

## The impact of violence on women's participation in decision making

- Duration:** 120 minutes
- Purpose:** Map and identify the different forms of violence against women in the community.  
Reflect on the impact of violence in the participation of women in decision-making.
- Materials:** Flipchart paper, markers (different colors), post-it notes (five different colors: one for each form of violence) and reference sheet: *"Violence against women, children and/or youth"*.
- Rights:** Right to life, liberty and security implicit in the articles 3 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); Article 2 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), right to freedom from violence implicit in the articles 1, 2 and 4 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW).
- Life skills:** Critical thinking, decision making/problem solving.
- Facilitation tips:** This activity may be split in two different meetings to accommodate for time. In case you choose to split this activity, complete Part A during the first meeting and make sure you keep the map that will be generated by the group (you will need it when you complete Parts B, C and D on a subsequent meeting).

### 40 min Part A Mapping violence in our community



1. Assign participants to small groups (4-5 individuals) and distribute flipchart papers, markers and post-it notes (five different colors) to each group.
2. Ask group members to draw a map of their community on the flipchart paper. In their map, they should include places where women, children and/or youth in particular can be found, such as their homes, schools, bus stations, community centres, parks, religious centres, shopping centres, hospital and health centres.

3. Ask group members to use their post-it notes to list the different forms of violence faced by women in their communities (request participants to select a different post-it color for each form of violence: physical, verbal, moral and psychological, economic, sexual). Instruct group members to use the reference sheet “Violence against women, children and youth” for a detailed explanation on the different forms of violence they are requested to list.
  4. Once group members finish listing the different forms of violence that women face, ask them to place their post-it notes in the different places in their community map (the ones they’ve identified in step 2 above) where these violence forms usually take place. Depending on the situation of each community, different forms of violence may occur in a same place in their map.
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**30 min      Part B      Role-playing: forms of violence in the community**

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, defines violence against women as:

- *“...any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”<sup>1</sup>*

This activity provides group members with an opportunity to illustrate a scenario of violence from their community in a role-play.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: WHO. (1997). Violence against women. Definition and scope of the problem. Retrieved Online: <http://www.who.int/gender/violence/v4.pdf>

1. In advance, copy the table below on a flipchart:

Violence against a...	Violence in the ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wife</li> <li>• Husband</li> <li>• Teenager (girl or boy)</li> <li>• Child (girl or boy)</li> <li>• Person with a disability</li> <li>• Person with HIV/AIDs</li> <li>• An elderly person (woman or man)</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home</li> <li>• Market</li> <li>• School</li> <li>• Hospital</li> <li>• Bar</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>

2. Ask group members to divide into teams (4-5 individuals) and create a short 1 to 2-minute role play, which reflects a typical scenario of violence in their community.
3. Using the suggestions in the table above, the teams will select an individual or group whom experiences violence, and a location where the violence takes place. The role play should clearly illustrate where the scenario is taking place and who is affected by the violence.
4. Give teams 10 minutes to prepare their role-play.
5. Invite each team to perform their role-plays. Invite the rest of the group to comment and ask questions.
6. Review reference sheet “*Violence against women, children and youth*” with group members and validate the definitions of the different forms of violence against women, children and/or youth.

**30 min**  
**participation**

**Part C**

**Reflecting on the impact of violence on women’s**

1. Return to the community maps (created in Part A) and ask group members to gather around the community map they created and do the following:
  - Use a red marker to circle on the map places in the community where women experience violence

- Use a green marker to circle on the map places that are considered safe and free from violence for women.
2. Invite group members to present their map and then ask them the following questions:
- Are there places in the community that have not been identified on the map? What should we add?
  - What are the places where women and girls face violence? Why?
  - How do the instances of violence in your community impact the participation of women in decision-making?
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**20 min      Part D      Final reflections**

*Feel...*

- What are your perceptions in regards to this activity?

*Think...*

- What resources are there in the community to protect women from violence?
- What resources are available if someone is abused?

*Act...*

- What can we do to make our community a safer place for women, children and/or youth?

**End of activity ■**

## Reference sheet: Violence against women, children and/or youth

### Defining violence

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, defines **violence against women** as:

*“any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”*

According to the World Report on Violence and Health, violence against children is child abuse or maltreatment that:

*“...constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”*

The definitions below encompass physical, emotional and sexual forms of violence.

### Forms of violence

Violence is not limited to physical abuse. It includes abusive words, actions and criminal acts that seek to degrade humiliate or harm any individual. Forms of violence include the following:

- **Physical violence:** beatings, attacks, mutilations, murder,
- **Verbal violence:** insults, shouting, angry and demeaning words.
- **Moral and psychological abuse:** neglect, stigmatization, marginalization, denigration, accusations of being a bearer of bad omens, denial of paternity, accusation of witchcraft
- **Economic violence:** family abandonment, refusal to pay support, refusal to deal with family obligations, obstructing economic activity of women, domestic exploitation
- **Sexual violence:** rape, incest, pedophilia, sexual harassment, early marriage, sexual exploitation, sexual marginalization, FGM
- **Domestic violence** which encompasses all of the above forms of violence

Some of the factors that contribute to these forms of violence are described below .

#### Sources:

WHO. (1997). Violence against women. Definition and scope of the problem. Retrieved Online: <http://www.who.int/gender/violence/v4.pdf>

UNICEF (2011). Violence Against Children in Tanzania Report. Retrieved Online: [http://www.unicef.org/media/files/VIOLENCE\\_AGAINST\\_CHILDREN\\_IN\\_TANZANIA\\_REPORT.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/files/VIOLENCE_AGAINST_CHILDREN_IN_TANZANIA_REPORT.pdf)

## Reference sheet: Violence against women, children and/or youth (cont'd)

### Factors that contribute to violence

All forms of violence are related to power and the prerogatives of those who hold authority. Violence is encouraged by ignorance, so-called religious and cultural norms, and lack of educational and financial resources to tackle its causes.

The dominant **patriarchal ideology** continues to structure the social, political and economic rules almost everywhere, which results in the exploitation and oppression of vulnerable groups, including women and children. **The feminization of poverty** supported by these kinds of unequal relationships greatly hinders women's and girls' access to resources and consequently their empowerment and capacity to address their basic needs. The consequences of violence against women and children are described below.

### Consequences of violence against women and children

Violence not only has immediate physical and emotional impacts, it silences women and is a major **barrier to gender equality**. It can negatively impact the participation and engagement of women in various aspects of life and society.

**Domestic violence** can have further impacts for children and leads to high social and economic costs. Women may suffer isolation, inability to work, loss of wages, lack of participation in activities of daily life and limited ability to care for themselves and their children.

**Violence against children and youth** can have a profound impact on core aspects of emotional, behavioural, and physical health as well as their social development throughout their lives.

The **sexual exploitation of children** often results in serious physical, mental and social consequences including injury and disability, early pregnancy, pregnancy complications and maternal mortality, cognitive development issues and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

#### Sources:

Statistics Canada. (2013). Section 3: Impact of violence against women. Retrieved Online: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766/11766-3-eng.htm>

WHO (2014). Violence against women—Intimate partner and sexual violence against women. Retrieved online: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>

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