experience of subordination under the gender system. This opportunity for empathy can become the possibility of political solidarity when the interlocking links between different forms of injustice and oppression are made clear.

“ In order to get the 'benefits' of masculinity he must be silent about having ever been hurt or scared, and pretend that he does not really need connection. His sense of himself now becomes rooted in a disconnection from much of his own internal experience and from authentic intimate contact with others. ”

*(Botkin and Arana 2007)*

The challenge, then, is to move toward:

- Accountability and consciousness where we have privilege.
- Empowerment and healing where we are targeted by violence and injustice.
- Building alliances with others to bring about social change that will end the violence.

Leading activists who work with men on gender equality share their views on the importance of addressing male privilege (see below). A training activity tool for exploring male privilege with a group of male activists is included on page 31 and on page 33 there is a story on the discussion of male privilege issues at a Mobilising Men workshop in Uganda.

“While some men are willing to acknowledge that women are disadvantaged and discriminated against, they are less willing to recognise that they are correspondingly privileged. It is easy to recognise blatant sexism or racism when someone puts another person down because of their gender or race. But it is much harder to recognise how in everyday interactions one may reinforce dominance simply because of one’s membership, by birth or circumstance, of a dominant group.”

*(Flood and Pease 2005)*

“Men collectively receive the bulk of income in the money economy and occupy most of the managerial positions. But men also provide the workforce for the most dangerous occupations, suffer most industrial injuries, pay most of the taxation, and are under heavier social pressure to remain employed. In the domain of power men collectively control the institutions of coercion and the means of violence (e.g., weapons). But men are also the main targets of military violence and criminal assault, and many more men than women are imprisoned or executed [...].”

*(Connell 2005)*

---

Flood, Michael, and Pease, Bob (2005) 'Undoing Men's Privilege and Advancing Gender Equality in Public Sector Institutions', *Policy and Society*, 24.4:119–38.

Connell, Raewyn (2005), 'Change among the Gatekeepers: Men, Masculinities, and Gender Equality in the Global Arena', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 30.3:1–25.

## Why is it important to look at male privilege?

The disadvantages listed here are, broadly speaking, the conditions of the advantages. For instance, men cannot hold state power without some men becoming the agents of violence. Men cannot be the beneficiaries of women's domestic labor and 'emotion work' without many of them losing intimate connections, for instance, with young children.

Equally important, the men who receive most of the benefits and the men who pay most of the costs are not the same individuals. As the old saying puts it, generals die in bed. On a global scale, the men who benefit from corporate wealth, physical security, and expensive health care are a very different group from the men who provide the workforce of developing countries. Class, race, national, regional, and generational differences cross-cut the category 'men', spreading the gains and costs of gender relations very unevenly among men. There are many situations where groups of men may see their interest as more closely aligned with the women in their communities than with other men.

## Tool: Looking at my Male Privilege

### Goal:

To better understand the workings of male privilege and how to address them.

### Steps:

Open the session by writing the word 'privilege' on a flip chart. Discuss the meaning of the term. Ask the group to identify a few examples of male privilege and write them up. If they have a difficult time with this, write up examples from the list in the notes section on page 32.

Go through each example on the list, clarifying what each means, and discussing people's views on each.

Then review the list again, and ask the men in the group to call out the examples of male privilege that they enjoy having the most and notice the least. If there are women in the group, ask them to call out the examples of male privilege that they notice the most and would like to have the most.

Discuss, using the following questions:

- How do these different aspects of male privilege contribute to the continuation of sexual and gender-based violence?
- Why is it important to take account of issues of male privilege when men take action against this violence?
- How might male privilege show up in the ways in which men get involved in action to stop violence?
- How can men address issues of male privilege in their work to end sexual and gender-based violence?

Wrap up the discussion by talking about the critical aspects of male privilege (see page 27) and some of the ways in which men can support each other to be more conscious of and accountable for their own privilege.

## Notes:

Potential list of male privileges - as a male...

It is unlikely I will experience sexual harassment in my job.

If I am a teen or adult and I can stay out of prison or stay away from police/military forces, it is almost certain that I will never be raped.

If I have children, and provide care for them, I'll be praised for my parenting even if I do very little.

If I have sex with a lot of people, I will not be talked about badly by others.

If I'm not attractive, the disadvantages are relatively small and easy to ignore.

I can be loud and/or aggressive with no fear of being called bad names.

If I have a female partner, chances are we'll divide up household chores so that she does most of the work.

It is incredibly unlikely that I will ever be beaten up by my partner.

Complete strangers generally do not walk up to me on the street and make unwanted advances. I have the privilege of being unaware of my male privilege.

## Story: Identifying the costs of male privilege in Uganda

At the training workshop for activist teams in Uganda, the facilitator from the Refugee Law Project led participants through an activity looking at male privilege and its costs, not only for women but also for men. She emphasised that this was important in order to better appreciate men's complicated experiences of male privilege; that they may be suffering in different ways even as they are enjoying the benefits that male privilege brings them.

The facilitator split participants in to three groups and asked each group to role play two scenes; the first showing gender relations in their country of origin and the second showing gender relations in their current context. All of the role plays made clear that gender relations are changing, in part because, being refugees, the old certainties about men being the breadwinner and women the homemaker no longer necessarily hold true. In many cases, it is women who are finding it easier to get work and earn money than their male partners, and this growing economic power of women is threatening men's expectations of being 'in charge'.

In order to re-frame this change as an opportunity for men as well as women to liberate themselves from the harms of patriarchal expectations (see pages \_\_\_for more on patriarchy), the facilitator led a discussion about the nature of male privilege and its costs for men as well as women.

The results of the discussion are detailed in the table opposite.

From the discussion, it became clear that men can pay a heavy price for the male privileges they enjoy. These privileges can cause disharmony among men, women, boys and girls and this affects development in homes, society and institutions. It was also clear that things are changing. Participants agreed that the current changes are good because more men are making joint household decisions with their wives. But some also observed that some men are feeling threatened by this change of roles, leading to violence in some cases. The link between equality and respect for each other in the family and reduced stress in homes, communities, and institutions was emphasised. Participants noted that further opportunities to work for this greater gender equality lie in the area of promoting universal primary and secondary education for both boys and girls.

<b>Male Privilege</b>	<b>Costs for Men</b>	<b>Costs for Women</b>	<b>Changes Observed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carefree life</li> <li>• No contribution to domestic chores</li> <li>• Guaranteed inheritance</li> <li>• High social value</li> <li>• Minimal involvement in child bearing and rearing</li> <li>• Control over and decision-making in use of resources</li> <li>• Protector of the family/defender of the national</li> <li>• Being served</li> <li>• Favoritism in jobs</li> <li>• Financial control</li> <li>• Freedom to move, marry another wife</li> <li>• Choose how many children you want</li> <li>• Participate in community discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-destruction</li> <li>• Become dependent</li> <li>• Stunted personal development</li> <li>• Risk of HIV, sexually transmitted infections</li> <li>• Stress and strains, frustration</li> <li>• Deprived of emotional attachment and lack of support in old age from children</li> <li>• Live with guilt</li> <li>• Alienation</li> <li>• High mortality, low life expectancy</li> <li>• Retaliation in later life by women</li> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress</li> <li>• Contracting sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• Burdened with household feeding</li> <li>• Stressed frustrated and at times become unfaithful</li> <li>• Divorce leaving small children</li> <li>• Poor sexual reproductive health</li> <li>• Early death</li> <li>• Early marriages by young girls running away from suffering at home</li> <li>• Psychosocial problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small change in the men</li> <li>• Sharing some responsibilities</li> <li>• Sharing domestic work</li> <li>• More cooperative</li> <li>• Share ideas with wives</li> <li>• More understanding</li> </ul>

## Get and give support

It is not always easy as a man to stand up and challenge the gender roles and gender inequalities that underpin sexual and gender-based violence. As many of the activists in the Mobilising Men programme report, men can face both ridicule and resistance from other men, as well as some women, when they seek to challenge the unjust gender system. Fear of this resistance and ridicule prevents many men from getting involved in this work. This can include fears about:

- Not knowing what to do - in part because of a lack of role models.
- Not wanting to look 'foolish'.
- Appearing too 'feminine' or too sensitive.
- Feeling isolated.
- Giving up male privilege.
- Facing other men's anger and resistance.
- Feeling ashamed to challenge others about behaviour that they themselves may have done.
- Being labeled 'gay' (when men stand up for women, they are often ridiculed by being called gay).

Helping men to deal with these fears, by talking with them about how they both give and get support, is an important part of mobilising men to be gender activists. It is also essential to discuss questions and issues of support because many men who want to get involved in challenging sexual and gender-based violence are dealing with their own trauma associated with such violence. Taking on this work may not only remind them of their experiences of violence but also arouse fears that they will be targeted with more violence if they take a stand to try and stop it.

Violence produces psychological and emotional 'injuries', which are often collectively referred to as trauma. Many men are affected by the trauma of sexual and gender-based violence,

whether because they are targeted directly by this violence or experience its effects indirectly through their relationships with women and girls. This trauma scars the lives of not only individuals but also whole communities, and is bound up with the scars borne by communities which have lived through histories of political violence and social unrest.

Mobilising men to take action against sexual and gender-based violence must involve dealing with this trauma; otherwise, they will be acting out of their trauma and not from a place where they can truly envisage a future without violence. Yet, dealing with this trauma can be a challenge for many men. One of the costs of male privilege discussed in the previous section is the limits that norms of masculinity can place on the range of emotional expression allowed for boys and men - see page 37 for a training tool on Talking about Emotions.

Helping men deal with the trauma of sexual and gender-based violence in their lives is likely to be long and deep work, beyond the scope of the Mobilising Men project alone. But it is important to open up a discussion about the emotional lives of men, and to look at the 'emotions' work that men may need to do in order to nurture their own and each other's resilience in the face of trauma, and to support the resilience of women and girls in their life. This work will look very different depending on the particular histories and characteristics of different cultures and societies. This work will also be shaped by differing men's experience of interlocking oppressions, which expose some men and not others to the trauma of ethnic violence, for example. In whichever ways the work is done, however, it is important to understand that talking about emotions is not simply a way of addressing the emotional costs of masculinity but is also about fostering a resilience to deal with the violent workings of injustice.

## Tool: Talking about Emotions

### Goal:

To explore the impacts of gender socialisation on men's range of emotional expression and the impacts of this on men's lives.

### Steps:

Write on a flip chart the five basic emotions that we will be discussing in this activity: fear, love, anger, sadness, happiness (FLASH).

Spend a few minutes discussing each emotion. Ask the group to provide a basic definition of each and ask them to identify the parts of the body where each emotion is felt.

Now ask the group to think about how easy or difficult it is for them to express these five emotions.

Ask each participant to rank the emotions on an individual sheet of paper as follows:

- Write a 1 on the emotion that they express with the greatest ease.
- Write a 2 on the emotion that they express easily, but not as much as the first.
- Write a 3 on the emotion that is neither too hard nor too easy to express.
- Write a 4 on the emotion that they have some difficulty to express.
- Write a 5 on the emotion that they have the greatest difficulty to express.

After finishing this individual exercise, ask the participants to share their results with the rest of the group by having them share their rankings on a piece of flip-chart paper.

Emphasise that each person expresses their emotions differently. But it is clear that a number of tendencies usually emerge, particularly related to the differences in how girls and boys are brought up. For example, it is common for young men to hide their fear and sadness. But it is common for them to express their anger via violence. We can think of these social expectations about the differences between boys/men and girls/women in terms of which emotions they are permitted to express as a set of emotional rules of the gender order.

Discuss the meaning of the rankings, using the following questions:

- What similarities are there between the rankings given by men?
- If there are women in the group, what similarities are there between the rankings given by women?
- How do we learn these emotional 'rules' of gender in terms of the emotions it is OK and not OK for men to show?
- How are these rules reinforced? By whom?
- What happens to those who do not conform to these rules?
- What violence is produced by these emotional rules?
- Whose interests are served by them?
- What would a greater range of, and permission for, emotional expression make possible for boys and men in their lives?
- How would such emotional expression help boys and men deal with the trauma of violence in their lives?

Wrap up the session by reminding the group how important it is that activists involved in this work both get and give support to each other to deal with the emotions that the work often brings up for people.

---

This 'Talking about Emotions' activity is taken from the Program H manual, developed by Instituto Promundo, ECOS, Instituto Papai and Salud y Genero. For more information on Program H go to [www.promundo.org.br/en/activities/activities-posts/program-h-manuals-download](http://www.promundo.org.br/en/activities/activities-posts/program-h-manuals-download)

**What is the work you have been involved in as a Mobilising Men activist? What are some of the challenges you have faced in this work, and how have you dealt with them?**

*I'm involved in community awareness and sensitisation programmes, lobbying and advocacy, capacity building, community mobilisation all with the aim of bringing about social transformation geared towards the attainment of gender parity and the respect of human rights. My work is about empowerment for marginalised groups particularly women and girls as much as it is about deconstructing masculinity and dismantling privileges. I do this from the knowledge that communities themselves need the freedom and authority to identify the issues and strategies that facilitate local activism and community mobilisation in their context. Some of the biggest challenges relate to the continuing acceptance of violence against women in society. The widespread silence that surrounds such violence only serves to perpetuate it. I have also been branded as a weakling for engaging in the struggle for gender equality, and often feel quite isolated, given the apathy and lack of interest by many men.*

*But I'm passionate about the work I do as a male activist. I'm in it because I believe in equality and no amount of resistance can sway me. To this end, at any given opportunity, I endeavour to strengthen individual knowledge and skills, mobilise communities for awareness creation on the issues of gender including promotion of community education and influencing policy change within different institutions. At the same time, the issue of gender justice is made possible through alliance building with others who are committed to this work. The alliances work best on the premise that each and every partner brings a constructive perspective and practice to the process. Where silence is concerned, I do encourage people to talk about any form of violence that they are experiencing - that way they help themselves and others.*

**Phil Otieno, Nairobi, Kenya**

*When I began this work with Master of Social Work students in 2003 in my university, gender-based violence was not recognised as a social issue. There was absolute denial with regard to gender-based injustice on the university campus and I was badly discouraged by my colleagues, including the head of the department. They made abusive comments about me, suggesting that I was less masculine because I supported female students who suffered from sexual exploitation by some professors and some non-teaching staff. But I persevered, partly through building alliances with key stakeholders such as male students and the Vice-Chancellor. This way I was able to raise the visibility of the issue on campus. I helped to found the local chapter of the Men's Action for Stopping Violence Against Women (MASVAW) campaign, and a number of students from various disciplines became members of MASVAW. With the help of students, I took some cases of sexual harassment of female students to the Vice-Chancellor of the university who got convinced and supported us and he not only reformed the Anti Sexual Harassment Committee but also took some serious action against the professors who were involved in harassment of young women.*

**Dr. Sanjay, Varanasi, India**

*One challenge I faced was to achieve the trust of feminist friends. I was accepted as an individual but it was difficult to get the trust of the group, particularly in terms of MASVAW. Many of my feminist friends were concerned about the dangers of a men's group diverting resources away from work with women, and of men taking attention away from women's struggles and distorting the women's empowerment agenda. There was also a feeling that men can't be changed and will not share their privilege.*

*In response to these concerns, I worked hard to make strong and close relationships with feminist groups. I asked some feminists to be advisors in MASVAW. I used them as resource persons on men and gender training. I participated with them in their campaigns as well as participated in their case work support for the survivors of violence. I asked feminist activists to evaluate our work and invited them to our events. I asked network members to make close relationships with women-headed organisations and participated in their events. I argued with them on the rationale of the work with men for gender justice and gave examples of men throughout Indian history who have fought against discrimination. It is not that all men have tried to transform society but that certainly they tried to reform the social system at the time, including the gender system.*

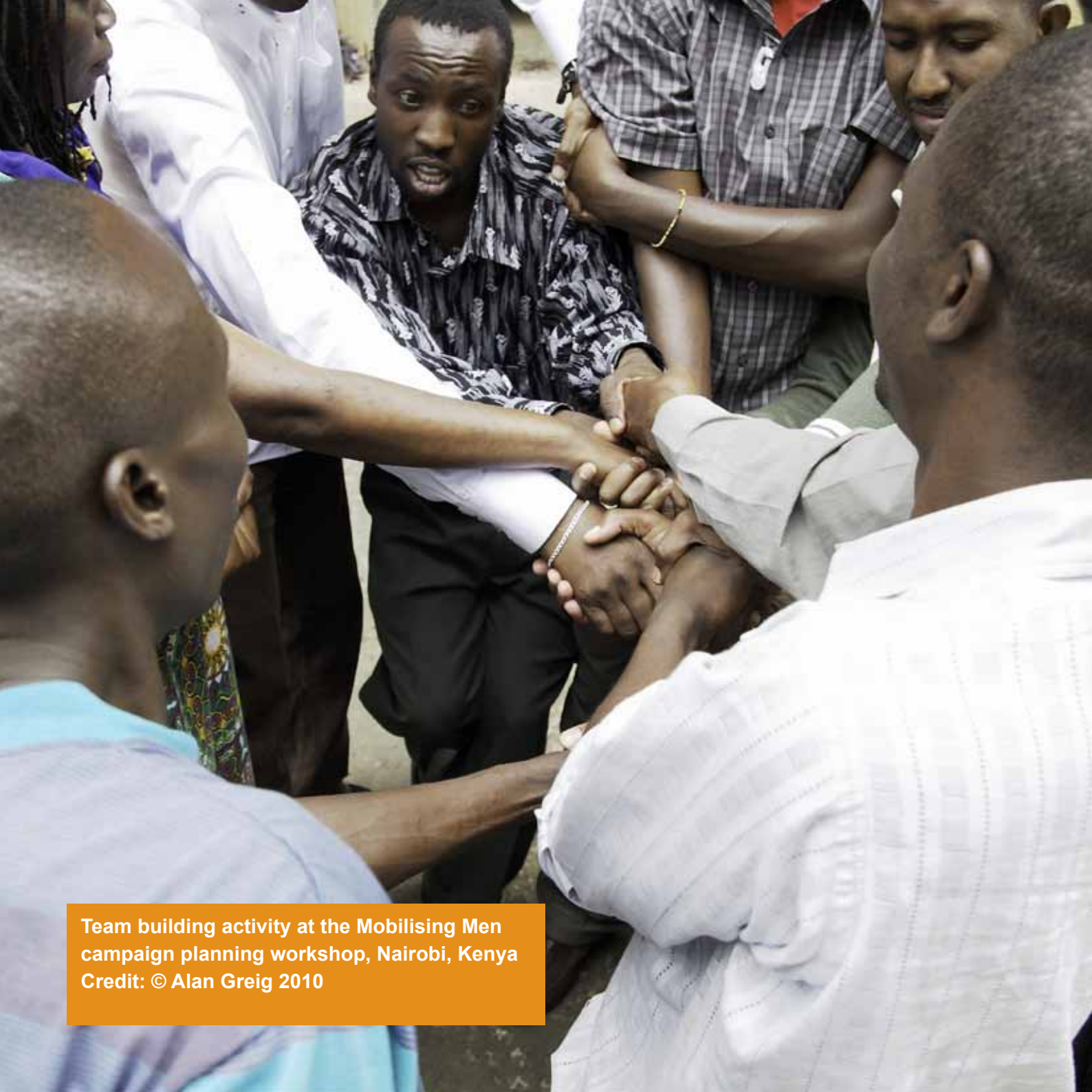
**Satish Kumar Singh, New Delhi India**

*I have been involved in counselling. The refugee community call me Mama and the parents always refer to me girls who have survived rape. Now that I know the effects of the abuse meted on them, I am able to refer them appropriately in a timely manner. But this work faces many challenges. The refugees are poor people and have many problems and often they expect some concrete help like food, or even medicine because when I refer them to medical centres, they may be seen by the doctor but told to get medicine elsewhere because it is not available at the clinic. This makes work very difficult. I have noticed that it is very difficult to make sense to some individuals who believe that religion and their culture are connected and sacred. While trying to engage in a meaningful discussion, all people say is that is what God said or that is our culture, even on issues to deal with bad cultural practices such as female genital mutilation.*

*During the education sessions that I have organised, I have explained to the refugee community that female genital mutilation and other practices against women are bad because they have biological consequences which have complicated women and men's lives. If a woman does not enjoy sex, it is bad for the husband and the individual because it often causes tension in the family. If she gets infections, she may be unable to have children and that too is a challenge.*

*Refugees are people who are suffering all their lives; they were abused in their home countries, as well as on their journeys and now here in Uganda. Looking at all the suffering, I then get wired and find myself challenging the bad practices. Some married couples have come to testify that my teaching and encouraging of equality has been very helpful. They say that when you are displaced and are living outside your country, it is very helpful when you can cooperate and live more happily because in any case, those that survived death are all that one has. I am happy to see people rebuilding lives; those abused recovering from the trauma and medical challenges and those fighting stopping domestic violence and respecting each other.*

**Muhimundu Saalama, Kampala, Uganda**



Team building activity at the Mobilising Men campaign planning workshop, Nairobi, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

# Understanding Institutional Violence

**Begin with an analysis of power**

**Look at conditions as well as behaviours**

**Document the violence**



Problem Analysis activity at the Mobilising Men campaign planning workshop, Nairobi, Kenya

Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

## Begin with an analysis of power

Violence is about power. Responses to any kind of violence must be grounded in an understanding of the inequalities of power which the violence maintains and from which it comes. This section presents a way of thinking about inequalities of power and how they are linked to the sexual and gender-based violence experienced by people of all genders.

“ Acts of violence against women cannot be attributed solely to individual psychological factors or socio-economic conditions such as unemployment. Explanations for violence that focus primarily on individual behaviours and personal histories, such as alcohol abuse or a history of exposure to violence, overlook the broader impact of systemic gender inequality and women’s subordination. ”

*(United Nations 2006)*

Power is not necessarily about violence. Power can mean many things - for individuals, groups, institutions and society as a whole. A useful framework for thinking about different types of power has been outlined by Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller (2002) and Robert Chambers (2006), which has been used effectively by Raising Voices in Uganda in its SASA! activist kit to prevent violence and HIV/AIDS ([www.raisingvoices.org/sasa](http://www.raisingvoices.org/sasa)), as follows:

- **Power over** means the power that one person or group uses to control another person or group. This control might come from direct violence or more indirectly, such as from the community beliefs and practices that position men as superior to women. Using one’s power over another is injustice.

---

United Nations (2006) *In-depth study on all forms of violence against women, Report of the Secretary-General*, United Nations General Assembly, Sixty-first session, A/61/122/Add.1, prepared for the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs/DESA, New York: UN: p. 29.

VeneKlasen, Lisa and Miller, Valerie (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Oklahoma City: World Neighbours

Chambers, Robert (2006) ‘Transforming Power: From Zero-Sum to Win-Win?’, *IDS Bulletin* 37: 6, Brighton: IDS

- **Power within** is the strength that arises from inside ourselves when we recognise the equal ability within all of us to positively influence our own lives and community. By discovering the positive power within ourselves, we are compelled to address the negative uses of power that create injustice in our communities.
- **Power to** is the belief, energy and actions that individuals and groups use to create positive change. Power to is when individuals proactively work to ensure that all community members enjoy the full spectrum of human rights, and are able to achieve their full potential.
- **Power with** means the power felt when two or more people come together to do something that they could not do alone. Power with includes joining our power with individuals as well as groups to respond to injustice with positive energy and support.

Mobilising men as activists to challenge sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings involves working to strengthen men's consciousness of their own ability to make change (power within) as well as their capacity to take action (power to) together with others (power with). But it starts with developing a better understanding of violence as the use of power over a person or group of people.

If violence is about 'power over', then sexual and gender-based violence is about the use of power over an individual or group that is made possible by unjust ideas about gender and sexuality. In nearly all societies, the dominant ideas about gender give men power over women and say that the masculine is strong and the feminine weak. In most societies, men in general still have more political, economic and social power than women. These ideas about gender are linked to ideas about sexuality that say that only one form of sexual desire and behaviour is normal and right, and that all other forms of sexual desire and behaviour are abnormal and wrong. In most societies, heterosexuality is seen as the only legitimate form of sexual expression.

These ideas form part of a gender-sexuality system, that gets expressed in all areas of life (political, economic, social) and that is reinforced by the major institutions of society as well as people's everyday behaviours and own attitudes and beliefs. Thus, we can think of this unjust gender-sexuality system, and the violence that comes from it and helps to maintain it, as working at four levels, as described below in the **4I's Framework**:

- **Internally** - for example, in the ways in which: some women have internalised messages that provide justifications for men's violence against them; many men feel entitled to sexually objectify women; and, many people who want to have sex with someone of the same gender feel that they are wrong to have these desires.
- **Interpersonally** - for example, in the ways in which: men use physical, sexual or emotional violence against women; and, gay, lesbian and transgender women and men are targeted by violence for refusing to live by the ideas of the dominant gender-sexuality system.
- **Institutionally** - for example, in the ways in which: women are significantly under represented in parliaments and government ministries; women do most of the care work in families and communities but this is not treated as real work in economic policy-making because it is unpaid; and, women do not receive equal pay for doing the same work as men.
- **Ideologically** - for example, in the ways in which: men's greater political, economic and social power is seen as natural or normal; men are regarded as the breadwinners and women regarded as the home-makers; expressions of sexual desire and love between people of the same gender are seen as unnatural and wrong; and, gender is seen as a two-category, binary system (man/woman, male/female, masculine/feminine).

This unjust gender-sexuality system is often called patriarchy - literally, the power of the father (patriarch in Latin). As is clear from the above, patriarchy is built on the idea of 'power over' - the power of men over women, masculine over feminine, heterosexual over homosexual. Because it is a 'power over' system, patriarchy relies on violence, done by individuals and institutions.

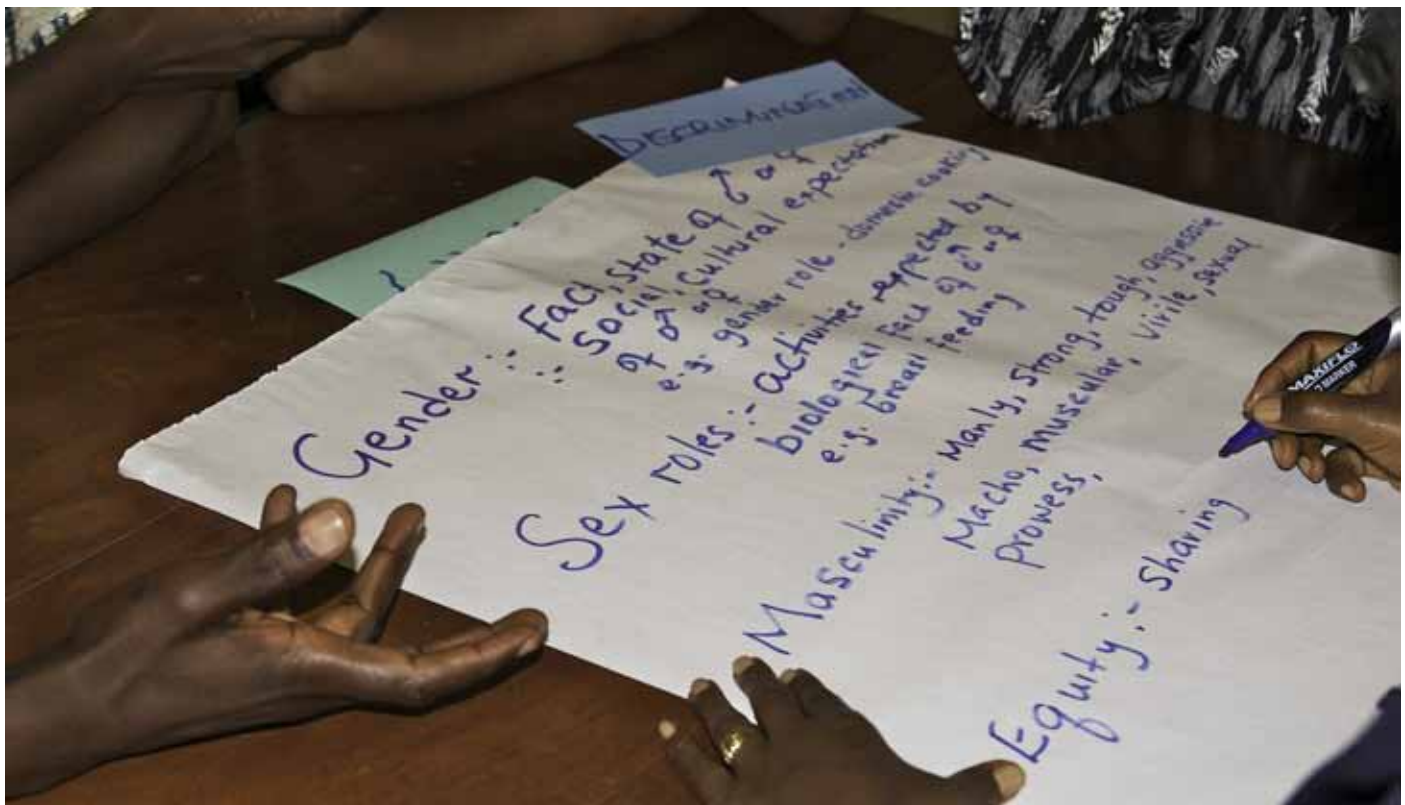
People who are defined as inferior within this system (women and girls, as well as lesbian women, gay men and transgender people) are the most common targets of this violence. But heterosexual men are also targeted by the violence of patriarchy, because it is a system built on the idea that the only form of power is power over another. Men get status and privilege within this system, in part by asserting their power over other men, often involving the use of violence. This male-on-male violence often happens in institutional settings, such as bullying in schools and workplaces, the hazing of military recruits, and physical and sexual violence against prisoners.

“Gender is how society defines what it is to be ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’. This includes the roles ascribed women and men and how work is distributed. These gender roles are institutionalized by government through various economic policies and political structures. They are also institutionalized in social and religious life. Typically, men have more power and run the institutions that enforce and expand that power – economically, politically, socially, and spiritually. The distribution of gender roles results in different opportunities for men and women in all aspects of life, as exemplified by the many limitations or prohibitions imposed on women but not men. In order to change the understanding and distribution of gender roles, men and women must work together.”

*(Solidarity Centre 2001)*

It is also true that some men are more likely to get targeted by this violence than other men because of their lower status based on other factors, such as economic position and ethnic identity. Patriarchy works together with other unjust systems that give power to some over others. These include the economic system that gives a small number of people (and countries) most of the wealth, as well as an ethnic-nationality system that privileges some ethnic groups over others. These systems, like patriarchy, are rooted in histories of injustice that include colonial exploitation, as well as in current global political and economic forces that continue to exploit the earth’s resources for the benefit of only a few.

It is no surprise then when many men say they do not feel very powerful in their lives. For example, a working class, ethnic minority man has some male privilege when it comes to women in his community, but in general he is disempowered. One of the tasks of mobilising men to confront the violence of patriarchy is to get men to see that they are part of a violent system, from which they both benefit and suffer (for more on the costs of male privilege see pages 27-34). Challenging this violent system involves men recognising the power it gives them and their part in maintaining it, as well as understanding the ways in which patriarchy is linked to other systems of injustice that damage and destroy so many people's lives.



Understanding Gender activity at the Mobilising Men campaign planning workshop, Nairobi, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

## Look at conditions as well as behaviours

We have defined sexual and gender-based violence as being the violence that relies on and reinforces an unjust gender-sexuality system (patriarchy), which interlocks with other unjust systems of 'power over' (economic, ethnic-nationality etc). This definition is useful in several ways, because it:

- Gets us away from thinking about and responding to such violence only in terms of individual acts of violence and the 'bad' men who do them; the violence is systemic, and embedded in the institutions and ideologies that dominate our lives.
- Insists on the connections between violence and oppression, thus emphasising that our work is not simply a matter of violence prevention but more fundamentally about social liberation.
- Helps to deepen our conversation around accountability. It is essential to hold people accountable for the violence they do commit, at the same time as insisting on the need to hold institutions accountable for the violence they directly or indirectly cause to happen. Much of the sexual and gender-based violence experienced by women and many men is directly caused by policies, practices and cultures of particular institutions.

It is clear, then, that mobilising men to challenge sexual and gender-based violence within institutional settings must not only look at individuals and their behaviours but also institutional and ideological conditions that enable the violence (make the violence possible) and enact the violence (are themselves violent). As the 2006 UN Secretary-General's Report on Violence Against Women makes clear ([www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw)), these conditions are not only widespread, but widely neglected by the individually-oriented violence prevention work done with men.

“Physical, sexual and psychological violence can be a daily feature of women’s interactions in their neighbourhoods, on public transport, in workplaces, schools, sports clubs, colleges and hospitals, and in religious and other social institutions.”

“The State — either through its agents or public policy — can perpetrate physical, sexual and psychological violence against women. State agents include all people empowered to exercise elements of State authority — members of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as law enforcement officials, social security officials, prison guards, officials in places of detention, immigration officials and military and security forces.”

*(United Nations 2006)*

The Mobilising Men partners worked with the activist teams to develop their analysis of the institutional practices and cultures and ideological norms and values that both enabled and enacted the violence they wanted to confront. In India and Kenya, they used an Actor-Factor Analysis tool (page 53) to explore and understand the institutional and ideological conditions in their particular contexts. As the story of Vikas Dubey’s work on the campus of Banaras Hindu University in India makes clear (page 51), this analysis was critical in designing a campaign that could begin to create an institutional environment that would not allow the violence to continue.

---

United Nations (2006) *In-depth study on all forms of violence against women, Report of the Secretary-General*, United Nations General Assembly, Sixty-first session, A/61/122/Add.1, prepared for the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs/DESA, New York: UN: pp. 40 & 43

## Story: 'I was amazed to find that even female teachers are unaware of their rights'

Two years ago, Vikas Dubey was like any other ordinary young man in Indian society. He must have seen injustice being done to women but never really noticed it. But his perspective about society underwent a drastic change when tragic events unfolded in his elder sister's life when she lost her husband. Her plight as a widow opened his eyes to the lack of dignity and respect experienced by women, and the misbehaviour of his father towards his mother was a further reminder that male dominance is stifling every aspect of female life.

He began to realise that females are subjected to disparaging treatment everywhere – to greater or lesser extent, gender inequality is the norm rather than exception. Even on the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) campus, where he was a final year Master's student in the department of Sociology when he joined the Mobilising Men project, it is common for male students to verbally harass female students. Such behaviour is also done by male teachers and the non-teaching staff. Female teachers and non-teaching staff are the targets of this abuse as well as female students.



As he began to explore the issues surrounding sexual and gender-based violence on campus, Vikas discovered that in his own department a female research scholar had to quit her studies four years ago, due to sexual harassment by her research guide. She was unable to speak out about this and tolerated it as long as she could but finally quit.

Based on his research into the issues, Vikas was clear that change had to occur on two levels: personal and institutional. At the personal level, the mindset of men must be changed on gender based issues so that they view women as individuals with the same human rights as themselves. At the institutional level, BHU policies and associated institutional practices must be changed to reflect a commitment to gender equality.

He identified a number of problems relating to institutional conditions that had to be addressed, including:

- Men dominating the official positions of power on campus, and the low participation of women in decision making processes.
- Rights illiteracy among women - even some female teachers seemed unaware of their rights when it came to dealing with sexism and other forms of violence at the hands of men on campus.
- A widespread domineering attitude of men toward women, cutting across all staff as well as students.
- An absence of sufficient basic amenities and facilities for women in a number of departments and faculties.
- The Anti-sexual Harassment Committee (ASHC) was not functional in BHU and did not exist in the colleges.
- Widespread denial of the existence of gender-based discrimination. Most authorities at colleges and the university campus adopted a dogmatic view stating that any talk about gender was against Indian culture. Students appeared confused. While they personally agreed about the need for attitudinal change on the gender issue, they felt that their parents and the society at large will not accept it.
- Passivity and self-interest among some teachers. While they accepted that there is violence on campus, they were reluctant to participate because they did not own the project and could not see how participation in the project would enhance their careers.
- Bureaucratic resistance - formal letters and Modes of Understanding were demanded by the Deans and the Heads of ASHC and Students Council before they would consider looking at the problem.

In response, Vikas adopted a range of strategies. He conducted face-to-face meetings with campus authorities and argued the need for men to come forward to eliminate SGBV. The second strategy was awareness and capacity building campaign through debates and discussions among the student body. He helped circulate information about the Supreme Court Vishaka guidelines on dealing with sexual harassment at the workplace and has nurtured the emergence of a campus chapter of Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women (MASVAW). His focus now is on helping to re-energise the working of the campus Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee.

## Tool: Actor-Factor Analysis

### Goal:

To better understand the institutional conditions that enable and enact sexual and gender-based violence within specific contexts and the opportunities that exist to address these.

### Steps:

Explain that Actor-Factor analysis is a method for doing a political mapping of stakeholders and situations around any issue for which change is desired or advocacy is to be planned.

If participants are working on SGBV issues within different institutional settings, divide them into smaller groups accordingly. Ask each group, with reference to their specific institutional context, to identify all of the stakeholders who have an interest in or are somehow connected to SGBV issues in the institution - this is a list of Actors.

Then ask each group to identify all of the circumstances and conditions that affect or have a bearing on SGBV issues in the institution - this is a list of Factors. Remind the groups that this is a beginning to the process of listing all actors and factors, and that these lists can be added to at a later stage.

After the first step of identification, the second major step is the political mapping, which involves identifying which actors and factors are in favour (or potentially in favour) of action on SGBV in the institution, and which are not. Ask each group to classify each of the actors and factors into one of the five categories contained in the matrix in the Notes section opposite. New actors and factors can be introduced at this stage. Remind the groups that they can also identify those who may be inactive at this stage but who may have a potential role to play. Their current stage of interest or mobilisation on the issue is indicated via the matrix.

Having done this initial mapping, ask the groups to discuss what the maps tell them about the balance of support for and resistance to action on SGBV within their institutional setting. Ask the groups to focus on the actors and factors on the right side of the matrix, and discuss the ways in which these 'resistant' actors and factors help to create the conditions that enable and enact SGBV within the institution. Ask the groups to discuss which of these conditions may be most amenable to change if targeted by a campaign.

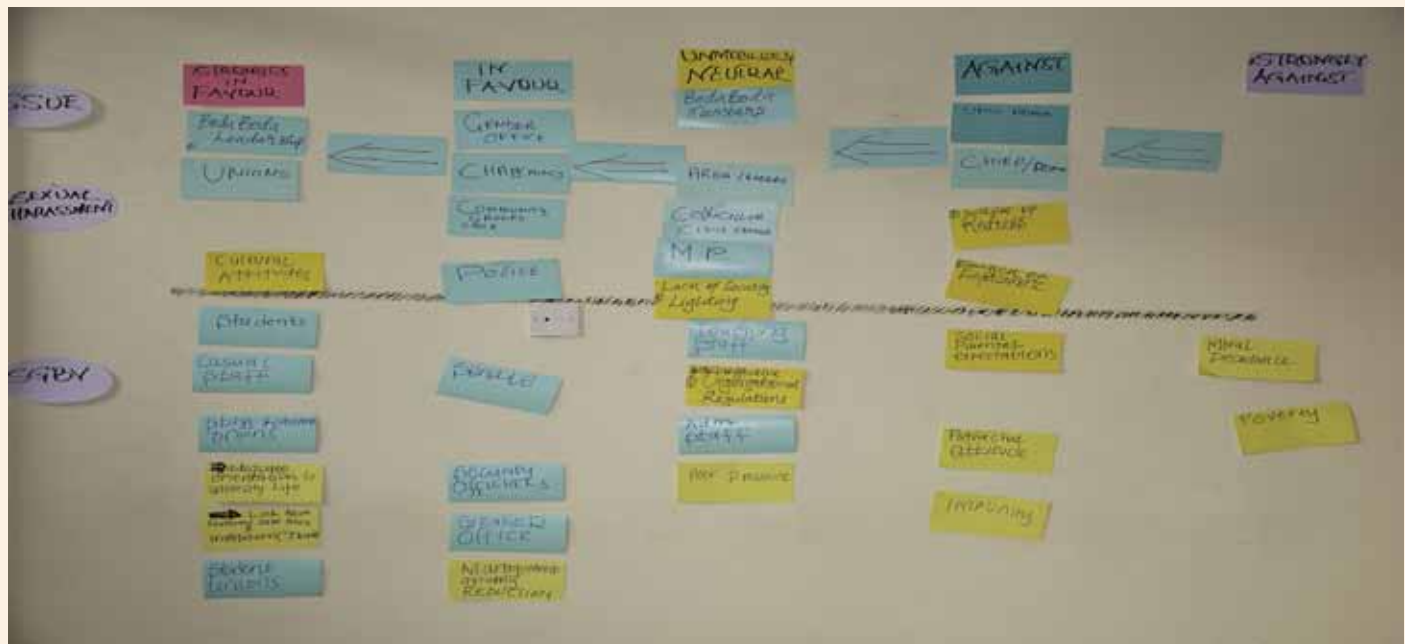
Now ask the groups to look at the actors and factors in the first three columns of the matrix and discuss which of these actors could be enlisted as allies in any campaign on SGBV within the institution, and which factors represent opportunities or entry points for the campaign. If there is time, ask the groups to discuss the kinds of strategies they could use to move the actors and factors from the right to the left side of the matrix.

End the session by asking the groups to share their matrices with each other, and summarise the similarities and differences between the matrices in terms of the major conditions within institutions that campaigns would need to target for change if SGBV issues are to be addressed.

**Notes:**

Use the matrix below to classify actors and factors according to their support for or resistance to action on SGBV within the institution.

Strongly in favour of action on SGBV	In favour of action on SGBV	Neutral or unmobilised	Against action on SGBV	Strongly against action on SGBV
--------------------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	---------------------------------



Actor-Factor analysis at campaign planning workshop, Nairobi, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

## Document the violence

As the 2006 UN Secretary General's Report on Violence Against Women makes clear, there is still much that we do not know about the nature and full extent of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls in institutional settings. We know even less about the violence that men and boys, as well as transgender people, experience in such settings.

One of the first tasks in campaign planning will be to develop a plan for gathering information about the nature, extent, causes and impacts of sexual and gender-based violence in different institutional settings. This will include identifying and reviewing existing sources of information. Where possible, it will also include gathering new information from people within those institutions who have been targeted or affected by such violence. Gathering stories and testimonies from such people will be a critical component of campaigning against the violence within those institutions.

- Remember that the gathering of stories and testimonies is not simply a preparation for the campaign. In effect, it is the beginning of the campaign. The story-tellers may be the first people that you begin to mobilise to take action, so it is important to think about how you can stay in touch with them beyond the interview that you do with them.
- Prepare the story-gatherer well before asking them to gather the stories. This includes developing a written guide for the questions as well as training the story-gatherer in the use of this guide (and the use of any audio equipment) and strengthening their interviewing skills (see page 61 for MEGEN's Focus Group Discussion guide).
- Prepare the story-teller carefully before asking them to tell their story. This includes discussing the reasons for gathering the story and how the story may be used in the campaign, and asking for their explicit (and written) consent. It also includes discussing the likely emotional impacts of sharing their story, perhaps for the first time.

The Story Telling Organising Project (STOP), a project of Creative Interventions ([www.creative-interventions.org](http://www.creative-interventions.org)) in the USA, is a community project that is collecting and sharing stories of everyday people ending violence through collective, community-based alternatives. STOP's useful guidelines for story-tellers include the following:

- It is important to be prepared and feel comfortable sharing your story with others. Take some time to think through the importance of this process but also any consequences. Would any information endanger yourself or others? If you want to share your story but this is a possibility, would you like to change some of the details, tell us the details but be very clear about what you want left out or changed, or just share parts of the story? Names can be changed for any stories told. If you are ok about sharing details of the story publicly, do you need to check with anybody else to see if it's ok with them? What would you need to make this be ok?
- Telling your story can be an emotional experience no matter what your role is in the situation of abuse or the intervention. It may bring up new feelings which can be liberating or challenging depending upon your situation at the time of the abuse or violence and now that you are telling the story. What do you need to prepare for any emotional feelings that may follow?

Some lessons learned from documenting the violence in refugee camps in Uganda are shared on pages 57, and a question guide tool that was used for focus group discussions with Boda Boda drivers in Kenya is included on page 61. The documentation of violence undertaken by activist teams will provide the information that is needed to begin to design campaign responses to SGBV issues - see page 63 for a campaign planning worksheet tool.

## Story: Documenting the violence in refugee camps in Uganda

Uganda is home to about 436,000 refugees, drawn from its neighbours in central and eastern Africa. Many of these women, men and children have experienced or continue to experience different forms of sexual and gender-based violence, whether in their country of origin, on their migrant journey and/or in their new life in Uganda. Many of the clients who seek help from the Refugee Law Project in Kampala present with medical, legal and psychosocial challenges resulting from sexual and gender-based violence. This violence takes many forms: sexual assault, rape, attempted rape, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, incest, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, female genital mutilation, early marriage, forced marriage, physical assault/abuse, economic abuse, confinement, trafficking, slavery, discrimination and denial of services, denial of education for girls, honour killing and abuse, and infanticide and/or neglect, among others. Many refugees do not know where to go to seek for services or are even denied such services when they seek to access them.

As a partner in the Mobilising Men programme, the Refugee Law Project (RLP) has recruited and supported two teams of activists. In Kampala, the activist team comprises the 12 male and female members of its SGBV Advisory Committee, which has representatives from each of the communities of forced migrants served by RLP. In the settlements of Kyaka 11 and Kyangwali, RLP is working with ten members, both male and female, of a youth group known as the COBURWAS, founded several years ago as a self-help initiative by members from different communities of forced migrants in the camps. Some of these young people were motivated to get involved in the project because they themselves were survivors of different forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Being keenly aware of the many challenges facing forced migrants in Uganda, they were also committed to helping their communities live better lives.

The main challenge facing this team of young activists was a lack of accurate information about the nature and extent of sexual and gender-based violence in the camps. Anecdotally, they knew of incidents of SGBV, including female circumcision and forced marriage, but with no formal data to guide them, the settlement authorities and agencies serving the refugee communities in the camps had no specific interventions in place to respond to the violence.



**Meeting with religious leaders, Hoima, Uganda**  
Credit: © Dieudonné N. Maganya 2011

As a first step, RLP convened the activist teams at a Mobilising Men training workshop. Issues covered at the workshop included Gender Socialisation, Sexuality, Male Privilege and its Costs, Inequalities and Violence, Mapping SGBV, Roots and Impacts of Violence, and Uprooting Violence. During this training, it became obvious that many participants were unaware that many of the experiences they regarded as part of normal life were in fact experiences of violence. In one activity, participants were asked to recall on flip-charts incidents when they had been abused or felt violated, and the flip-charts ended up being full. Participants were also asked to identify times when they had abused others - the workshop report notes that the 'room was filled with sadness'. The activity on the Roots and Impacts of Violence opened participants' eyes to the institutional dimensions of violence for refugee communities.

The second half of the workshop focused on skills development, giving participants the opportunity to discuss and practice skills in Eliciting Stories, Encouraging Disclosure, Building up the Evidence Base, Intro to Counselling, Making Good Referrals, Taking Care of Ourselves,

Working as a Team, and Using the Information. Armed with these skills, the activist teams developed a plan for gathering information and documenting stories about the nature and extent of SGBV and responses to it in their respective communities and contexts. In order to gather such information in both Kyaka 11 and Kyangwali, the COBURWAS youth group recruited more young people to assist them and trained them in turn in basic documentation skills and methods. These youth activists carried out both one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions with male and female youths and adults in their communities, as well as with representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister, responsible for running the camps, and with staff of agencies providing a range of medical, legal and psychosocial support to refugees.

The picture that emerged was of many cases of sexual and gender-based violence going unreported, usually because the survivors of violence and their family members were not confident that their case would be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately, and in some cases because the perpetrators themselves were persons in positions of power. Having carefully anonymised this information to protect the identity of the respondents, the findings were presented to camp authorities, together with a demand that SGBV issues be treated as a priority concern. One immediate result of this advocacy was that COBURWAS representatives were invited to join the SGBV coordinating committee for humanitarian agencies working in Kyangwali settlement. From this position, they have been able to draw attention to the responsibilities of such agencies to ensure adequate protections for both female and male migrants from the threat of violence. Holding duty bearers to account for their failure to fulfil institutional responsibilities for protection remains an important focus for the project. To this end, activists continue to document information on examples of such failure that can be used in advocacy activities with the relevant authorities.

This has not been without its challenges. The activists have sometimes faced suspicion and even hostility from agencies working in Kyangwali, who have perceived them as 'spies' reporting challenges and gaps in relation to sexual and gender based violence matters. They were also accused of duplicating services by offering counselling and providing advice on referral pathways as well as escorting survivors to health clinics and to get legal support. Through meetings with the Office of the Prime Minister's representative and heads of agencies, RLP has supported the activist team in addressing these misunderstandings and has helped create a mechanism whereby cases of institutionalised sexual exploitation of forced migrants, which had previously been ignored, are now being taken up by the Humanitarian Country Group for appropriate sanction.

Important lessons have been learned from this experience, including the following:

- Having been identified as people with an interest in responding to sexual and gender-based violence, the young activists found themselves swamped with requests for assistance in dealing with SGBV issues by community members. This was made worse by the fact that a non-governmental organisation which was charged with addressing sexual and gender-based violence pulled out abruptly due to funding challenges. This left a gap in service provision, which the activists were called upon to fill, working together with churches and other community based programmes to address cases of violence. Mobilising Men activists have been called upon to help individuals get access to needed medical care, and have even provided safe shelter to survivors on a few occasions. To minimise the danger of burnout, and also the risks they ran of becoming targets of violence themselves, RLP staff worked with the team to strengthen their relationships with service providers so that the activists could refer people on to get the appropriate service.
- At times, the age of the activists counted against them, with some community members feeling that the team were too young to be advising others about the SGBV issues, particularly when it came to violence within the home. In response, the activist team worked hard to strengthen their relationship with key community leaders, including religious leaders and elders, whose enthusiastic support for the project was important for its success.
- It was critical to get the support of the authorities in charge of running the camps. RLP staff worked together with the activist team in securing the backing of the Office of the Prime Minister Representative, which proved crucial not only in getting the project off the ground but also in dealing with challenges that arose during project implementation.
- Many of those challenges related to claiming the right of refugee communities to demand protection from sexual and gender-based violence and to hold the authorities accountable for their failure to uphold their duty of protection, given the prevailing view that refugees should be grateful for what they are given and not make demands of their 'hosts'. Preparing for confrontation is vital because challenging the institutional authorities in this way is likely to be met with resistance and backlash. RLP staff worked closely with the activist team to manage the risks of such conflict, and find ways to present their demands that enabled space for discussion with and action by responsible authorities.

# Handout: Boda Boda Focus Group Discussion Guide

## Topic:

Engaging men and boys to end Institutional Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Name of Group Interviewed:

## Date:

## Location:

Time discussion started: \_\_\_\_\_ and ended: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant summary: No. of women: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of men: No. \_\_\_\_\_ Total No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Facilitator(s):

## Introduction:

Explain that the discussion is confidential and that participants should respect each other's right to privacy by not discussing what was talked about with people outside of the focus group. Reiterate that all participants must agree to the rule of confidentiality; those who do not agree should be invited to leave the focus group without being stigmatised. The facilitator should inform the participants that she/he will be asking general questions about issues in their community affecting women and men and she/he is NOT requesting that participants disclose personal information about themselves.

## Questions:

- What are the common forms of violence within your community/institution?
- Without mentioning names or indicating anyone specific, who are the perpetrators - known or unknown?
- What happens to the perpetrators (different consequences if the perpetrator is known/unknown)?
- Do you think sexual violence is increasing or decreasing with time within your institution/community? Why do you feel that way?
- Do women/men look to disclose or seek help when they experience sexual violence?
- What are the reasons that may prevent them from doing so?

- Do they tell anyone (family members, other women, health worker, community leader, police/security people/authorities, someone else)?
- What kind of response would a rape survivor expect from the following: family members, friends, police, chief, other women, health worker, community leader, police/security people, people in authorities, someone else)?
- What can be done to reduce instances of sexual violence e.g. rape, defilement, harassment and sexual assault in the community/institutions?

Thank you for your important feedback. I know these are difficult questions about topics that people don't usually talk about.

# Handout: Campaign Planning Worksheet: Completing Step 1

This worksheet includes the major steps in campaign planning, which are discussed in more detail in the next section. The information gathered from documenting the violence can be used to complete section 1 of the campaign planning worksheet. The information gathered from documenting the violence should address the following points listed under section 1 of the worksheet.

## 1. Assessing the violence

- Nature and extent of SGBV
- Characteristics of survivors and perpetrators
- Institutional conditions that enable/enact the violence
- Level of disclosure/barriers to disclosure
- Consequences of disclosure: reactions from community, responses from authorities
- Types of services provided to survivors - issues of accessibility and quality
- Nature of response to perpetrators
- What do survivors say they want/need in terms of services?
- What would help to encourage more survivors to seek support and services?
- What interventions are needed to deal more effectively with perpetrators?
- What changes in institutional practices and 'culture' would help to prevent SGBV?

## 2. Identifying priority issues

## 3. Setting objectives

## 4. Defining targets

## 5. Crafting demands

## 6. Creating a frame

## 7. Developing stories

## 8. Designing strategies

## 9. Choosing agents

## 10. Engaging allies



Launch of the Boda Boda Mobilising Men campaign, Juja, Kenya  
Credit: © MEGEN 2010

# Taking Action for Change

**Identify priority issues**

**Design the campaign**

**Select strategies for action**

**Improve rights literacy of constituency**

**Establish and monitor institutional policy**

**Change institutional culture**

# Identify priority issues

Turning information about sexual and gender-based violence in a specific institutional setting into an issue or issues around which a campaign against such violence can be developed is a key step in taking effective action for change. US-based social justice activist, Rinku Sen, notes that campaign issues always have at least three elements, namely:

1. A constituency with a grievance.
2. A set of demands that address that grievance.
3. An institutional target at whom the grievance is directed.

In order to identify priority issues for the campaign, it is helpful to look at the information that has been gathered at the documentation stage in terms of:

- **Targets, perpetrators and beneficiaries** - who is targeted by the violence, who is perpetrating the violence, and who benefits from it?
- **Conditions** - what aspects of institutional policy, practice and culture create the conditions that enable and enact the violence?
- **Accountabilities** - who should be held accountable for perpetrating the violence? Who should be held accountable for the conditions that enable/enact the violence?
- **Tensions and contradictions** - where are the tensions and contradictions between institutional policy, practice and culture that create entry points to raise the issue of sexual and gender-based violence? These can be places to highlight values in the way that a campaign issue is framed.
- **Forces at work** - what forces are pushing for change and what forces are resisting change? Which issues will help to build with the former, and confront the latter?

- **Relationships with key players** - what relationships can be used with key players both inside and outside of the institution to make change in institutional conditions?
- **Opportunities** - what opportunities for action are being presented by unfolding events - e.g. new leadership at the institution?
- **Balance of risk** - what are the benefits and risks of choosing a particular issue to focus on?

Mobilising Men partners worked with their activist teams to discuss the information on SGBV issues and responses that they had documented. In doing so, they used some or all of the following criteria to prioritise the specific issues on which they would focus in their campaigns - and thus complete the second step of campaign planning (see the Campaign Planning worksheet on the next page.)

An issue is a priority when it:

- Increases people's safety and support around issues of SGBV.
- Expands the rights of our constituency, legally, economically or otherwise.
- Provides new opportunities for engaging men in work to end sexual and gender-based violence.
- Reveals patterns of policy and practice in an institution that are complicit with SGBV.
- Allows us to reveal the gender assumptions that operate in a particular policy or institution.
- Is winnable - we can realistically accomplish our objectives.
- Is feasible for us to take on, given our capacity and current work-load.
- Attracts allies.
- Attracts media attention that will enable us to have a greater impact.
- Does not expose us to undue risk of harm.

Gender

Fact, state of  
social, cultural expectation  
of ♂, ♀  
e.g. gender role - domestic cooking

Sex Roles: activities expected by  
biological fact of ♂, ♀  
e.g. breast feeding

Masculinity: Manly, Strong, tough, aggressive  
Prowess,  
Macho, muscular, Virility

Equity: - Share

Understanding Gender activity at the  
Mobilising Men campaign planning workshop,  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Credit: © Alan Greig 2010

## Handout: Campaign Planning Worksheet: Completing Step 2

This worksheet includes the major steps in campaign planning. Use the criteria presented in section 2 to select the issues around which the campaign will be designed.

1. Assessing the violence

2. Identifying priority issues

To what extent does this issue(s):

- Increase people's safety and support around issues of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Expand the rights of our constituency, legally, economically or otherwise.
- Provide new opportunities for engaging men in work to end sexual and gender-based violence.
- Allow us to reveal patterns of policy and practice in an institution that are complicit with sexual and gender-based violence.
- Allow us to reveal the gender assumptions that operate in a particular policy or institution.
- Look as if it is winnable - we can realistically accomplish our objectives.
- Look as if it is feasible for us to take on, given our capacity and current work-load.
- Attract allies.
- Attract media attention that will enable us to have a greater impact.
- Not expose us to undue risk of harm.

3. Setting objectives

4. Setting objectives

5. Crafting demands

6. Creating a frame

7. Developing stories

8. Designing strategies

9. Choosing agents

10. Engaging allies



**Activist Pooran Chand with his family, in Mallagaon village, Nainital District, Uttarakhand, India  
Credit: © Anand Singh Shahi 2010**

## Design the campaign

In designing their campaigns, the Mobilising Men activist teams considered the following elements of a campaign plan:

- **Objectives: What needs to change - now, sooner, later?**

Any campaign must begin by clarifying its objectives. What are the immediate objectives for this work and what are its medium term and longer term objectives? What are the content objectives (such as, change policies) and what are the process objectives (such as, build community among participants)? These objectives need to be defined and talked about in a way that can launch a campaign, draw people to it, and sustain it over time - objectives should inspire, motivate, mobilise.

- **Targets: Who can make the change?**

Who are the people and institutions that need to be moved to make the change that is needed? This includes the primary targets; the individual decision-makers within institutions who have the power to concede our demands and make a change in the situation. Primary targets also include those who can influence people with authority. These are the secondary targets; individuals to whom the primary target feels some sense of accountability. In both cases, an effective campaign requires a clear sense of who these audiences are and how they can be influenced. It is useful to map who these targets are, and the different strengths and kind of relationship between them.

- **Demands: What must the primary targets do to make the change?**

Achieving campaign objectives requires identifying demands around which to build the campaign with its targets. Demands should be ambitious enough to galvanise support from those who are affected by problems of sexual and gender-based violence and specific enough that they focus attention on what the primary targets can do to make the needed changes in institutional policy, practice and culture

- **Frame: How will the changes that are needed be presented?**

It is essential to pay attention to the frame that an issue is put in, as well as the issue itself. The 'frame' defines the picture that is given of an issue and how you want others to see the issue. Thus, the frame is the meaning that is given to an issue - it expresses the position on an issue, and the values reflected in this position. In this way, the frame expresses the values of the campaign, and the worldview that underlies those values. Framing is critical to strategic campaigning on any set of issues, but especially with regard to issues of sexual and gender-based violence with their potential for controversy and distortion.

“ A frame is the overarching perspective or larger story that shapes the understanding of a message or action. Our frames invoke our story: who we are, what we want, and what values we share. You can think of framing literally as the edges of the television screen or the rims of the eyeglasses that define what and who is in the story and how they are presented. What is left out of the frame is as important as what you choose to put inside the frame. Effectively framing the action means that the change agents set the terms of the debate, and shift who has power in the story - the protagonists of the new story become the impacted constituencies who are mobilising for change.”

*(Canning and Reinsborough 2008)*

Careful framing of issues of sexual and gender-based violence is essential in order to:

- Emphasise their importance
- Highlight the conditions that allow the violence to continue
- Identify who is really affected and how affected
- Identify who should be held accountable
- Put opposition on the defence
- Define the players in the debate
- Appeal to primary and secondary targets
- Assert values of affected constituency
- Maximise drama and reach of issue

---

Canning, D. and Reinsborough, P. (2008) 'Changing the Story: Story-Based Strategies for Direct Action Design', in Team Colors Collective (eds) *In the Middle of a Whirlwind*, The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest Press: Los Angeles

# Tool: Developing a Campaign Frame

## Goal:

To understand the importance of strategic framing of campaign issues and the elements of an effective frame

## Steps:

Present a definition of a campaign frame, using the information on page 75.

Lead a discussion on the importance of strategic framing, using the following questions:

- How are experiences and issues of sexual and gender-based violence in this institutional setting currently framed, presented and talked about?
- What are the dominant representations of and meanings given to these experiences and issues?
- How do these representations and meanings:
  - Affect the survivors of the violence?
  - Explain or excuse the violence?
  - Reveal or hide the commonly held assumptions that allow the violence to continue?
  - Serve to identify or mystify the causes of the violence and those responsible for it?
  - Challenge or collude with the forces and factors that sustain the violence?
  - Shift or maintain the inequalities of power that underpin the violence?

Present and discuss an example:

- Dominant frame = “women who dress ‘immodestly’ have only themselves to blame if they experience some form of sexual and gender-based violence”
- Campaign frame = “blaming the victim is a popular strategy that is used to justify attacks by a socially dominant group on a socially subordinate group - we have seen this throughout history”.

To build a society of equal rights and respect for all, we need to start by holding the powerful to account for the way that they abuse their power; in this case, holding men accountable for their violence against women, and holding institutional authorities accountable for not doing enough to create safe environments for women within the institution.

Break people into their project groups. Have each group discuss and identify:

- One campaign objective: one thing they want to change in their institutional setting.
- Primary and secondary targets.
- One or more demands that their campaign will make of their primary target.
- The frame they will use to present these demands.

Ask each group to prepare a skit, showing them using this frame to present their demands to their primary target in their institutional setting.

Come back together as a large group. Ask each small group to take it in turns to present their skit. Before they present the skit, ask the group to describe their campaign objective, who are the primary and secondary targets, and what their demands are. After each skit, de-brief with the large group by asking:

- What was good about the campaign frame used by the group (with reference to the key points about campaign frames on page 72)?
- How well do you think this frame spoke to the primary and secondary targets?
- How could the frame be improved?

End the session by summarising the key points about careful framing of SGBV issues, using the information on page 72.

## Handout: Campaign Planning Worksheet: Completing Step 3-6

This worksheet includes the major steps in campaign planning. Based on discussion of priority issues for the campaign, discuss and complete sections 3 - 6 of the campaign plan.

1. Assessing the violence
2. Identifying priority issues
3. Setting objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Short-term (now)</li><li>• Medium-term (sooner)</li><li>• Longer-term (later)</li></ul>
4. Defining targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Primary</li><li>• Secondary</li></ul>
5. Crafting demands <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Level of ambition</li><li>• Degree of specificity</li></ul>
6. Creating a frame - to what extent does our framing of the issue(s) of SGBV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emphasise their importance</li><li>• Highlight the conditions that allow the violence to continue</li><li>• Identify who is really affected and how</li><li>• Identify who should be held accountable</li><li>• Define the players in the debate</li><li>• Appeal to primary and secondary targets</li><li>• Assert values of affected constituency</li><li>• Maximise drama and reach of issue</li></ul>
7. Developing stories
8. Designing strategies
9. Choosing agents
10. Engaging allies



Mobilising Men campaign planning workshop, Kampala, Uganda  
Credit: © Yaya Donald 2011

## Select strategies for action

Having identified objectives, targets, demands and the frame, the next step in campaign planning is to select the strategies that will work best to meet campaign objectives. To do this, the Mobilising Men activists considered the following elements:

### **Stories: What story of change is the campaign telling?**

As Canning and Reinsborough (2008) say: 'Storytelling has always been central to the work of organisers and movement builders. In many ways the defining manifestation of a movement is the emergence of a common story that allows people to express their shared values and create a common vision of the change they want to see.' It is important that this 'common story' carries across all of the strategies and activities of the campaign.

### **Strategies: How will we move to make the change?**

There are many ways to express campaign demands, from subtle (such as meeting with campus authorities privately to present a specific proposal on dealing with sexual harassment on campus) to 'in-your-face' (such as holding a protest in front of the police station to demand action from the police on sexual violence within the community). In determining which strategies will work best, it is helpful to discuss the following questions:

- What opportunities are there for creating heat (pressuring our primary and secondary targets to make change) as well as shedding light (educating and persuading the targets to make change)?
- Where are the entry points for raising our campaign demands with the primary and secondary targets?
- What leverage do we have that will help the targets to pay attention and listen to demands?
- What risks are we running with this strategy and what do we need to do to manage these risks?
- In what ways will the strategy build the resistance and resilience of people most targeted and affected by the violence?

---

Doyle Canning and Patrick Reinsborough (2008), 'Changing the Story: Story-Based Strategies for Direct Action Design', *In the Middle of a Whirlwind* (eds) Team Colors collective  
<http://inthemiddleofthewhirlwind.wordpress.com/changing-the-story/>

### **Agents: Who is best placed to do this work?**

The same message has a very different impact depending on who communicates it. Who are the most credible messengers for different audiences? In some cases, these messengers are 'experts.' In other cases, it may be 'real people' (such as survivors of gender or sexual violence) who can speak from personal experience. What do we need to do to equip these messengers, both in terms of information and to increase their capacity as advocates?

### **Allies: Who do we need to partner with?**

Thinking through who best to ally with to implement the campaign is critical, especially given the need for men to be allying with women's existing struggles against sexual and gender-based violence. Coalitions are essential to real change, but their politics can be tricky. This dilemma extends to communications. Many organisers are wary that communicating with a coalition will necessarily weaken their message. This does not have to be the case. Another strategy might be for different members of a coalition to communicate a similar core message, but in ways that feel authentic to them. If everyone has a role to play in a coalition and they can play that role comfortably and authentically, the coalition can lead to deeper alliances.

Mobilising Men partners worked with their activist teams to strengthen skills in relation to strategies of persuasion (including group facilitation skills - see the tool and handout on pages 79-82) and strategies of pressure (including event organising skills - see handout on page 83-84).

## Tool: Facilitating a Group Discussion

### Goal:

To understand and practice key skills in group facilitation.

### Steps:

Explain that this activity will be used to practice skills in dealing with difficulties in facilitating a group discussion on men's responsibilities to challenge violence against women.

One of the most common difficulties that we face as facilitators is how to deal with men's denial of this responsibility. A common way that men express this denial is through blaming the victim. A group member might say: 'If a woman gets raped, it is because she asked for it - by dressing the way she did, by being in that part of town at that time of day or night.' This point of view is very harmful because it blames the victim of violence and excuses the perpetrator of violence from any responsibility. This point of view helps to create the conditions that allow violence to continue. Everyone has a right to their opinion. But they do not have a right to oppress others with the views that they express. It is essential for the group facilitator to challenge such harmful points of view when they are expressed in a group setting. The best way to do this is to not only repeat the core messages of your campaign but also to give the person a chance to think more deeply about their point of view, and the impact that it has, as well as to listen more closely to other views in the group. This can be difficult. But it is vital in helping group members to work toward positive change.

Explain that we are going to do a role play to practice skills in dealing with victim blaming. Present this four step model as a way of dealing with this difficult situation:

- Step 1: Ask for clarification. 'I appreciate your sharing your opinion with us. Tell us why you feel that way?'
- Step 2: Seek a different point of view. 'Thank you. So at least one person feels that way, but others do not. What do the rest of you think? Who here has a different opinion?'
- Step 3: If another point of view is not offered, provide one. 'I know that a lot of people disagree with that statement. Most men and women I know feel that the only person to blame for a rape is the rapist. Every individual has the responsibility to respect another person's right to say 'no'.

- Step 4: Offer facts that support a different point of view. 'The facts are clear. The law states that every individual has a right to say "no" to sexual activity. Regardless of what a woman wears or does, she has a right not to be raped. The rapist is the only person to be blamed.'

Remind everyone that it is important to remember that changing deeply held views is difficult. Even after the facilitator has used these four steps, it is unlikely that the group member will openly change his or her opinion. However, by challenging the statement, the group facilitator has provided another point of view that the group member will be more likely to think about and, it is hoped, adopt later.

Divide the group into two smaller groups; a performance group and an observer group. Ask the performance group to choose one of their members to be the facilitator, and one of their members to play the role of the person blaming the victim. Give the performance group five minutes to prepare a role play, in which the facilitator will use the four-step model to deal with the difficult person in their group.

When the performance group is ready, ask them to step into the middle of the room and perform the role play, while the observer group watches. When the role play is complete, ask the observer group to give the facilitator feedback on how he used the four-step model, reminding people about the importance of constructive feedback.

If there is time, run the role play again with different people taking the role of facilitator and disruptor; during the role play, ask the observer group to raise their hand if they have suggestions for the facilitator and invite them to step into the role to continue the scene. Then swap the performance and observer groups, and repeat.

End the session by giving out the handout, and presenting its main points.

## Handout: Good Practice in Facilitating a Group Discussion

Good facilitation skills help to improve the quality of group discussion and problem solving. Such skills can also help groups to agree on changes that are needed and to commit to taking action on these changes. There is no single best way to facilitate a group discussion. Different facilitators have different styles. Different groups have different needs. But there are some key aspects of good group facilitation, which are described below.

**Involving everyone:** Helping all group members to take part in the discussion involves paying attention to who is talking a lot and who is not saying much. There may be many reasons why someone is quiet during a group discussion – for example, they may be thinking deeply. But in general, it is a good idea to bring quiet group members into the discussion – for example, by asking them a direct question. On the other hand, if someone is very talkative, it is helpful to ask them to allow others to take part in the discussion.

**Keeping the group on track:** Helping the group stay focused on the issues that are being discussed and the objectives for the group discussion. If the group seems to be losing its focus, it is important to remind group members about the objectives for the activity and the issues that are being looked at. This will help to get them back on track. The facilitator will usually open up the discussion of issues and then use questions and information to focus the discussion to key learning points and remaining questions. Finally, the facilitator closes out the discussion by summing up and agreeing on change and action items.

**Managing conflict:** Talking about SGBV issues may well give rise to disagreements within the group. Most people have strongly held views about such issues. Disagreement is very healthy and should be welcomed. It is often through disagreement with others that we come to better understand our own thoughts and feelings. There may be situations when disagreement turns into conflict. In a conflict, people put their energy into defending their own fixed positions rather than exploring the issues with each other. Helping the group to manage such conflict is a key role for the facilitator. This is because conflict can make it harder for the group members to do their work together and achieve their objectives. There are many ways to manage conflict. These different ways tend to share some common features, including getting people to:

- State their concerns, and the reasons for them, clearly – this reduces the danger of other people making assumptions.
- Listen to others carefully – this helps to shift people out of their fixed positions and creates an atmosphere of respect in which it becomes easier to work a conflict out.
- Look for areas of agreement and shared concern – this is to create a common ground on which to come together to work a conflict out.

Dealing with disruptions: Facilitating a group discussion may mean dealing with negative or disruptive people or with someone who continues to interrupt the discussion. Reminding the group of any working agreements and asking everyone to be responsible for maintaining these agreements is a good way to deal with disruptions. It is important to try and involve the group when asking a disruptive group member to help rather than hinder the work of the group.

Achieving agreement: It will not always be possible to achieve agreement among group members. But a good facilitator will highlight areas of agreement for the group, as well as points of disagreement that need further discussion. The facilitator should also sum up the main points of the discussion and any action points that have been agreed.



Young activists  
at a Mobilising  
Men meeting,  
Hoima, Uganda

Credit: ©  
Dieudonné N.  
Maganya 2011

# Handout: Organising a Public Protest in an Institutional Setting

**Campaign message:** In designing the campaign message, discuss the following questions:

- How can our campaign message express the campaign demands that we identified in the previous skills-building activity?
- How can we use our campaign message to re-frame the discussion of violence against women within our institutional setting?
- Who is our audience for this event, and what kind of message will they respond to best?
- In creating the message, how will we involve our supporters and those most affected by the violence?

**Testimonies:** Personal testimonies from survivors of violence, and from those who are working to end the violence, can be a powerful tool for mobilising others to get involved and take action. In planning how to gather and use such testimonies, discuss the following questions:

- Whom will we ask to provide testimonies (for example, survivors, allies, service providers, community leaders, others)?
- How will we gather these testimonies (for example, in written form, audio/video recording, interviews with individuals)?
- How will we present these testimonies at the event (for example, in person, by reading them out, by playing a recording, by printing them on a brochure or poster)?

**Evidence:** Evidence of the nature, extent and impact of violence against women within the institution is also a powerful mobilising tool, which can be used to counter the silencing and denial that still surrounds such violence. In planning how to gather and use such evidence, discuss the following questions:

- What evidence is available to us (for example, official statistics, anecdotal reports, media reports)?
- How can we gather new evidence (for example through a survey, a mapping exercise, interviews with key informants)?
- How can we present this evidence at the event (for example, through a speaker, as a fact sheet, as a short video)?

**Event outreach:** In order to make the event the most successful it can be, it is essential to do a lot of outreach beforehand to get as many people there as possible, in particular those people

from your main target audience. In planning such outreach, discuss the following questions:

- How and where will we publicise the event in order to reach our target audience (for example, posters, flyers, radio broadcasting, SMS text messaging, other social media, word of mouth)?
- How can we use our relationships with key organisations in order to mobilise their constituencies to attend?
- How can we create a sense of excitement and urgency about attending the event that will help to attract people to attend?

### **Event logistics:**

- What permissions do we need from whom in order to put the event on?
- What will help us to get these permissions?
- How will we safeguard the safety of those attending the event?
- How can we make it easier for people to get to and stay at the event?
- What can we do to make people feel welcome and supported at the event?
- What is our plan if there is any kind of emergency at the event (for example, health or safety emergencies)?

### **Event activities:**

- In what ways will our activities reflect our commitment to gender justice (for example, ensuring gender balance among the panel of speakers, having a woman open and close the event)?
- Who can we get to speak at the event who will appeal to our target audiences?
- What mix of activities will help to keep people's attention at the event?
- What mix of activities will help to both educate and inspire people to take action after the event?

### **Event media coverage:**

- Which media do we want to cover the event?
- How can we make sure that they attend?
- How can we make sure that they hear, understand and report our message?
- How can we use the event to build a better relationship with key media organisations and personnel?

### **Event documentation:**

- How will we document the event?
- How can we use this documentation in our ongoing campaign efforts toward our campaign objective?

## Handout: Campaign Planning Worksheet: Completing Step 7-10

This worksheet includes the major steps in campaign planning. Based on discussion of strategies for the campaign, complete sections 7 - 10 of the campaign plan by discussing the following issues:

1. Assessing the violence
2. Identifying priority issues
3. Setting objectives
4. Defining targets
5. Crafting demands
6. Creating a frame
7. Developing stories How does our 'story' of the campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Express shared values</li><li>• Create common vision</li></ul>
8. Designing strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities for creating heat as well as shedding light</li><li>• Entry points for raising our campaign demands</li><li>• Leverage with primary and secondary targets</li><li>• Risks and risk management</li><li>• Focus on resistance and resilience of people most targeted and affected by the violence</li></ul>
9. Choosing agents <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issues of credibility</li><li>• Issues of capacity and how to address them</li></ul>
10. Engaging allies <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process of developing a shared agenda</li><li>• Process of agreeing principles of collaboration</li><li>• Process of allocating different roles and responsibilities</li></ul>



Launching the Mobilising Men campaign, Juja, Kenya  
Credit: © MEGEN 2010

## Improve rights literacy of constituency

Educating people about their rights in relation to sexual and gender-based violence was an important strategy for the Mobilising Men partners. This involved improving people's knowledge of their rights as well as their ability to claim their rights from responsible authorities and hold such authorities accountable for their failure to promote and protect such rights.

In Uganda, members of the Kampala-based activist team participated in weekly meetings of their respective communities, at which they have presented information on the rights of forced migrants under international law and the Ugandan Constitution. Crucially, these meetings also enabled survivors to exercise their rights by being linked to needed services through referrals from activists. In this way, the Kampala-based Mobilising Men activists have helped bridge the gap between the service providers and refugee communities. The activists, together with the Refugee Law Project, have also conducted trainings with service providers to sensitise them to the rights and needs of the different refugee communities in Kampala. In this way, the Mobilising Men programme has helped organisations change the way that they engage with issues of sexual and gender-based violence, especially when it comes to working with men who are survivors of sexual violence, whose needs have largely been neglected thus far.

The progressive gender provisions of the Bill of Rights outlined in the new Kenyan Constitution became a centrepiece of the campaigns there, and accessible information materials on the Sexual Offences Act were widely distributed on the campus of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) where the Kenya-based Mobilising Men activist team was based. A weekly Open Forum on Sexual and Gender-based Violence on the JKUAT campus, organised by the student activists, also afforded an ongoing opportunity to engage both male and female students in discussion of violence as a human rights issue and the conditions that allow this rights abuse to continue. Innovative use of social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter) are sustaining this conversation online.

# SEXUAL Harassment

Where a person in a position of authority e.g. a boss at work or a public officer uses his/her position to try and make another person have sexual intercourse with them against their will, that person in authority or that public officer is guilty of sexual harassment and shall be jailed for 3 years or more or made to pay a fine of Kshs 100,000/= or both.

However the person claiming that he/she has been sexually harassed must prove that the harassment:

- was to decide whether he/she was to get employment, or assistance from the person harassing them
- was to decide the conditions of their employment
- affected their performance at work or school.

Example: Mary's boss Njuguna has been disturbing Mary by trying to get her to sleep with him. Mary has refused to sleep with her boss and Njuguna is threatening to fire her if she doesn't sleep with him. Njuguna is guilty of sexual harassment.

**QUALTE** **MOBMEN**

"Know your Rights"

# Socially constructed roles often thwart potential

**Gender discrimination denies.  
Gender discrimination robs.  
Gender discrimination deprives.  
Let's level the playing field**

**QUALTE** **MOBMEN**

"Know your Rights"

Mobilising Men campaign materials, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenya  
Credit: © MEGEN 2010

Similarly, Mobilising Men campaigns at Banaras Hindu University and Pune University in India have developed specific educational materials on rights-based responses to violence against women on campus, drawing on the Vishaka guidelines on responding to sexual harassment at the workplace promulgated by the Indian Supreme Court.

Important lessons have emerged from this work, including the following:

- **Making rights education accessible in ways that resonate with people's lived experience:** International conventions on human rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, provide the foundation and framework for rights literacy work with campaign constituencies (those people who are most impacted by sexual and gender-based violence). But such conventions, and the government authorities with the responsibility for upholding them, can seem very remote from people's own lived experience. Mobilising Men partners sought to connect their rights literacy work with people's own experience by creating specific educational materials using easy-to-understand language (as MEGEN did in relation to the Sexual Offences Act in Kenya), as well as by relating international human rights standards to local customs and practices relating to ethical conduct and notions of justice and fairness.
- **Focusing on skills as well as knowledge:** Crucially, Mobilising Men partners also used training activities with their affected constituencies to not only pass on information about rights, but to also strengthen people's confidence and skills in being able to claim these rights, by using role plays and other experiential training methodologies.
- **Getting the support of powerful allies:** As the story of Kolkata Rista's work with the transgender and *hijra* community in Kolkata, India, makes clear, an important component of rights literacy work is also working with key stakeholders, such as local council officials and the police, to enlist them as allies and help promote an environment that is more conducive to upholding the rights of targeted constituencies, especially in the case of groups that are socially marginalised, such as the transgender and *hijra* community in Kolkata. Where possible, it is also important to secure the support of individuals and organisations that are able to provide paralegal advice and support to rights claimants.
- **Documenting and publicising rights abuses:** Rights literacy work will also be strengthened by careful documentation of rights abuses. This helps in reducing individuals' sense of isolation when it comes to their experience of violence by reminding people that rights abuses are not isolated incidents but are widespread, and are enabled and enacted by the major institutions of society (see pages 42-50 for more on understanding the violence).



Group discussion on sexual and gender-based violence, Kyangwali refugee settlement, Uganda  
Credit: © Dieudonné N. Maganya 2011

## Story: Promoting the Rights of the Transgender and *Hijra* Community

As part of the Mobilising Men project, CHSJ is supporting Kolkata Rista, a transgender and *hijra* community organisation in Kolkata in India, to challenge the violence faced by members of their community and to advocate for justice for gender and sexual minorities.

*Hijras* have a long recorded history in the Indian subcontinent, as communities of people who have been assigned a male gender identity at birth but take on a feminine gender identity as young people or adults. Many *hijras* live in clearly defined and organised all-*hijra* communities, under the spiritual leadership of a guru.

Kolkata Rista organised a workshop in New Digha, Kolkata, on gender and sexuality issues for 20 members of the local transgender and *hijra* community from 30 October to 1 November 2010. Participants welcomed the discussions, as they opened up issues that have been silenced for too long. People got to talk about their own experiences in dealing with society's restrictive norms around both gender and sexuality, and also learned about how to keep themselves healthy, particularly when it comes to having safer sex. The two day workshop ended with the group being clear about the need to demand from government equal rights and protection under the law for the transgender and *hijra* community, and practicing skills in claiming these rights in their dealings with local government officials.

In order to get broader support for the rights of their community, Kolkata Rista organised a meeting that brought together district council officials and local party members with members of the transgender and *hijra* community to discuss how best to uphold the rights of transgenders and *hijras* in the local area. The workshop highlighted the discrimination faced by the transgender and *hijra* community and its roots in the patriarchal system. Videos and group exercises were used to expose the myths of the 'abnormality' or 'unnaturalness' of transgender and *hijra* experience and participants got the chance to explore their own attitudes and have their questions answered. The main message of the workshop was that, as humans, we can have a range of gender and sexual identities and society must recognise and respect this diversity. The workshop ended with calls, especially from the women participants, for people who are transgender and *hijra* to be accorded a similar priority in government policy as women are in terms of empowerment efforts.

This rights literacy and rights advocacy work laid the foundations for Kolkata Rista's efforts to promote the rights of the transgender and *hijra* communities to fully participate in the cultural life of their city. *Durga Puja* is one of the biggest festivals in Kolkata, West Bengal. People come to Kolkata from all over the state and beyond to enjoy the festival with their families and friends. This includes people of all gender identities; female, male, transgender, and *hijra*. But ever since 2006, when transgenders and *hijras* were physically attacked by festival goers and the police during *Durga Puja*, it has been difficult for members of the transgender and *hijra* communities to take part in the festival. Kolkata Rista focused its activities in 2010 on ensuring that the transgender and *hijra* community can enjoy the *Durga Puja* festival with their loved ones and can have a stall, and thus an official presence, at the festival. This effort was largely successful, though it did meet with some resistance. However, having secured the support of the Head of the *Durga Puja* Committee, this resistance was overcome.



Members of Kolkata Rista at the  
Puja festival in Kolkata, India  
Credit: © CHSJ 2010

## Story: Making refugees aware of their rights in Uganda

In Uganda, the Refugee Law Project (RLP) is supporting a team of young male and female activists drawn from a youth group known as the COBURWAS, founded several years ago as a self-help initiative by members from different communities of forced migrants in the settlements of Kyaka 11 and Kyangwali. These young activists have engaged in awareness-raising with their communities through trainings, music, dance and drama - in churches, schools and community leaders' meetings.

The activists examined the role played by the church in perpetuating sexual and gender-based violence and noted that: girls below 18 years were encouraged to marry; women were excluded from leadership positions; there was hate speech towards sexual minorities, especially homosexuals and lesbians; and there were sermons preaching wives' duty of obedience to their husbands. The activist team reached out to religious leaders and conducted education and drama sessions on preventing sexual and gender-based violence for their congregations. The young activists also went into schools to educate young people about their rights to be protected from sexual and gender-based violence, as well as young women's rights to gender equality. In part, this was in response to reports of children being abused by teachers as well as other older children in schools. The team has conducted workshops in primary and secondary schools in the settlement, reaching over 2000 young people in four schools.

The Mobilising Men activist team has also prioritised working with community leaders, to ensure their support for the project and their commitment to addressing issues of sexual and gender-based violence in their communities. In this, and their other work, the young activists have emphasised the use of music, dance and drama, and have formed a music, dance and drama group, which has run over ten drama shows to date, highlighting the range of different forms of violence being perpetrated against forced migrants and what refugee communities can do to stop the violence. They have designed and implemented two behaviour change campaigns, focusing on messages of equal rights for women and men, and the need for men and women to work together to end sexual and gender-based violence in the community. These campaigns included 15 community meetings, reaching over 700 community members, as well as door-to-door outreach education with over 800 households in the settlements.

Marcel Bahati, one of the leaders of the Mobilising Men activist team, said:

“What inspires me is to see survivors of sexual and gender-based getting help from our team members. Through basic support and appropriate referrals, we are making a difference for our communities, who appreciate our efforts.”



**Refugee Law Project Director Chris Dolan and SGBVP Coordinator Salome Atim planning the Mobilising Men project for Uganda**

**Credit: © Alan Greig 2010**

## Change and monitor institutional policy

The absence or inadequacy of institutional policy responses to sexual and gender-based violence is a key condition that enables such violence to continue to be a feature of life in many of the institutional settings addressed by the Mobilising Men programme. In both India and Kenya, Mobilising Men activists worked on college campuses to address the failure of college authorities to put in place adequate institutional mechanisms for tackling sexual harassment against female students, faculty and non-teaching staff - see the Story from Pune, India on page 97. In Kenya, the beginning of the Mobilising Men project on the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) campus in Juja outside of Nairobi coincided with the launch of the university's new Gender Policy, and the activists were able to play a key role in raising awareness of the new policy on campus, among both students and faculty. Mobilising Men activists in Juja have also prioritised efforts to improve the coordination of services for survivors, both on campus and in the neighbouring community, by linking with local officials from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development.

### **Important lessons have emerged from this work, including the following:**

- Women and men working as allies to seek change in institutional policy: Working as allies in struggles for gender equality and against SGBV is always important (see pages 21-24 for more on this), but nowhere more so than in work to change institutional policy, whose decision-making spaces are usually male-dominated. In this context, it is important that male activists model the change they would like to see in the world by not taking over the struggle from women or seeking to 'protect' women from 'bad' men, but rather working in relationships of equality and solidarity with women to argue for change in institutional policy.
- Using a frame that resonates: As the Boda Boda activists in Kenya found out in their work to develop a Code of Conduct for the Boda Boda bicycle taxi industry (see page 99 for more details of this work), it was essential to frame the issues of sexual and gender-based violence and the need for a Boda Boda policy in ways that made sense to the drivers. In this respect, an important 'frame' for the campaign to create a Boda Boda Code of Conduct on sexual and gender-based violence was to emphasise the drivers' professional ethics to ensure the safety of their passengers.

- Using a mix of persuasion and pressure: It is also clear that education strategies, that help people to 'see the light' in relation to the conditions that are needed to prevent SGBV are necessary but not sufficient to change particular institutional conditions that allow such violence to continue. This kind of institutional change also requires campaigns that help duty bearers 'feel the heat' by putting pressure on them to fulfil their responsibilities under national and international mandates.
- Keeping the pressure on through the monitoring of policy implementation: Securing a change in institutional policy, such as the re-establishment of Anti-Sexual Harassment Committees (see the Story on page 97) is a significant achievement. But it is only a meaningful achievement if policy change is, and continues to be, effectively implemented. Over the life of the programme, Mobilising Men activist teams have come to recognise the importance of working to develop mechanisms to monitor policy implementation and thus contribute to holding duty bearers accountable for their responsibilities to ensure effective implementation. This is critical for giving people confidence in any new policy.



Mobilising Men campaign posters, Banaras Hindu University, India  
Credit: © Sanjay Singh 2010

## Story: Working to Make the College Campus a Safe Environment

Sandeep Barve has been an activist with the youth organisation, Yuvak Kranti Dal, for the last five years. Yuvak Kranti Dal (Yukrand) was established in the 1970s in the state of Maharashtra in India, and from that time has been guided by the Gandhian precepts of non-violence as a way to address issues of social justice. The organisation has a set of values and principles that every member of the organisation has to abide by – an important one is the respect and equal treatment of women.



Sandeep was recruited as an activist for the Mobilising Men project because of his commitment to addressing sexual and gender-based violence on college campuses. With support from CHSJ, Yukrand under Sandeep's leadership formed action committees in seven colleges affiliated with Pune University, with coordination being undertaken by the state-level offices of Yukrand. A

situation assessment was done at the beginning of the project, which found widespread denial, among both campus authorities and male-dominated student bodies, that SGBV was a problem in the campus context. Anti-Sexual Harassment Committees existed on paper, but were not operational and lacked institutional support. Efforts to reach out to female faculty and non-teaching staff proved difficult, in part because of a lack of formal opportunities to meet with them.

As a first step in the campaign, Sandeep began to hold regular discussions with students and had one-to-one meetings with male and female non-teaching staff members. He distributed literature and pamphlets and invited them to participate in other activities on gender-related issues, such

as film screenings, rallies, campus meetings etc. He also organised capacity building workshops for male students and male teachers. Male teachers and the National Service Scheme (NSS) coordinator were invited as guests in campus discussions. In order to build alliances with key stakeholders, Sandeep also held one-to-one meetings with editors of five leading newspapers in Pune and involved NSS Programme Officers and the Director of the Centre of Women Studies in campaign planning. Their involvement from the planning stage ensured their active participation in and support for the campaign.

The next step was to organise a series of meetings with all the seven colleges, involving the principal, the vice- principal and NSS coordinators. These meetings took stock of SGBV issues on campus and also the condition of Anti-Sexual Harassment Committees. Simultaneously, a core group of Yukrand and NSS volunteers began to organise within the student bodies on campus, and actively sought to recruit more women as activists for the campaign. Sandeep recognised the need to throw the full weight of Yukrand as an organisation behind this effort, and focused much of his initial effort on internal advocacy with the mostly-male leadership of the organisation. As a result, SGBV issues are now at the forefront of Yukrand's action agenda. Reflecting on this campaign Dr Kumar Saptarshi, the founder president of Yukrand, said: 'This initiative within the organisation will create more spaces for women members of Yukrand and at the same time men in the organisation have to go through transformative personal changes. We, as an organisation, would like to invite participation of influential male activists to stand against SGBV and that will be the key success of this initiative.'

The campaign has achieved its initial objectives. As a result of internal advocacy with campus authorities, as well as external pressure from both female and male students and faculty, Pune University has authorised the re-establishment of Anti-Sexual Harassment Committees in each of the seven college campuses, with new terms of reference and a commitment to provide needed financial support. Yukrand is continuing to support the operation of these committees, in part by organising capacity building activities for the committees' officers, and in part by continuing its SGBV education with students, faculty and non-teaching staff alike. Attention is now shifting to setting up mechanisms, with the support of Yukrand, that can monitor the functioning of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committees, and support survivors of violence in getting their cases dealt with appropriately by the new structures that have been created.

## Story: Setting a Code of Conduct for Boda Boda drivers in Kenya

Different forms of sexual and gender-based violence, mostly targeting women of all ages, are an acknowledged problem in the transport sector in Kenya. Concerns about such violence are raised regularly, yet little in the way of concrete action has been taken to address the problem. It is as if it is seen as a 'fact of life', about which little can be done. Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN), the Mobilising Men partner in Kenya, has been working to engage different groups of men in efforts to end SGBV for several years now, and saw the Mobilising Men programme as an opportunity to apply its expertise to address the seemingly intractable problem of SGBV within the transport sector. In taking this opportunity, MEGEN staff were clear that it would not simply be enough to work with individual transport operators and treat the problem as one of individual behaviour; there was a clear need to change the policy and practice of the transport industry in order to create a transport environment that was safe for its passengers.

MEGEN chose to work in Juja, a town on the outskirts of Nairobi, because of its proximity to a major highway and the presence there of the Jomo Kenyatta University Of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), whose students are serviced by motor-cycle and bicycle taxi drivers (Boda Boda drivers). Stakeholders within JKUAT as well as the local community acknowledged that there is a problem of sexual and gender-based violence being perpetrated by Boda Boda drivers against female students, ranging from sexual harassment to sexual assault. Yet little was being done to address this. MEGEN reached out to the leadership of two Boda Boda associations working in the Juja area, and recruited a team of six Boda Boda drivers to participate in the Mobilising Men project, together with a team of students from the campus. After an initial skills building and campaign planning workshop, both activist teams conducted interviews with their respective constituencies. Based on their analysis of this documentation, the Boda Boda team in conjunction with MEGEN decided to focus on developing a pioneering Code of Conduct for the Boda Boda drivers in Juja, the first of its kind as far as is known in Kenya, which would set an 'institutional' standard of practice that committed Boda Boda drivers to ensuring a safe travelling environment for their passengers.

"Raphael and I, as activists in Juja, are trying our best to sensitise and teach our co-workers so that we can have zero tolerance on SGBV at the place of work and in the community, in part thanks to the code of conduct that we started implementing some few months ago."

*Aggrey Chigome, Boda Boda driver*

Following the workshop, two members of the MEGEN support team conducted weekly visits to support the Boda Boda team in deepening their understanding of the issues, and in educating the larger Boda Boda operators' community on issues of gender equality and SGBV. Out of these initial discussions was produced a draft Code of Conduct on Sexual and Gender-based Violence for the Boda Boda operators in Juja. The Code of Conduct outlines the rights of passengers and the responsibilities of Boda Boda drivers with respect to sexual and gender-based violence. Framed in the context of the gender equality provisions of the new Kenyan Constitution, the Code of Conduct enjoins Boda Boda operators in the Juja community to challenge a prevailing culture of impunity by reporting to the police cases of sexual and gender-based violence committed by Boda Boda drivers and also by helping to link survivors of such violence to needed health services. As the first Code of Conduct of its kind for the transport sector in Kenya, it offers a model for developing an institutional response to violence against women that can be applied more broadly to the transport industry within Kenya and indeed in other countries.

Following consultations with the Boda Boda operators in Juja and other stakeholders within the University and local community, the draft was finalised in late 2010 and the Boda Boda Code of Conduct was formally ratified. Since then, the focus has been on continuing to educate Boda Boda drivers about the need for and importance of the Code and seeking to ensure that as many drivers as possible sign up to the Code. In addition, the Boda Boda activist team continues to play a monitoring role in relation to the level of, and problems with, the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

Members of the activist team have also been involved in MEGEN's efforts to establish a Survivor Support Team (SST) in Juja. Comprising a multi-sectoral working group, with representatives from health, safety/security, psychosocial and legal sectors, the aim of the Survivor Support Team is to enable a collaborative, multi-functional, inter-agency and community-based response to cases of sexual and gender-based violence in the Juja area. MEGEN has supported the creation of the SST, and has provided training on clear procedures, roles and responsibilities for each actor involved in the prevention of, and response to, SGBV in order to improve coordination and avoid duplication of efforts. This initiative has also included the setting up of a referral mechanism for survivors, in which the Boda Boda activist team are closely involved. In this way, MEGEN is pioneering ways of mobilising male social change agents to take issues of violence into the centre of their work, by establishing institutional policies and procedures that are geared towards combating SGBV within various institutions.

## Change institutional culture

Changing the 'culture' of institutions, that shape their formal and informal ways of working, is neither easy nor quick. Such institutional cultures, and the individual attitudes and practices that reflect and reinforce them, are often deeply entrenched, especially so when it comes to issues of gender and sexuality. Yet Mobilising Men activist teams have developed campaigns that are beginning to challenge and change harmful aspects of institutional cultures in which they are working, and two stories from India illustrate this work in action (see page 103).

Although this work remains at an early stage, important lessons are already being learned, including the following:

- Be the change you want to see in the world: The personal example of activists involved in Mobilising Men projects has proved to be inspiring to other men and helped them begin to challenge previously unquestioned institutional practices and cultures.
- Share a vision of a different future: One of the greatest obstacles to changing institutional culture, and in particular challenging patriarchal practices and attitudes within a given institution, is the sense that such practices and attitudes are too deeply entrenched to be changed. An important task confronting activists working for change at the institutional level is to hold out a vision for how things could be different. This often involves highlighting the ways in which harmful aspects of institutional culture are at odds with the official mandate of the institution, and that the vision for change is in fact to help the institution to be more aligned with this mandate.
- Build momentum: The stories of change shared here also highlight the importance of building momentum for change that can help to overcome the fatalism and passivity described in the previous point. The mass rally of women party members described in Ganesh's story is a good example of using an activity to build such momentum and mass support.

- **Build alliances for persuasion and pressure:** It is also clear that there is a need to build alliances for change with stakeholders both inside and outside of the institution and to use a mix of strategies of both persuasion and pressure that can be sustained over time. To this end, each partner convened a Country Reference Group at the beginning of their projects, comprising national stakeholders, to advise on project implementation and review project progress.
- These Country Reference Groups provided an invaluable forum for sharing programmatic experiences and lessons with a range of national stakeholders and for discussing particular issues and challenges facing the projects in respective countries. More than this, they have also served to foster a broader dialogue on the importance of, and strategies for, engaging men more closely in efforts to challenge the institutionalised nature of sexual and gender-based violence. In this way, the Country Reference Group has been a useful mechanism through which to draw wider policy implications from the work of the Mobilising Men programme.
- **Accountability for change:** One of the greatest challenges facing this work of changing institutional cultures in relation to SGBV issues is to confront the culture of impunity that persists in many settings. Mobilising Men projects in all three countries have recognised the importance of putting in place mechanisms of accountability, not only for individuals but also for institutional authorities, in order to challenge such impunity. In doing so, however, it has also become clear that this focus on accountability has to be about transformation and not simply punishment. This requires an emphasis on 'accountability for change', an approach that holds people to a standard of behaviour, whether in terms of personal action or institutional responsibility, that they feel both required and inspired to maintain.

## Story: Mobilising local government to respond to violence against women

Jagdish Lal has been a social activist for the last ten years, particularly on issues of gender equality and violence against women. Currently he is involved with a number of initiatives, including Men's Action for Stopping Violence Against Women (MASVAW) in his home state of Uttarakhand in northern India. When he first started to work on social issues years ago, his family was sceptical and wanted him to take up jobs like other young people in the village. However, they slowly began to recognise that he is working for the good of society. As a result of his activities, he says that the atmosphere in his family has also improved over the years.

He continues to meet resistance to his social justice work, particularly when it comes to speaking out on violence against women. Some people in his village, usually men, challenge him, saying that he is focusing on private, trivial matters when he should be focusing on the 'real' issues, such as money, jobs and prosperity. Though initially discouraging, Jagdish has learned to trust his own judgment on the important issues facing the community, and also recognises that people's resistance often comes from a place of fear and ignorance.

Jagdish became interested in the Mobilising Men project because it allowed him to work more closely with men on SGBV issues. He said: 'I had been talking about gender issues for several years. Here one side is the exploiter and the other is the exploited. So far, we were only dealing with empowerment of women and the exploiter class remained untouched. But the project gave an opportunity to work with men and their contribution towards gender violence. Men are not basically violent, but they just lack awareness about gender issues. This is what I liked and decided to join the project so that men can be sensitised.' There was another reason for his interest in the project: it allowed him to work at the institutional level. Thus far, his efforts had been limited to individual change. But he was clear that for bigger impact, particularly in rural areas, change was needed in the mindset at the institutional level of the *Panchayat* (local or village level government system), because of the key role it plays in not only enforcing policy but in setting norms for the community.

Recognising the significance of the institutional 'culture' of the *Panchayat*, Jagdish identified a number of issues that the Mobilising Men campaign would need to address, including:

- The continuing silence about violence against women, either because it is perceived as a family issue that should not be discussed in public or it is seen as a trivial issue that is not worthy of *Panchayat* attention.
- Discrimination in education, which favours boys over girls, and which initiates the subordination of women from an early age.
- The misperception that the reservation of seats to women within the *Panchayat* system is promoting women's empowerment, when in fact they often lack the education or support to participate in decision-making equally with men, who usually treat them as easily manipulatable.
- A patriarchal mindset among men, not least the men in leadership positions within *Panchayat* structures, which means that issues of gender equality are largely ignored within development planning and programmes at the village level.

Jagdish undertook a range of activities to try and change the institutional 'culture' within the *Panchayat*. He initiated debates at the village level challenging the traditional roles of women merely as mothers, wives, and sisters and highlighting the fact that the *Panchayat* is ignoring the welfare of half the population, that is women. At these community-level discussions, he used participatory activities to explore issues of individual and institutional accountability for sexual and gender-based violence, and challenged the victim-blaming that he had often encountered. He also educated *Panchayat* members and officials on the provisions of India's domestic violence legislation (the 2005 Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act), and created a range of promotional materials to raise awareness of women's right to redress in cases of violence.



**Mobilising Men meeting, Nainital District, Uttarakhand, Northern India**

**Credit: © Anand Singh Shahi 2010**

In order to not only expand the reach of these education activities, but also build a constituency among men for change that could keep up the pressure on the *Panchayat* to change, Jagdish also recruited and trained a team of 12 activists selected from five villages, so that they could continue the work of sensitising their respective *Panchayats* on issues of gender and violence. This team of activists not only helped in raising awareness of these issues, but also got involved in responding to incidents of violence against women in their villages, and in bringing these incidents to the attention of the authorities. In this way, they continued to pressurise the *Panchayat* to take the responsibility for dealing with these cases through legal action. There were some cases where the male friends of activists who had attended the Mobilising Men training put pressure on the *Panchayat* to carry out legal action against the accused.

In his work with this team of male activists, Jagdish emphasised the need for men not to stand by and let the violence happen but to stand up and take action to stop it, and he encouraged these men and their male friends to think about doing the following:

- Protesting against teasing and harassment of women while working in the community.
- Promoting discussion about violence against women in open village meetings.
- Pressurising the *Panchayat* to take judicial actions against offenders.
- Urging the *Panchayat* to organise public awareness programmes on SGBV issues.
- Calling on the *Panchayat* to openly announce its agenda prior to its deliberations so that it could be held accountable for its response to SGBV issues.

As a result of this work, there now exist in a number of villages a constituency of men who are committed to working for greater gender equality and an end to sexual and gender-based violence. Cases of violence against women are now being addressed as matters of public concern, and referred to the appropriate judicial authorities. There is a continuous process of questioning the *Panchayat* on the adequacy of its response. And in the midst of all this, many of the male activists involved in the project are talking about the positive changes that are happening in their own lives and relationships with women.



Launching the Mobilising Men Boda Boda campaign,  
Juja, Kenya  
Credit: © MEGEN 2010

## Additional readings and on-line resources on men, masculinities and gender equality

- Cornwall, A., Edström, J. and Greig, A. (eds.) (2011), *Men and Development: Politicizing Masculinities*, Zed Books: London  
[www.ids.ac.uk/idspublication/men-and-development-politicizing-masculinities](http://www.ids.ac.uk/idspublication/men-and-development-politicizing-masculinities)
- Greig, A. and Esplen, E. with Cornwall, A. and Edström, J. (2008) *Politicising Masculinities: Beyond the Personal*, Report of an International Symposium held in Dakar, October 2007, Institute of Development Studies  
[www.siyanda.org/docs/esplen\\_greig\\_masculinities.pdf](http://www.siyanda.org/docs/esplen_greig_masculinities.pdf)
- Greig, A. and Edström, J. with Glyde, J. (2008) *Men, Sex and HIV: Directions for Politicising Masculinities*, IDS In Focus, Issue 04, July 2008, Institute of Development Studies  
[www.ids.ac.uk/go/bookshop/ids-series-titles/ids-in-focus-policy-briefings/men/-sex-and-hiv/ids-in-focus-issue-4-men-sex-and-hiv-directions-for-politicising-masculinities](http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/bookshop/ids-series-titles/ids-in-focus-policy-briefings/men/-sex-and-hiv/ids-in-focus-issue-4-men-sex-and-hiv-directions-for-politicising-masculinities)
- An excellent bibliography focused on men, masculinities and gender politics can be found on XY online:  
[www.xyonline.net/](http://www.xyonline.net/)
- MenEngage is an alliance of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that seek to engage men and boys in effective ways to reduce gender inequalities and promote the health and well-being of women, men and children:  
[www.menengage.org/](http://www.menengage.org/)
- Also useful is Engaging Men.Net, a gender justice information network:  
[www.engagingmen.net/](http://www.engagingmen.net/)
- A collection of training curricula on men, masculinities, and gender, compiled by Michael Flood:  
[www.xyonline.net/content/curricula-men-and-masculinities-xy-collection](http://www.xyonline.net/content/curricula-men-and-masculinities-xy-collection)



# Mobilising Men in Practice

## Challenging sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings

### Tools, Stories, Lessons

Gender inequalities, and the violence that maintains them, are not simply a matter of individuals and their behaviours; they are maintained by the social, economic and political institutions that structure all of our lives. So, what can men do to work with women in challenging the institutionalised nature of sexual and gender-based violence?

Through exploring ways of engaging men as gender activists within their every-day contexts, the Mobilising Men programme is working to better understand what it takes to confront sexual and gender-based violence in institutional settings. Since early 2010, the Institute for Development Studies, with support from UNFPA, has partnered with implementing civil society organisations in India, Kenya and Uganda to identify, recruit, train and support teams of male activists to work with women in developing campaigns to challenge and change the policies and cultures of specific institutional settings that condone or even fuel sexual and gender-based violence.

'Mobilising Men in Practice' brings together stories and lessons from this work, as well as some of the tools used by the partners in India, Kenya and Uganda. It is intended to inspire and guide others who are committed to engaging more men in efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence within the institutions in which we live our lives.

