

# Rethinking

## Domestic Violence

A Training Process for Community Activists

Dipak Naker & Lori Michau



© Raising Voices, 2004  
All Rights Reserved

ISBN: 9970 - 893 - 00 - 9

Rethinking Domestic Violence: A Training Process for Community Activists

Written by: Dipak Naker and Lori Michau

Artwork by: Marco Tibasima

Design by: Samson Mwaka

Any part of this publication may be reproduced for non-profit purposes, provided that full attribution is made to Raising Voices.

Raising Voices  
Plot 16 Tufnell Drive, Kamwokya  
PO Box 6770  
Kampala, Uganda  
Tel: +256 (0)41 531186  
Tel: +256 (0)71 839626  
Fax: +256 (0)41 531249  
Email: [info@raisingvoices.org](mailto:info@raisingvoices.org)  
Website: [www.raisingvoices.org](http://www.raisingvoices.org)

# Rethinking

## Domestic Violence

### A Training Process for Community Activists

#### was developed by



Raising Voices works to prevent violence against women and children. We develop program tools and work in partnership with community-based non-governmental organizations to strengthen violence prevention programs and advocate for broader use of social change approaches.

#### in collaboration with



The Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP) is a registered local non-governmental organization in Kampala, Uganda. CEDOVIP works in partnership with communities to promote women's rights by influencing a change of attitudes and practices that perpetuate violence against women.

#### with the generous support of



## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section One: Becoming Aware of Gender and Rights.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Session 1.1 Women’s Reality.....	18
Session 1.2 Gender Roles People Play.....	22
Session 1.3 What Do You Believe?..	26
Session 1.4 Women’s Contributions .....	30
Session 1.5 Masculinity.....	32
Session 1.6 Femininity and Women’s Identity .....	36
Session 1.7 Relationships with Women .....	38
Session 1.8 Hot Debate: Do we need a ‘Head of the Household’?.....	40
Session 1.9 Human Rights: What are they? How do we get them?.....	42
Session 1.10 Women’s Rights.....	44
Session 1.11 Human Rights: A Global Concern .....	46
<b>Section Two: Deepening Understanding of Domestic Violence .....</b>	<b>48</b>
Session 2.1 Domestic Violence: An Overview.....	50
Session 2.2 The Experience of Domestic Violence .....	52
Session 2.3 Our Own Stories .....	54
Session 2.4 Roots of Domestic Violence .....	56
Session 2.5 Consequences for Women and their Families .....	58
Session 2.6 Consequences for the Community .....	60
Session 2.7 Cycle of Violence .....	62
<b>Section Three: Developing Skills to Prevent Domestic Violence .....</b>	<b>66</b>
Session 3.1 Skills and Personal Qualities .....	68
Session 3.2 Listening and Being Heard .....	70
Session 3.3 Roadblocks to Listening.....	72

Session 3.4	Effective Listening .....	74
Session 3.5	Facilitation Skills.....	76
Session 3.6	Developing Community Drama.....	78
Session 3.7	Seeing is Believing.....	80
Session 3.8	Using Stories to Raise Awareness.....	84
Session 3.9	Creating Learning Materials.....	88
Session 3.10	Learning through Games .....	90
<b>Section Four: Taking Action to Prevent Domestic Violence .....</b>		<b>92</b>
Session 4.1	Breaking the Silence .....	94
Session 4.2	A Process of Change.....	96
Session 4.3	Assessment Before Action .....	100
Session 4.4	Working Together.....	102
Session 4.5	Advocacy for Change. ....	104
Session 4.6	Taking Action.....	106
Session 4.7	Developing Action Plans .....	108
Session 4.8	Supporting Each Other .....	110
Session 4.9	Personal Motivations.....	
<b>Final Word .....</b>		<b>113</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>		<b>114</b>
Appendix 1:	Games Directory .....	116
Appendix 2:	Domestic Violence Info Sheet .....	121
Appendix 3:	Human Rights Info Sheet .....	123
Appendix 4:	Creating Learning Materials .....	125
Appendix 5:	Pretesting Learning Materials .....	128
Appendix 6:	Understanding Individual Behaviour Change .....	129
Appendix 7:	Action Plan Sheet .....	130
Appendix 8:	Action Plan Guidelines .....	131
Appendix 9:	Sample Action Plan .....	132
Appendix 10:	Further Resources .....	134

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, our gratitude goes to all the participants and colleagues from many workshops and learning processes we have developed and facilitated over the years. Our perspective about and belief in a participatory approach has been nurtured by their participation and knowledge. They have taught us that learning is a personal journey, and that the best qualities a facilitator can bring to a process are humility and humor.

We would like to thank staff at the Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP) in Uganda for field-testing this tool. Special thanks go to the many facilitators who used the sessions outlined in the following pages with their own groups, and provided detailed comments. In particular we would like to thank Hope Turyasingura, Bernard Byagageire, Betty Akullo, Tina Musuya, Josephine Kamisya, Christine Apiot, Rose Muduwa, and Dennis Kizito. This work has been immensely strengthened by their feedback and innovations.

The playful images throughout the publication were done by long-time friend and colleague, Marco Tibasima. We feel blessed that his art graces and enlivens the pages. We also thank Rachel Rinaldo whose careful eye for detail helped bring this publication to print.

Our gratitude also goes to CIDA's Gender Equity Support Project II, the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Kampala, American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and the Moriah Fund. It is only with their generous support that we were able to conceptualize, develop, test and publish this work.

This publication is a result of the contributions and combined efforts of these, and many other colleagues and participants, too numerous to name here. Its shortcomings, however, are entirely our own responsibility. We hope you will find the ideas in the following pages useful and welcome your comments and feedback.

**This Training Process is** a tool for strengthening the capacity of a wide range of community members to prevent domestic violence. It is a series of training sessions that can be used individually or as a part of a longer process. It will help participants think about, discuss and take action to prevent domestic violence. It is a practical tool for trainers and activists who want to begin a process of change in their community.

**This Training Process is for you if** you are interested in helping community members learn about and prevent domestic violence. You might be:

- A trainer working with an NGO
- An activist who wants to help people talk about and take action against domestic violence
- A police officer, community leader, health care worker, teacher, religious leader or a professional who wants to help your colleagues, clients or fellow community members to better understand domestic violence
- A member of a group of women, men or youth interested in promoting women's rights
- Anyone who is interested in women's right to safety who wants to work with others to prevent domestic violence

You do not need to be an expert! The most important qualities you need are a commitment to prevent domestic violence, a willingness to use participatory learning techniques and respect for the participants with whom you will be working.

### **The sessions in the Training Process can be used as**

- Independent activities during any training process
- Part of regular capacity building of a selected group of people, for example, weekly or monthly sessions with staff or community groups
- Four separate workshops held over 9 to 18 months with follow up support to participants in between the workshops
- A resource for adaptation to fit your needs and objectives

### **Resources required include**

- A safe and private space where you can work with the participants without disturbance
- Somewhere to record participants' contributions (flipchart and marker pens or blackboard and chalk, etc.)
- Occasional photocopying of the handouts included in this book

**Before you begin the process** it is important to review the table of contents so that you have an overview of the sessions suggested. Also read the overview of each section so you can choose the sessions that meet your objectives and needs.

**Before you begin a session,** read through it and plan how you will facilitate the session. Look through the 'preparations' section to make sure you have all the materials ready prior to conducting the session. Feel free to write your thoughts in the margins of this book or make notes that will help you during the process. You may choose to facilitate the activity as described or adapt it for your group. Once you are familiar with the steps and the intent of the session, allow your creativity and personal experience to flow.

## **The Training Process is organised in six parts.**

### **Introduction**

This section will give you an overview of the work, a brief description of the ideas behind the approach and some tips on how to facilitate the process.

### **Section One: Becoming Aware of Gender and Rights**

In this section, you will explore the belief system in your community that allows domestic violence to continue to occur. You will explore ideas about gender and discuss what it means to be a good man or a woman in your community. Together, you will learn about women's rights and where we get these rights from and discuss why women's rights are important and who has the obligation to protect them.

### **Section Two: Deepening Understanding of Domestic Violence**

In this section, you will explore with your group how they understand domestic violence, what their experience has been and what some of the consequences have been for their community. It is an opportunity to help participants think about their personal experiences and come to a deeper understanding of why action is necessary.

### **Section Three: Developing Skills to Prevent Domestic Violence**

In this section, you will identify skills and personal qualities needed to prevent domestic violence. You will discuss and practice using practical skills, such as listening skills. You will also discuss the importance of, and practice using tools that can help participants take creative action.

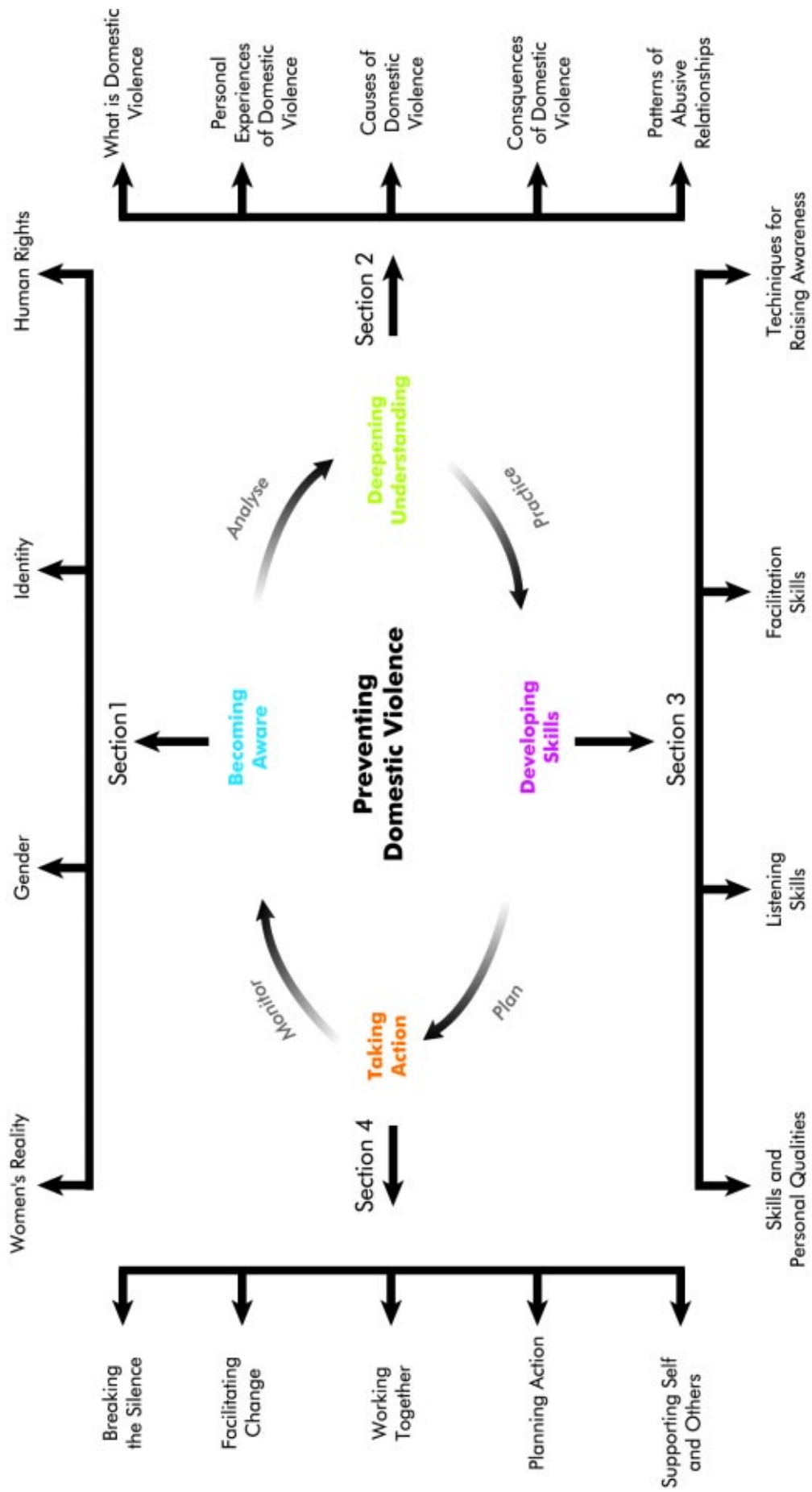
### **Section Four: Taking Action to Prevent Domestic Violence**

In this section, you will discuss the importance of breaking the silence around domestic violence. You will, as individuals or small groups, develop action plans and discuss how you will support each other to maintain this initiative. You will also discuss how you will apply in your own lives, what you have learned together and how you will inspire others to take action.

### **Appendices**

In this section you will find information about how you can monitor and evaluate the process you have been undertaking. You will also find ideas on what else you can do once you have managed to strengthen the capacity of people in your community. In the appendices, you will find additional information that can help you as you are facilitating the process to deepen your knowledge about the work of preventing domestic violence. You will also find handouts, and learning tools to help you carry out the sessions.





## What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is any act, or threat of an act, that causes physical, sexual, emotional or economic harm in an intimate relationship.

- Physical violence includes beating, hitting, slapping, burning or choking a person.
- Sexual violence includes forced sex (rape), refusal to practice safe sex or forcing a person to do sexual acts against their will.
- Emotional violence includes threatening, intimidating, shouting, isolating or humiliating a person.
- Economic violence includes not allowing a person to work, taking all her earnings or not allowing her to participate in financial decision-making.

Domestic violence happens between people who are in an intimate relationship (i.e., marriage or cohabiting in the same house). At its core, domestic violence is about power and control over another person. It is about absence of equality and the low status of a woman in her relationship. In this way, domestic violence can be understood as a *context of a woman's life, not just an event*.

## Why focus on domestic violence against women?

While women experience violence in all aspects of their lives, by far the most common form of violence is the one that occurs within the home. It is estimated that around the world, a third of all women have at some point in their life or are currently experiencing domestic violence (Heise et al., 1999). Experience from many different places in the world has shown that while some men do experience domestic violence, *most* of the domestic violence is suffered by women and children (WHO 1997). Most of the violence against women is perpetrated by the men they know, and usually are in an intimate relationship with, as husbands or partners. In some places, the violent man might also be a father, brother or a relative. This violence has far reaching consequences for women as a group and the community they live in.

*In this Training Pack, we have chosen to focus mainly on violence perpetrated by men against women within the home.* This is not to imply that children don't suffer violence within the home. Clearly, they do. However, the strategies and analysis required to address these problems are different and mixing them might create confusion.

## Why does domestic violence occur?

Many people believe that men have a higher status as a human being compared to women, and as a result, in most communities, women are valued less than the men around them. Many men are socialised to think of women, especially their wives, as a person over whom they should have power. Because of this belief system, the community develops customs and norms that creates acceptable ways of behaving in that community. For example, in many communities men feel justified in using physical and psychological violence to control their wives' or partner's behaviour.

## 8

When society imposes behavioural roles like this (e.g., who is the head of the household or who should cook and clean), they are called *gender roles*. *Gender* is a set of behavioural

options that are given to women and men by the society they live in, that tells them how a man or a woman should behave. This is different from the sex of a person, which is a biological reality. The roles imposed by the biological sex of a person are fixed (e.g., who can give birth or breast-feed), but gender roles are socially imposed, and as a result, can be changed. In most cultures, the gender roles given to women force women into a lower position to men — this is called *gender-based inequity*. The work of preventing domestic violence is to help community members redefine these gender roles such that they promote equity between women and men.

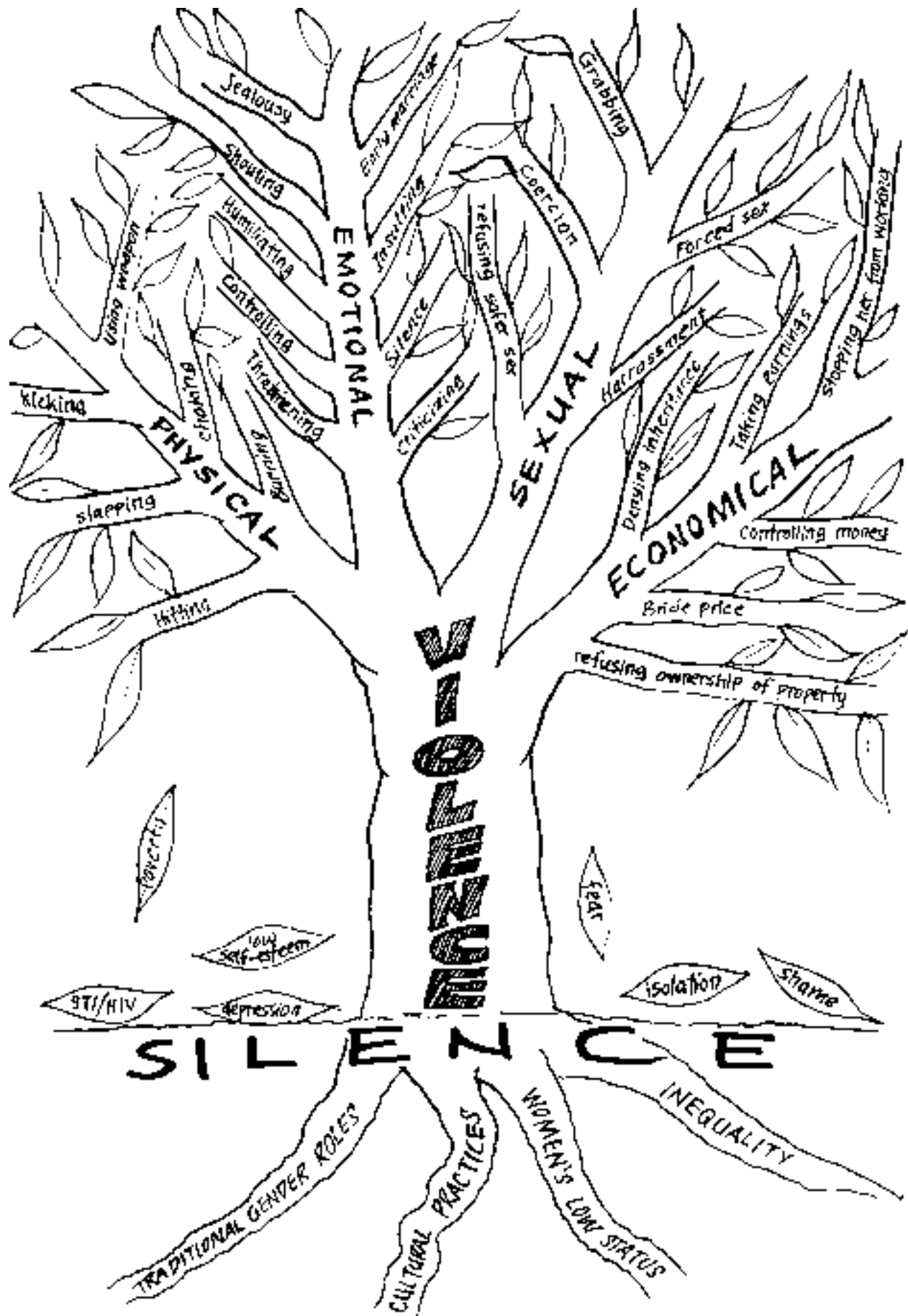
When women and men are seen to be unequal in worth as human beings, men feel they are justified in asserting power and control over their partners. When a husband beats his wife because as a head of the household, he sees it as his duty to ‘discipline’ his wife, this is an example of *gender-based violence*. *All domestic violence against women and girls is gender-based violence*. Many people think that alcohol, poverty or personal problems are what causes domestic violence. These are factors that may trigger the violence, but they are not the root causes of violence. *The root cause of domestic violence is the inequality of power in intimate relationships based on gender inequity.*

### Why is preventing domestic violence important?

Domestic violence affects the entire community. Because of the violence or its threat, women cannot make free and informed choices about issues that have a deep effect on their lives. Domestic violence undermines a woman’s health, placing a burden on her as well as the community’s resources. A woman’s inability to fully participate in the economic development of her family and the community, keeps her locked in a cycle of poverty and has long-term consequences for her family. The exclusion of women from communal and social decision making processes impoverishes the entire community.

Women’s lower status in their community is an underlying cause of violence and an issue that touches all other aspects of our lives. When we understand why domestic violence occurs, we can see the connection it has to many other problems that individuals, families and communities face. *By addressing the root causes of domestic violence, we also address causes of many other problems that affect our communities.*





## Key ideas in preventing domestic violence

First, it is important to recognise that domestic violence *is not a woman's problem but a concern of the whole community*. Since gender inequity is the root cause of violence and gender is a result of the community's beliefs about women and men, everyone needs to participate in changing this core value system that undervalues women.

Second, it is important to recognise that *change is a process, not a single event*. To influence an entire community to change its beliefs about women and men will require time and involvement of a wide range of community members. Key decision makers, opinion leaders, professionals as well as 'ordinary' members within the community; all have to be convinced that reviewing their expectations of gender roles is in the community's best interest.

Third, it is important to recognise that raising awareness of the issue is not enough. For a community to change, *there needs to be a clear and visible action from a wide range of people* who endorse the new value, who publicly pronounce their support for gender equity and demonstrate as role models a different way of behaving.

Finally, it requires the patient work of persuading as many community members as possible that *it is in the personal interests of all community members to take an active role* in creating more equitable norms and customs that create equality between women and men.

Preventing domestic violence requires persistence, creativity, stamina and skill. It requires people like you to begin taking action. We hope this training process will help you and members of your community to take action!

# Participatory Learning

## What is Participatory Learning?

Participatory learning may be different from what you are used to. It is not usually used in schools and other conventional learning environments. Instead of the customary teacher-student relationship, the participatory learning method uses a facilitator who guides the group and encourages participants to take an active role in their own learning process. The learning process taps into the wealth of experience that participants have and uses it for collective problem solving. Participatory learning has proven very useful for promoting social change and working with participants who may not be used to being students.

Conventional learning and participatory learning are both useful methodologies. The best method to use depends on the objectives of the process. The sessions described in this Training process are based on a participatory method of learning. The following table summarises some of the differences between participatory learning and conventional learning.



## What is Facilitation?

Participatory learning is *facilitated*, not taught. Facilitation involves using specific skills that enable participants to share, learn from, and use their experience to develop solutions to their situation.

Facilitation begins from the assumption that the participants are the experts on issues that affect their lives. It emphasises that everyone has valuable experiences and knowledge that will help the group solve the problems of their community. Thus, the role of the facilitator is to use her/his facilitation skills to help participants to learn from their experiences, deepen their understanding of issues of importance to them, and find ways of applying their learning to their personal life.

### Participatory Learning

- Values personal experience
- Participants and facilitator share power in the learning environment
- Everyone contributes to the learning process
- Based on mutual respect and collective responsibility between participants
- Aims to create safety during the learning experiences
- Encourages risk taking and diversity of experiences
- Values emotions as well as logical thinking
- Values co-operation among participants
- Encourages creative and critical thinking
- Focuses on building skills that affect one's personal life

### Conventional Learning

- Values objective facts and knowledge
- Teacher holds all the power in a classroom style setting
- Teacher gives students information
- Values obedience and 'good behaviour'
- Creates fear of authority figure or a teacher
- Focuses on correct answers and success
- Values logical thinking and discounts emotion
- Fosters competition between students
- Values memory based learning
- Usually focuses on imparting theoretical knowledge

## Developing Facilitation Skills

There are several important skills that a facilitator can develop and use to create a safe and a dynamic learning environment. Some of these skills are listed below with tips for how to use them.

### a) *Develop a relationship of trust with the participants.*

- Be respectful, honest, open, and friendly before, during and after the process.
- Conduct group work while sitting in a circle, whenever possible, the way people do in informal discussions. Sitting behind desks or tables may intimidate some participants and create a competitive setting for others.
- Encourage and value all the participants' contributions.
- Establish an informal and comfortable atmosphere using your words and actions.
- Emphasise that you are learning and growing through the process as well; avoid presenting yourself as the expert.
- Share openly the objectives of the process and address the expectations that the participants may have.

### b) *Structure the learning process in an understandable and meaningful way.*

- Think and plan ahead about how to facilitate each activity so that the participants can feel that you are a reliable and credible person.
- Keep time and negotiate any major schedule changes with the participants.
- Share the timetable. Explain the flow of the process and obtain agreement. Be willing to modify the schedule if the group suggests alternatives.

### c) *Enable the participants to share their experiences meaningfully.*

- Develop ground rules with participants at the beginning of the process to share responsibility for the outcome of your work together.
- Create a safe way for participants to introduce themselves to the group at the beginning of the process and thus help them feel that they are members of the group. A fun activity often works well.
- Protect shy and vulnerable participants from being forced into silence or revealing personal information inappropriately.
- Delegate some of the 'disciplinarian' roles to nominated members such as time keeping, monitoring whether the objectives are being met, etc.
- Ask open-ended questions that help participants expand on what they're sharing and that help the group broaden their discussions.
- Emphasise in words and actions that all contributions are valid. Build on and make links between participants' contributions instead of searching for 'right answers'.
- Avoid pressuring participants or singling them out to share their views (i.e., calling on participants, when they are not ready, putting people on the spot, etc.). This may inhibit the participants and make them anxious about getting it wrong.



- Clarify what participants contribute using gentle probing questions and by repeating back what you think is being said.
  - Invite elaboration without embarrassing participants by using neutral questions such as “Can you say more?”
  - Extract meaning from a set of contributions by summarising them and linking them to form a collective understanding.
- d) *Intervene if you feel the group’s objectives are being compromised.*
- Seek contributions from different participants if one or two of them are dominating the group.
  - Have a private word with a participant if s/he is promoting an agenda for personal instead of collective learning or one that opposes the group’s learning objectives.
  - Focus the discussion if it is becoming diffuse and straying from the objective of the workshop.
  - Boost the energy of the group by introducing a game or a physical activity, especially if energy is low during a demanding discussion or the heat of the afternoon.
- e) *Ensure that the work remains a learning process.*
- Summarise frequently, and always summarise at the end of each activity to highlight the collective learning that has occurred.
  - End each session with an overview of the discussions and, if appropriate, questions for reflection until the next session.
  - Begin each new session with an overview of the previous session’s work and with an opportunity for participants to contribute reflections.
  - Conduct an oral evaluation of the process and a written evaluation if appropriate. This allows the participants to come to a collective emotional understanding of the process.
  - Ensure, whenever possible, that participants have had an opportunity to think about what they will do practically with what they have learned.
  - Discuss, if appropriate, what support the participants will need, and who from, to apply what they have learned.

Every time you facilitate a learning process, the participants are placing their trust in you and therefore placing on you the responsibility to be as effective as you can be. Becoming an effective facilitator is primarily about having respect for the participants you are working with. If you begin with that, then the rest will come with experience and practice. It is also important to believe in your ability to make a meaningful contribution to the development of the participants. Keep learning from each process you facilitate and, above all, make it fun!