CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR SCADeP IN GBV

Gender Myths & Stereotypes

ANTHONY K. SAM

RESEARCH MONITORING & EVALUATION

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Myths

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  - Conquering stereotyping
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Deconstructing myths

Statement about GBV on flip charts – Gender myths

The perpetrators of violence are a minority group of men with mental health issues	*Poverty or war leads to attacks on and abuse of women*	*Gender-based violence is caused by substance abuse such as alcohol and/or drugs*	*Gender-based violence is an inevitable part of intimate partner relations*	*Violence against women is an inherent part of maleness or a natural expression of male sexual urges.*

Activity– *all move to stmt on chart/read aloud/choice of true or false/ respondent's view. Facilitate brief discussions around response.*

Clarifications

Myth	Facts (for clarification)
1.The perpetrators of violence are a minority group of men with mental health issues	• Violence may be perpetrated by those with mental health problems, but it is by no means a behavior related only to those who are mentally ill. • Violence, and GBV in particular, is a common occurrence worldwide. • It is a socially and culturally learned behavior.
2.Poverty or war leads to attacks on and abuse of women	• Poverty and war may intensify levels of violence. • Some studies have found these phenomena to be risk factors for gender-based violence. • There are many individuals living in poverty or war who are not violent toward women • There are many individuals in higher economic status or non-conflict settings that are violent toward women

Clarification condt (@plenary)

Myth	Facts (for clarification)
3.Gender-based violence is caused by substance abuse such as alcohol and/or drugs	• Substance can make potential survivors more vulnerable to violence. • First, it may lower shyness on the side of the perpetrator. • For the potential survivors, it may damage judgment and cause them to make decisions that put them in situations that increase their risk for abuse or prevent them from defending themselves. • It is important to recognize that neither alcohol nor drugs nor the victim should be blamed in these situations. • Violence against women is unacceptable under all circumstances.
4.Gender-based violence is an unavoidable part of intimate partner relations	• Disagreements and disputes may be inevitable parts of intimate partner relations. • However, violence as a way to resolve those disputes is not. • Violence is a learned behavior and can be unlearned.

Clarifications contd (@plenary)

Myth	Facts (for clarification)
5.Violence against women is an inherent part of maleness or a natural expression of male sexual urges.	• Male violence is not genetically based • It is perpetuated by a model of masculinity that permits and even encourages men to be aggressive. • It is up to us as individuals, communities, SCADeP PCU, IPs and as a society to change these gender norms so that violence against women is not accepted or tolerated.

What the statements /views are

- All of these statements are **actually myths** about gender-based violence. ***A myth is a story that was made up by people who wanted to explain how or why our world works, how we can treat others and why things happen. It is a Greek word meaning word of mouth***.
- They **attempt to explain GBV** or **justify** it
- Such views lead to a **perception that GBV is uncommon** or exceptional and/or that it is caused by factors outside of men's control.
- They are **used as justifications** for violence.
- These views place the responsibility on women to ensure that they minimize the chances of their behavior instigating violence.

Justifications for violence

Justifications for violence are frequently based on **gender norms**

- Gender norms are the **socially assigned roles** and **responsibilities** of women and men.
- **Cultural and social norms** often socialize men to be aggressive, powerful, unemotional, and controlling. This contributes to a social expectation (by both men and women) that accepts men as dominant.
- Similarly, **expectations of women** are that they be **passive, nurturing**, **submissive**, and **emotional**. This reinforces **women's roles** as *weak*, *powerless*, and *dependent on men*.
- The socialization of both men and women has resulted in an unequal balance of power and unequal power relationships between women and men.
- In many societies, **children learn that men are dominant** and that ***violence is an acceptable means of asserting power and resolving conflict.***
- **Women** as mothers and mothers-in-law **unknowingly perpetuate violence** by socializing boys and girls to accept the dominance of men and by agreeing throughout life to men's demands.

Traditional myths in Sierra Leone & religious myths

- **Traditional myths in Sierra Leone**
  - Mental health illnesses are caused by witchcraft, curses, evil spirits or punishment of having bad people in the family
  - Ebola outbreak in SL was sparked by a bewitched aircraft that crashed on a remote part of SL
  - It is bad to breast feed while simultaneously have sex with a spouse
  - If a woman has sex while on her menses, she will give birth to an albino
- **Religious myths**
  - You must respect others views
  - Religion is the foundation of morality/ethics
  - Prayer works

Our own cultural norms and thoughts above GBV

- **Discussion-** Participants share their own cultural norms and thoughts about GBV.
- These are captured on flip chart for reporting.

Stereotypes- a video on gender stereotype for discussion

Gender Stereotype

- Discussion questions:
  - What is gender role theory?
  - How do we conquer stereotyping?
  - What are different connotations that can be identified when stereotyping?
  - Are roles in society different for men and women?
  - Are those differences diminishing?

Gender stereotypes- key facts

- Gender stereotyping involves how men and women are expected to act, speak, dress, conduct themselves based on their sex
- These are preconceived roles
- They limit men's and women's capacity to pursue professional careers
- They prevent men and women from making individual choices about their lives

Stereotypes about women

- Women are supposed to have ‘clean jobs’ e.g secretaries, teachers, librarians, seamstress
- Women are nurses
- Women are not as strong as men
- Women should be in the kitchen
- xxxxxx

Thank you

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