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Gender-Based Violence against Women

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WHO estimates that at least one in five women has experienced violence in their lives.

“Until recently gender based violence (GBV) was viewed as a private or family matter. However, there has been a shift in thinking in the last few years about this topic and it is now viewed as both a public health problem and a human right violation”.

Practical Guide Approach to GBV/ UNFPA, Pilot edition 2001, NY

United National Declaration on VAW defines GBV as “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”.

Forms of Domestic Violence: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional and Verbal Abuse, Psychological Abuse.

Limited availability of services, stigma and fear prevent women from seeking assistance and redress. Statistics paint a horrifying picture of the social and health consequences of violence against women. Violence against women is a major cause of death and disability for women 16 to 44 years of age. (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 2002, Recommendation 1582 (2002) on Domestic Violence against women)

“One of the most perplexing manifestations of gender based familial violence is that of honor killing. The origin of honor killings relates to cultural norms whereby males proclaim the right to defend their honor by maintaining the honor of their family relatives” Official Statistics show 20 women were killed annually in Jordan”

Domestic Violence is a global phenomenon and not restricted to one region and is fought in different parts of the world. In Morocco, NGOs established Anaruz Network of 40 listening centers all over the Country to provide services to women victims of violence. Yet, women are still hesitant to report cases of violence against them from members of family.

UNIFEM and national partners in Syria produced the first comprehensive study on VAW that was featured in NY times. The main recommendations of the study:

- Create knowledge
- Conduct research, studies and create central register for incidence of VAW.
- Conduct behavioral change campaign.
- Capacity Building.
- Provide women protection services.
- Achieve comprehensive Syrian women protective legislation.

In brief, A **Problem Tree Analysis/ Causality Analysis** is a visual problem analysis tool used to specify and investigate the possible causes and effects of a problem and to highlight the relationship between them. The whole purpose of the Problem Tree is to *define* the main problems, in order to *analyze* and *prioritize* their causes as a step toward effective sustainable solutions. The most important analytical tool for constructing a Problem Tree is to ask the question *WHY* at every stage and identify the immediate, underlying, basic and root causes of our problem.

As a general rule: Immediate causes determine the current status of the problem. Underlying causes are often the consequence of policies, laws and availability of resources. They may reveal related complex issues and require interventions that take significant time in obtaining results (at least 5 years). Root/structural causes reveal conditions that require long-term interventions in order to change societal attitudes and behavior at different levels, including those at the family, community and higher decision-making level.

Key Question in the Causality Analysis: Why?

Once identified the development challenge, the *key question* in the causality analysis is *why* it is happening to a particular sector of the population? For example, why are the girls in rural areas being denied their right to education?

Added value of HRBA in Causal analysis:

It is important to consider the country context and have in-depth knowledge of its norms, institutions, legal frameworks and enabling environment.

Human rights standards reinforce situation analysis at three levels:

- being a reference for identifying development challenges and gaps between international obligations and the real practice.
- The standards attributes are a roadmap for the analysis of immediate, underlying and root causes of a development challenge
- Defines the actual entitlements and claims of rights holders and the extent of the duty-bearers' obligations.

Applying Human Rights Principles in the Causality Analysis

The use of the principles is an effective way to structure the analysis and articulate the causes. Analytical process: Ensure the participation of national stakeholders including the most marginalized and excluded. Provide stakeholders with the necessary information on the CCA process and content of the exercise including information from international human rights mechanisms so that they can take informed decisions. If needed, strengthen some capacities to motivate meaningful participation including possible incentives to those without resources to participate. Seek the consensus of all stakeholders in the development challenges and root causes being identified. Share with all stakeholders the findings of the analysis.

UNIFEM strategies to combat GBV:

- Protective laws and national actions: working with national partners on establishing legal frameworks to combat violence
- Measuring the problem: collection of data and research on VAW
- Prevention: stop violence before it starts and supporting prevention initiatives including in conflict and post-conflict situations
- Support for women's organizations to bring the voices of activists together and support creative initiatives to end VAW.
- Trust Fund to end VAW: UNIFEM supports the initiatives of regional and national organizations to fight VAW at the community level. Based on this success, UNIFEM Amman office established a trust fund for the Arab region to support organizations working on VAW

Causes of Violence against Women (Based on the Status of Jordanian Women published by UNIFEM in cooperation with the Department of Statistics and the Jordanian National Commission for Women).

Economic reasons: Financial burdens, variations in husband's and wife's economic levels.

Social reasons: Divorce, large number of children, living in extended families and disagreements.

Faulty concepts: Husband's right to beat his wife and the necessity of the wife offering obedience to her husband and patiently bearing his abuse. Men's right of custody

Psychological reasons: Depression, stress, low feelings of responsibility toward the family.

What is a HRBA?

HRBA is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. A HRBA *focuses explicitly on discrimination and marginalization in the development process*

HRBA penetrates all development practice to the point that the boundaries of human rights and development disappear as both become conceptually and operationally inseparable parts of the same processes of social change. HRBA is applied to development in such a manner that it alters the way that programmes are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated beginning with the assessment and analysis of the situation, which is ideally the point of departure.

The level of commitment is higher in the application of HRBA and requires addressing the challenges in a more comprehensive way. This means confronting persistent patterns of inequality and discrimination and formulating responses that will have taken into account the structural causes that enabled a political and societal environment to foster exclusion and marginalization and ultimately, the denial of human rights

HRBA recognizes human beings as rights-holders and establishes obligations for duty-bearers, focuses on discriminated and marginalized groups, aims for the progressive achievement of all human rights.

Example - Needs-based approach versus a rights-based approach:

“The essence of the differences is that in the former “beneficiaries” have no active claim to ensure that their needs will be met, and there is no binding obligation or duty for anybody to meet these needs. In contrast, a rights-based approach recognizes beneficiaries as active subjects or “claim-holders” and establishes duties or obligations for those against whom a claim can be held.” Urban Jonsson

Focus is Both on Outcome and Process

In a HRBA, attention must be paid to results since the desired outcome and impact of any programme activity is that it contributes to further the realization of human rights. At the same time, attention must be paid to ensure that the development process does not deepen inequality, discrimination and ultimately conflict. Human rights principles and standards provide objective criteria for acceptable development processes, thus being participatory, inclusive and accountable processes which prioritize the most marginalized and excluded groups. For example, human rights principles should inform the *process* of formulating, implementing and monitoring a poverty reduction strategy.

Characteristics of a HRBA:

- Situation Analysis to identify immediate, underlying and basic causes of the non-realization of human rights
- Identification of key claim-holder/duty-bearer relationship on all levels of society (Pattern Analysis)
- Assessment and analysis of the capacity gaps of claim-holders to be able to claim their rights and of duty-bearers to be able to meet their obligations. (Capacity Analysis).
- Monitoring and evaluation of both outcome and process guided by the HR standards and principles.
- Programming is informed by the recommendations of international human rights monitoring mechanisms.

When to begin applying the HRBA to the country program?

Given that the HRBA should be applied in all phases of the programming process, the point of departure for the preparation of the CCA begins from the early stage, with the gathering of information for the assessment and analysis.

In brief The Human Rights Based Approach to programming consists of the following steps:

- 1- causality analysis
- 2- role/pattern analysis
- 3- Identification of priorities
- 4- formulating the program of cooperation after conducting the first three steps.

The relationship chosen for this exercise is:

WOMEN'S CLAIMS ON NGOs = NGOs' DUTIES TO WOMEN

NGOS' CLAIMS ON WOMEN = WOMEN'S DUTIES TO NGOS

In looking at the two relationships we define the claims and the duties of both claim holder and duty bearer which will help us in identifying the capacity gap that is preventing them both from claiming their duty and/or doing their duty.

Women's CLAIMS ON NGOs = NGOs' DUTIES TO WOMEN

Women need intervention programs to support women victims of violence through counseling. NGOs need to design programs to suit the needs of women victims and provide services to abused women. NGOs need to reach out to local communities to build trust and save families from domestic violence.

NGOS' CLAIMS ON WOMEN = WOMEN'S DUTIES TO NGOS

Studies and reports on GBV in the Arab region indicate women are hesitant to report cases of violence and benefit from the services provided by the NGOs. Women fear from their families. Women need to interact with the services provided by the NGOs and take on step ahead in planning with NGOs their programs targeting women victims of violence.

NGOs need capacity building to reach out for local communities; there is lack of studies and surveys to highlight the effect of violence on families. NGOs strategies need combined planning with women to ensure it reflects their needs and priorities. And also, women need their capacities built to be empowered to claim their rights. Based on this, we now have the basis for a program of intervention that will help us in building the capacities of both claim holders and duty bearers.

**Testimony of
ATHANASIE MUKARWEGO, Teacher, Rwanda**

From 1960 to 1981, Ms Mukarwego grew up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She arrived in her home country, Rwanda, at the age of 22 years old. She had four children with her husband. Athanasie Mukarwego was a secondary school teacher in Kigali. Everything was going well and she was proud to be a citizen from Rwanda.

When the genocide of the Batsutsi started, her husband was killed by one of their friends. After his death, she was captured and tortured during 89 days (3 months). She was violated night and days, by a total of 500 men, including a lot of militaries, even after a miscarriage. She was not fed; she was beaten, insulted and exploited.

They told me they would rape me until I die and that they would not use another weapon than rape. Nights and days, militaries came...

Her kids were lock up in a room. Ms Mukarwego could hear other Batsutsis screaming, because they were tortured next to the house.

By the end of the month of May, she was nearly dead. She became unconscious until the end of the genocide in July.

After the genocide, she could not recognize people around her, even her children. She was scared of her own son and of men in general: she thought that all men were rapists.

She was scared to go out of her house and she was ashamed of what she had lived.

During a whole year, all I could smell and taste was sperm. This odor followed me everywhere. I had always nausea.

After, she discovered an association for women that were victim of rape: *Rwanda Women's Network*. With this organization, she received some training, counseling and therapies. Most of the women there suffered from gynecological, psychological and self-esteem problems. Those women were often marginalized by the population.

After a few days, there are no scars of a rape. But morally, the victim continues to suffer every day of her life.

After 13 years of therapy, Ms Mukarwego still lives with the burden of the rapes she has suffered.

A rape is worst than a weapon: a weapon kills entirely, but a rape destroys morally and psychologically, living the person alive.

After being raped by 500 men, she didn't get infected by HIV. She then understood that she was living for the others and that she had to help them.

A lot of women that were raped during the genocide now are HIV positive. Some of them were raped in front of their children.

Ms Mukarwego served as a coordinator at *Village of Hope*, an organization of 20 houses that brings support for women raped in the genocide and infected with HIV. She also taught local women how to support themselves through income-generating activities. She also defended and raised awareness about HIV/AIDS infected people.

Today, Ms Mukarwego is 48 years old and has been living in Canada for a year. She has attended many conferences where she shared her story of hope. She also took part of the documentary "mère courages".

When I transmit this message, I aim particularly at men, that are our brothers, our fathers and our children that we love. To the men that fight amongst themselves. It is the women that are the victims of the violence of men. I ask men to be the messengers of women victim of violence. Imagine if men could fight on women's side.

Period of questions and answers

- Q. There are no words to describe the courage of Ms. Mukarwego in sharing her story. Apologies from a human being to another human being for the inaction of the international community.
- Q. Modern war found a new weapon: the rape of women. What role can we play? Is it a preventive role? Is it a reaction? How can we react?
- Q. Apologies on behalf of all the men.
- R. Rape is a worldwide problem. A lot of women don't talk about it. It's a shame, usually rapists are not the ones that apologies. It is the victims that apologies. Thank you for your apologies. We need to unite against rape.