

GUIDE TO PREVENTING
AND MITIGATING

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN A CONTEXT OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

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WHY THIS GUIDE?

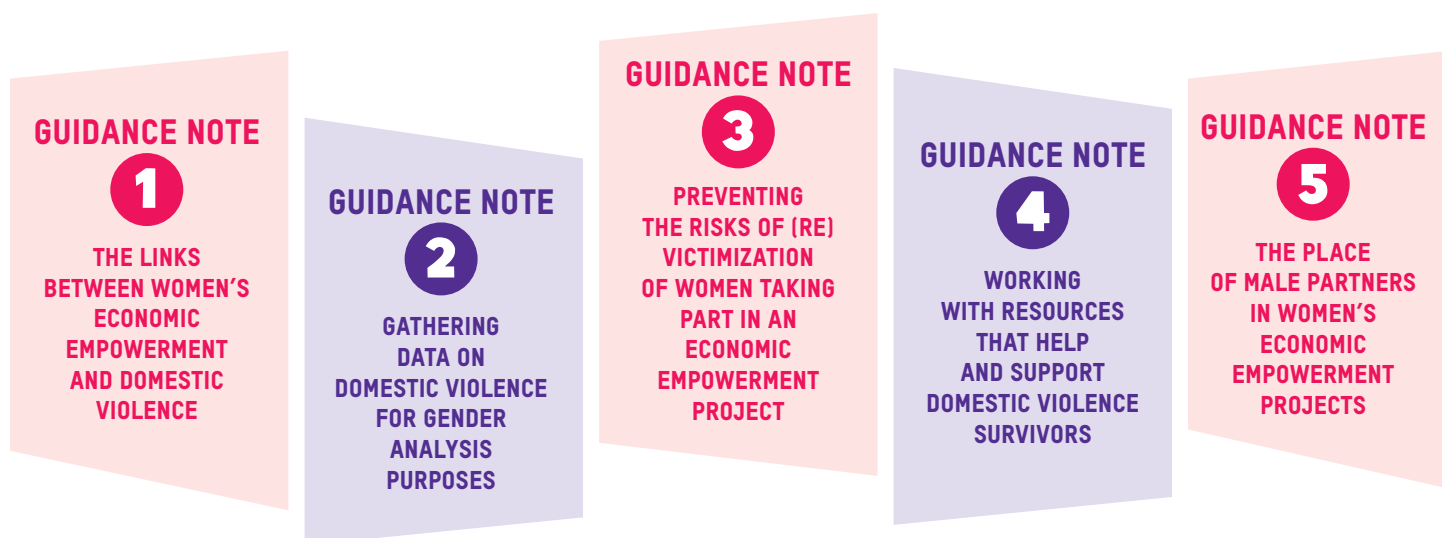
This guide forms part of a research-action initiative¹ that began in 2016 in collaboration with the research team Équipe Violence Conjugale and the Knowledge Hub, led jointly by Oxfam-Québec and Oxfam Canada, on violence against women and girls (VAWG) and gender-based violence (GBV). The research initiative responds to a number of priorities identified by members of the network (Oxfam members and partners), one being to design a practical guide – aimed at personnel in programs not specializing in gender and putting forward concrete strategies and actions – to help better understand, prevent and mitigate the dynamics of domestic violence (DV) related to women’s economic empowerment (WEE) projects. This guide was developed in 2019–2020 based on a *review of the literature*, a *participatory research* effort conducted with Oxfam teams and partners in Burkina Faso and Occupied Palestinian Territory, and, finally, a co-creation workshop held in Montréal with multidisciplinary actors from various horizons.

The need for a guide of this kind results from the growing awareness in the international development community that economic empowerment programs may potentially increase women’s risk of experiencing gender-based violence, particularly in the home.

Development practitioners must therefore ensure that programs are implemented in such a way as to minimize the risks for all participants. This involves understanding risk and prevention factors and implementing appropriate measures and resources to help mitigate these risks in order to guarantee that women’s economic empowerment programs give women the intended tools and opportunities without exposing them to violence.

WHAT IS THIS GUIDE?

This guide is a tool for developing and implementing strategies to combat gender-based violence, and more specifically domestic violence. It contains five guidance notes on key subjects related to the prevention and mitigation of domestic violence in the field of women’s economic empowerment.



¹ Research developed as part of the ACCESS Innovation program (2015–2020) funded by Global Affairs Canada.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE AIMED AT

This guide is chiefly intended for economic development practitioners. We hope it will help readers engage more effectively in combating gender-based violence, by making use of it ahead of their interventions and also by allying themselves with organizations that specialize in the issue.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The whole guide is designed to be a reference tool for professionals seeking to integrate the issue of domestic violence into the various stages of a women's economic empowerment project. This integration process is essential in the identification, planning and implementation phases of projects (see diagram 1, page 4), but it also affects other phases of a project's management cycle.

Each guidance note begins with an explanation of its objectives, and then sets out a specific problem together with practical recommendations for addressing the issues involved. Examples (in Burkina Faso and Occupied Palestinian Territory), together with additional tools and resources, are also presented to facilitate the appropriation and implementation of the practical recommendations suggested.

> Future avenues

The guide is also an evolving document that will be enhanced with the lessons generated by its use. Further guidance notes will be added to provide information on the exit, evaluation and scaling-up phases.

GUIDANCE NOTES THAT MIGHT BE DEVELOPED TO EXTEND THIS GUIDE:



DIAGRAM 1.

USING THE GUIDANCE NOTES DURING THE FIVE PHASES OF A PROJECT'S CYCLE



GLOSSARY

This glossary is provided as an aid to understanding the vocabulary used in the guide to describe the main concepts related to the themes addressed. The definitions that follow are taken from a number of sources, but mainly from work and publications by Oxfam International¹.

ATTITUDE



Attitude means what a person feels about a thing or behaviour, how they perceive it and how they judge it; it involves a positive or negative evaluation of something. Attitudes may be shaped by social norms, customs, religious or family teaching, or by life experiences, among other factors. Like social norms, attitudes can encourage or discourage violent behaviours.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE / FAMILY VIOLENCE



Refers to a wide range of violent behaviour occurring within a relationship based on an emotional bond of family, intimacy, dependency or trust. Domestic violence is very often perpetrated at home over a long period. Generally, its intensity increases with time.

GENDER



Refers to the social roles, power and opportunities related to one's sex. Gender also refers to relations between women and men and between girls and boys, as well as to relations between women and between men. These roles, possibilities and relations are social and cultural constructs and are assimilated during the process of socialization. They are not biologically determined and are therefore able to evolve. Gender is thus a differentiation (social identity) that society applies to men and women in a given cultural context.

Gender is also an analysis category that serves to shed light on the unequal power relationships between men and women.

GENDER ANALYSIS



Systematic gathering and analysis of information on gender differences between and social relations, with the aim of identifying, understanding and reducing gender-based inequalities.

¹ Oxfam-Québec (2008). Politique en matière de justice entre les femmes et les hommes. https://oxfam.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/OQ_politique_justice_femmes_hommes_20100930.pdf
Oxfam (2013). Participatory Methodology: Rapid Care Analysis – Guide for Managers and Facilitators
<https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620147/ml-rapid-care-analysis-facilitators-151116-en.pdf?sequence=1>
Maire Sinha (2012). Overview of family violence. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2012001/article/11643/11643-1-eng.htm>
Oxfam (2020). La parité, faisons le tour de la question. Boîte à outils d'informations sur la parité dans les espaces décisionnels. <https://oxfam.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/parite-faisons-le-tour-de-la-question.pdf>

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



The term gender-based violence (GBV) is used to describe any harmful act committed against a person based on social differentiation between men, women or persons having another gender identity, i.e. based on gender. GBV must be addressed and understood in the context of women's and girls' historical condition of subordination, of social structures, and of social roles traditionally associated with women or men. **GBV more severely affects women and girls everywhere on the planet.** That said, the concept of GBV also opens the door to understanding men's and boys' vulnerability in the face of violence done to them by other men.

GENDER EQUALITY



Situation in which women and men enjoy the same status and equal conditions, responsibilities and possibilities, so that they can fully exercise their human rights and their potential. Presupposes that everyone participates in the development process and benefits from its outcomes equally, whether they were born female or male. This includes equality in social relationships, equal access to resources and equal control over resources, for women and men.

GENDER EQUITY



Fair treatment of women and men based on their respective needs. This can involve treatment that is equal or differentiated but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, duties and opportunities. Equity is part of the process that aims at achieving equality between women and men. It is a principle (and a mode of action) that seeks to compensate for individual and social disadvantages that hinder the attainment of gender equality. This principle may also mean that women and men must be treated differently in order to guarantee equality of opportunity between the sexes, without constituting a form of discrimination.

GENDER JUSTICE



Full equality and equity between men and women in all spheres of life. This concept evokes both an outcome and a process. As an outcome, it involves access to and control over resources, allied with the ability to make choices. As a process, it brings in a new, essential element: accountability, that is, the responsibility and answerability of social institutions charged with rendering justice.

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE



Intimate partner violence is characterized by a set of repetitive, cyclical behaviours, actions and attitudes. It includes verbal, physical, psychological and sexual aggression, threats and constraints, and acts of economic domination. It is not the result of loss of control: on the contrary, it constitutes a deliberate choice to dominate the other person and assert power over them. It may be experienced during – and after – a marital, extramarital or romantic relationship at any age of life.

**SEXUAL DIVISION
OF LABOUR**

The roles of women and men, habitually assigned socially, based on types of work. Includes “productive” work, for example in factories, offices and farms; “reproductive” work, such as cooking, housework, and caring for family members; and “community” work, such as participation in community meetings and activities.

SOCIAL NORMS

Widely held beliefs about customary, appropriate behaviours in a group. Social norms reflect often tacit rules or expectations regarding conduct.

**UNPAID CARE
WORK**

Unpaid care work refers to the provision of services to the family and members of the community outside the formal market, where concern for the welfare of care recipients is likely to affect the quality of the service provided.

**WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT**

Process through which women become aware (individually and collectively) of the impact that power structures have on their lives and acquire the self-confidence they need to challenge the resulting gender inequalities.

GUIDANCE NOTE 1

THE LINKS BETWEEN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

GUIDANCE NOTE OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this guidance note is to present the conceptual framework underlying Oxfam's approach to the links between women's economic empowerment and domestic violence.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Although women's economic empowerment (WEE) projects encourage participating women to strive for empowerment, vocational fulfilment and material independence, the resulting autonomy can also create tensions within families and communities, which sometimes translate into domestic violence (DV)¹. Numerous studies of the subject reveal that identifying the causal link leading to domestic violence is difficult. For this reason it is preferable to speak of factors or contexts of vulnerability, which may make a person more likely to suffer (or commit) DV. In a context of "safe programming" and "doing no harm," it is therefore vital to know how to analyze and mitigate these risk factors.

KEY CONCEPTS

> ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Women's economic empowerment (WEE) is a process aimed at supporting an increase in women's capacity to access and control resources and assets. The process is also aimed at facilitating women's capacity to manage risks and improve their economic status and well-being, which implies a sufficient level of independence and self-confidence to be able to make choices, make enlightened decisions and influence change in various spheres (personal, familial, community and national). Economic empowerment may be supported by a variety of means such as microfinance programs, conditional money transfers, access to sustainable means of subsistence, income-generating activities or women's and girls' employability.

> DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence (DV) is a form of gender-based violence occurring between intimate partners (or ex-partners) or family members. It may be physical, sexual, psychological, economic, or verbal. Specifically, it includes the harm caused to women and children who are exposed to or victims of family violence. Some definitions also include any type of violence occurring within a family, for example severe "punishments" inflicted on children and abusive treatment of elderly members of the family. In this document, the conceptual angle used is that of the first definition, although the authors recognize that the question of WEE falls into the broader context of violence against women and girls. DV can be an undesired consequence of WEE initiatives or an obstacle to women's economic empowerment.

¹ Hughes, C., Bolis, M., Fries, R. and Finigan, S. (2015). Women's economic inequality and domestic violence: Exploring the links and empowering women. *Gender & Development*, 23(2), 279-297.

MAIN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS

A number of studies have focused on factors associated with women's vulnerability and increased risks of experiencing DV when participating in economic empowerment initiatives. These studies help guide practices aimed at preventing violence and supporting women who are survivors. They also bring to light individual, interpersonal, community-based and socio-economic factors involved in the context.²

➤ TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES AND NORMS:

The fact that women on the path of economic empowerment run a greater risk of suffering domestic violence is partly explained by the challenge to traditional gender roles and norms that women's economic empowerment poses³. Women's financial independence, one of the goals of economic empowerment projects, is viewed by spouses as a threat to their power. This perceived loss of power may lead to resistance from spouses, generating conflicts that may result in domestic violence, especially where there is a high level of gender inequality within the household. The risk is especially prevalent when household tasks, childcare and meal preparation are automatically assigned to the woman, while the man is responsible for decision-making, the family budget, paid work, etc. Men who feel their masculinity threatened by women's assuming power in the domestic sphere may try to reassert their power over the relationship by resorting to violence⁴.

Domestic violence situations can also occur when the spouse cannot accept that the woman, having become financially independent, starts to play a role in the public space (markets, group meetings, jobs, politics, etc.). The ensuing departure from traditional gender roles and standards can have an indirect effect on violence against women and girls within families⁵.

➤ SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS:

Although domestic violence affects women of all classes and social milieus, women who work to achieve economic independence in certain social, political and cultural contexts are at greater risk. These contexts vary considerably from one region to another within a single country. This means that the effect of participating in women's economic empowerment initiatives on domestic violence depends on a conjunction of macrosystemic factors, in particular: the community's values and progressiveness, the extent to which violence against women and girls is accepted in the society, policies and services implemented by public institutions, laws (and failures of enforcement), wars and internal conflicts, etc.

➤ LEVEL OF EDUCATION:

Researchers agree unanimously that education is an effective strategy to reduce the risks of domestic violence associated with women's economic empowerment initiatives⁶. But studies do not agree on the **potential effect of women's level of education compared with that**

² See guidance note no. 3 "Preventing the risks of (re)victimization of women taking part in an economic empowerment project" for more examples.

³ Dalal, K. (2011). Does economic empowerment protect women from intimate partner violence? *Injury & Violence*, 3(1), 35-44; Krishnan et al. (2010). Do Changes in Spousal Employment Status Lead to Domestic Violence? Insights from a Prospective Study in Bangalore, India. *Social Science Medecine*, 70(1), 136-143; Vyas, S., Jansen, H., Heise, L. and MbWambo, J. (2015). Exploring the association between women's access to economic resources and intimate partner violence in Dar es Salaam and Mbeya, Tanzania. *Social Science & Medicine*, 146, 307-315.

⁴ Falb et al., (2014). Gender norms, poverty and armed conflict in Côte D'Ivoire: Engaging men in women's social and economic empowerment programming. *Health Education Research*, 29(6), 1015-1027.

⁵ Dalal, K. (2011). Does economic empowerment protect women from intimate partner violence? *Injury & Violence*, 3(1), 35-44. Dalal (2011); Krishnan et al. (2010); Krishnan et al. (2012); Vyas et al. (2015).

⁶ Dalal, K. (2011). Does economic empowerment protect women from intimate partner violence? *Injury & Violence*, 3(1), 35-44. ; Dalal, K., Dahlström, Ö. and Timpka, T. (2013). Interactions between microfinance programmes and non-economic empowerment of women associated with intimate partner violence in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study. *BMJ Open*, 3, e002941 ; Désilets, L. (2018). Explorer les effets des initiatives d'autonomisation économique des femmes sur la violence domestique. Oxfam-Québec and CRI-VIF.

MAIN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS (CONTINUED)

of their partners and on vulnerability to domestic violence after participating in a women's economic empowerment initiative. Some studies⁷ show that working women with higher levels of education suffer less emotional violence and control exercised by their partner than women who are less well educated. On the other hand, other studies have concluded that more highly educated women who participate in a microfinance program are twice as likely to suffer domestic violence than less well educated women⁸. It therefore appears that education may represent both **a protective factor**, by increasing women's knowledge of their rights and of existing health resources, **and a risk factor**, by posing a challenge to traditional gender roles and standards within the family and within society.

➤ INCOME:

Some studies highlight the fact that stress arising from poverty and low income is a risk factor associated with the perpetration of domestic violence by partners⁹. Overcoming situations of financial precarity in homes in which women are developing their economic independence would therefore appear to be an effective strategy for reducing domestic violence¹⁰. Yet here again there is no consensus in the scientific literature. Some studies have shown that

women having a higher income than that of their partner are more likely to fall victim to episodes of domestic violence than women whose income is equal to or less than that of their partner¹¹. Other studies have come to distinctly more optimistic conclusions, namely that the more women are able to assume the costs of home and family expenses (financial independence), the less likely they are to suffer domestic violence, and that this economic empowerment may enable them to avoid conflict and even to leave an abusive relationship¹².

➤ EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF EACH PARTNER:

The status of employee and transition towards the labour market appears to increase women's risks of being subjected to domestic violence¹³. Higher numbers of women who work outside the home or hold a casual seasonal job report experiencing sexual violence in a conjugal context compared with women who hold a regular job or work within the home.

Moreover, the partner's employment stability also has a bearing on women's exposure to domestic violence. Male partners who have difficulty finding and holding down a job are more likely to be violent towards their female partner than those who have stable employment¹⁴.

⁷ Hidrobo, M. and Fernald, L. (2013). Cash transfers and domestic violence. *Journal of Health Economics*, 32, 304-319.

⁸ Dalal, K., Dahlström, Ö. and Timpka, T. (2013). Interactions between microfinance programmes and non-economic empowerment of women associated with intimate partner violence in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study. *BMJ Open*, 3, e002941.

⁹ Krishnan, S., Rocca, C.H., Hubbard, A.E., Subbiah, K., Edmeades, J. and Padian, N.S. (2010). Do Changes in Spousal Employment Status Lead to Domestic Violence? Insights from a Prospective Study in Bangalore, India. *Social Science & Medicine*, 70(1), 136-143.

¹⁰ Vyas, S. and Watts, C. (2009). How does economic empowerment affect women's risk of intimate partner violence in low and middle income countries? A systematic review of published evidence. *Journal of International Development*, 21, 577-602.

¹¹ Dalal, K. (2011). Does economic empowerment protect women from intimate partner violence? *Injury & Violence*, 3(1), 35-44.

¹² Arnaud, M. (2018). Exploring the impacts of women's economic empowerment on the prevalence of domestic violence, data analysis report, occupied Palestinian territory. Oxfam-Québec.

¹³ Dalal (2011); Krishnan et al. (2010); Krishnan et al. (2012); Vyas et al. (2015)

¹⁴ Krishnan et al. (2010); Krishnan et al. (2012).

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

During the project's identification phase, start a conversation between your organization's staff and the selected partners about the general risks of domestic violence in connection with women's economic empowerment in your local setting and potential risks specific to your WEE project.

> TO HELP YOU DO THIS, THE FOLLOWING STEPS ARE SUGGESTED:

- Create a safe, trusted, horizontal (no power hierarchy) space where participants can express themselves, secure in the knowledge that they will be listened to with empathy and discretion and without being judged. A space where opportunities to speak freely will be shared by all, and where care has been taken to reach prior agreement on the feminist principles and values that people will be working with¹⁵. Ideally, the person facilitating the conversation will be experienced and respected in the local community.
- Present key concepts and risk factors on the links between WEE and DV. How do these issues present themselves in your context?
- Identify issues that need to be further documented and specify the information that the gender analysis must gather.

> DURING THE PLANNING PHASE, YOU ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED TO:

- First plan and then conduct a gender analysis (see guidance note 2) covering the main domestic violence risk factors and the issues identified as essential parameters of the gender analysis.
- Use the risk factors identified in the gender analysis to orient prevention strategies and strategies to support women who become survivors of domestic violence after participating in an economic empowerment project.
- Organize communication and awareness activities on DV and WEE involving members of the project team, partners and women participating in the economic empowerment project.

> DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:

- Take a feminist approach to monitoring-evaluation-learning of the project in order to monitor how the DV issue develops by listening to women's voices.
- Hold periodic meetings with the country team, partners and women involved in the economic empowerment process in order to ensure fluid communication on DV among all stakeholders.
- In these meetings, foster the development of community domestic-violence-prevention mechanisms – a topic that is often taboo and kept out of sight in the community.

NATURALLY, THE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES NEEDED TO CONDUCT THESE ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE PLANNED FOR IN ADVANCE.

¹⁵ Oxfam (2018) Feminist Principles: What they are and how they serve as a guidepost for our work. Oxfam Canada <https://42kgab3z3i7s3rm1xf48rq44-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Feminist-Principles-Oxfam-Canada.pdf>
Guide Oxfam pour le travail d'influence féministe. Oxfam International: https://oi-files-d8-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/file_attachments/oxfams_guide_to_feminist_influencing_french.pdf

➤ Additional tools and resources

Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (2013). Women's Economic Empowerment: Guidance Note. <https://www.worldcat.org/title/autonomisation-economique-des-femmes-note-dorientation/oclc/879668871?referer=di&ht=edition>

Batliwala, S. (2011). Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Twelve Insights for Donors. Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). Retrieved from: www.forum.awid.org/forum12/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/MnE_ThirteenInsights_womens-org_ENG.pdf

Care (2012). Mind the Gap: Exploring the Gender Dynamics of CARE Rwanda's Village Savings and Loans (VSL) Programming. <https://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/2012-Mind-the-Gap.pdf>

Oxfam (2012). Ending Violence Against Women. Guide for Oxfam. https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/ending-violence-against-women-oxfam-guide-nov2012_2.pdf

Oxfam (2019). Exploring the impacts of women's economic empowerment initiatives on domestic violence. Scientific literature review. <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/handle/10546/620867>

Saskia van Veen, Bethan Cansfiel and Sandrine Muir-Bouchard (2018). Let's stop thinking it's normal. Identifying patterns in social norms contributing to violence against women and girls across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Pacific. Oxfam Research Report. https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/rr-lets-stop-thinking-normal-evaw-social-norms-251118-en.pdf

Oxfam (2018). Ten harmful beliefs that perpetuate violence against women and girls. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/ten-harmful-beliefs-perpetuate-violence-against-women-and-girls>

Oxfam (2020). Feminist Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning. Oxfam Guidance Note. <https://42kgab3z3i7s3rm1xf48rq44-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Oxfam-Canada-Feminist-MEAL-Guidance-Note-English.pdf>

GATHERING OF DATA ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR GENDER ANALYSIS PURPOSES

GUIDANCE NOTE OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this guidance note is to underline the importance of a “comparative analysis of gender and power” (generally referred to as “gender analysis”) and the role it plays in formulating a safe strategy for programming that is sensitive to gender issues in the framework of women’s economic empowerment initiatives. More specifically, this guidance note gives an overview of ethical recommendations and feminist principles that should guide the development of a gender analysis, particularly regarding the gathering of sensitive data. It is a tool to complement the many practical tools available to help with conducting a gender analysis¹.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Gender analysis is a method of examining the gender dynamics and power relationships between men, women, girls and boys, and the causes and consequences of disparities on various aspects of their lives – access to resources, decision-making, health, etc. – as well as various individual, social, cultural, economic, legal, political, etc. factors that affect them. These relationships can also be viewed in connection with other factors such as ethnic background, social class, age, disability, etc. depending on the context. It is then a matter of analyzing how the interaction of all these factors, combined with the planned intervention, can contribute to increasing the incidence of gender-based violence. The gender analysis lays the foundation for a risk mitigation and management plan, in order to guarantee safe programming. It also helps develop a strategy to ensure crosscutting inclusion of gender in projects and programs, so that measures can be put in place to enable equitable participation and benefits for women, girls and marginalized groups and better meet their needs. This analysis should also allow you to make recommendations to prevent the risks of domestic violence.

WHAT DATA HAS TO BE COLLECTED?

The incidence of domestic violence related to women’s involvement in an economic empowerment initiative is influenced by the political and sociocultural context in which they live². In this sense, a good knowledge of the social context, the structures in place, the social norms and the power relationships affecting women’s economic empowerment is vitally important, meaning that risks and harmful impacts can be assessed before implementing an initiative that could have deleterious effects on certain groups of the population.

¹ As examples, Oxfam (2014) Quick Guide to Gender Analysis <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/312432/ml-quick-guide-to-gender-analysis-300114-en.pdf?sequence=1> ; Guide d’Oxfam pour le travail d’influence féministe. : https://oi-files-d8-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/file_attachments/oxfams_guide_to_feminist_influencing_french.pdf ; Gender at Work Frame-work <https://genderatwork.org/>

² See guidance note 1: “The links between women’s economic empowerment and domestic violence”

WHAT DATA HAS TO BE COLLECTED? (CONTINUED)

Gender analysis is aimed at understanding the different realities experienced by women and men regarding the following aspects:

**> DIVISION OF LABOUR:**

Who takes care of productive work and community tasks? And who cares for the family? Are domestic responsibilities shared or transferred to other members of the family when those traditionally responsible for care are engaged in economic activity?

**> ACCESS TO SERVICES AND TO TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS:**

Access to services and resources (health, education, technology, land, water, etc.), control of resources and their benefits. How and with whom do women negotiate access to services and control over resources?

**> GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE:**

What are the types of gender-based violence that affect members of the community? Committed by whom? What are the risk factors and protection factors? What adaptation strategies are employed by survivors of gender-based violence?

**> POLITICAL AND JUDICIAL FRAMEWORK:**

What rights are guaranteed, or not guaranteed, by law (sexual and reproductive rights, rights of expression, rights to mobility, etc.) and for whom? Are there discrepancies and disparities in the enforcement of laws, and if so, what social norms impact them?

**> DECISION-MAKING AND POWER:**

Although the dimension of power must be built into all of the preceding components, an analysis of the various types of power exercised in a specific context assists in understanding the influence and negotiation mechanisms operating in a community. This mainly involves studying who exercises visible, invisible or hidden power³ in the various spheres (household, associative or community groups, etc.).

³ For an explanation of the various types of power, see the Oxfam tool: Oxfam's guide to feminist influencing <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/oxfams-guide-feminist-influencing>.

ETHICAL AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DATA GATHERING

Conducting a gender analysis usually means having to collect information on sensitive subjects such as gender-based violence, an issue that must be taken into consideration in our interventions. Survivors' fear of power dynamics being reproduced (revictimization⁴), in relations with interveners, researchers or authorities, when disclosing experience of violence, poses a significant challenge to research. Fortunately, it is now recognized worldwide that gender-based violence is a global scourge: as a result, its being taken into consideration in development projects or humanitarian interventions needs no justification. The role of the person/team in charge of conducting the gender analysis is not, therefore,

to inquire into the prevalence of cases of gender-based violence. Rather, it is to evaluate the types of gender-based violence that occur most frequently in a given setting – that is, the vulnerability factors that come into play – and also to analyze the context in terms of the risks of gender-based violence occurring. In this sense, given the sensitive nature of the subject and the potential risks to which women expose themselves when divulging their intimate situation, it is vital: to show exemplary ethical conduct; to put women's interests at the heart of research concerns; and to plan interventions appropriately in order to be able to meet the various needs that may come to light.

FEMINIST PRINCIPLES IN RESEARCH

A comparative study on gender and power⁵ must be guided by certain feminist practices and values, guaranteeing that as far as possible:

- Neither those participating in the study nor the researchers are harmed by the research, and that the perceived risks arising out of the study are rigorously taken into account and managed in order to reduce them to the greatest possible extent;
- Absolute, informed consent is obtained from all involved;
- The benefits of the construction of feminist knowledge for a transformative impact on gender justice outweigh the risks;

- The diversity of women's experience is explored and the gendered dimensions of power are demonstrated (both in the subject of the study and in the way in which it is conducted);
- Participatory feminist methods are employed to get away from more traditional research methods that position the researcher as an objective expert. This is a matter of recognizing that we all have a valuable, relevant contribution, because the knowledge and know-how of each of us are the fruit of our life history and our relations with our physical and social environments.

IDENTIFYING AND MITIGATING THE RISKS INVOLVED IN DATA GATHERING

Beyond the programming-related risks, there are risks involved in planning an intervention. One of the first steps in planning a gender analysis is to assess the risks

that such a study may entail for participants and researchers. A risk matrix is a useful tool to help you identify and mitigate risks.

⁴ See guidance note 3. "Preventing the risks of (re)victimization of women taking part in an economic empowerment project."

⁵ See Oxfam's guide to feminist influencing.

**IDENTIFYING AND MITIGATING THE RISKS INVOLVED IN DATA GATHERING
(CONTINUED)****➤ Examples of risks for participants in data gathering⁶****Examples of risks for participants in data gathering**

- There is a physical risk for participants. For example, if you are collecting data on gender norms, your questions may expose women to the risk of domestic violence.
- Psychological distress in participants caused by questions that are asked. For example, if you collect data from women on their experiences of sexual assault.
- Lowered self-esteem. For example, if you collect data on the level of control and on decision-making regarding economic matters in intimate relationships. (This may, however, also lead to reflection and awareness that can mitigate the same risk, which is to say that both a risk and a benefit may be involved.)
- A study that involves the participation of persons unable to give informed consent. For example, persons living with a disability that may affect their capacity to give their consent.
- Deceiving participants by concealment or secret observation. For example, telling participants that your study is about family relationships when in fact it is focused on domestic violence.
- A research method that does not properly take into account the recruitment of participants, questions of consent or confidentiality, or protection of participants' privacy or data. For example, if you collect information on sexual and reproductive health and rights by means of interviews or surveys and do not manage the data securely.

In the context of a gender analysis that studies a set of dynamics and variables and is not specialized purely in gender-based violence, it is preferable not to ask women directly to talk about their experience of sexual abuse; it is better to ask them less personal questions on attitudes and beliefs about violence in the community or on their knowledge of gender-based violence situations that may exist among people whom they know ⁷. The Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) approach⁸ can prove useful in this process.

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Some countries have laws that require professionals to report any case of real or suspected abuse to the authorities or social services. Policies of this kind can be problematic and conflict with ethical considerations

such as respect for confidentiality and autonomy, and the protection of vulnerable persons. In the case of adults, there is a consensus that the principles of autonomy and confidentiality must take precedence. Where minors are concerned, child protection laws exist in many places that oblige certain professionals to report cases of suspected abuse. When making such a report, it is imperative to see that the child's safety is not compromised. This is why it is important to know the legal context and the ethical and professional obligations involved.

Moreover, those conducting the gender study must be informed of reliable, safe organizations and local authorities in the event that a case of abuse must be referred.

⁶ Source: International Women's Development Agency (2017) Feminist Research Framework
https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/FeministResearchFramework_online_minustemplates-1.pdf

⁷ See World Health Organization (2001). Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women.
<https://www.who.int/gender/violence/womenfirstseng.pdf>

⁸ Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey Method (USAID). See the "Additional tools and resources" section at the end of this guidance note.

METHOD

A gender analysis normally involves two main steps: a study of secondary data, followed by gathering and analysis of primary data.

> GATHERING SECONDARY DATA

- Conduct a search for published and unpublished studies on gender issues related to the project objectives (previous gender analyses, project evaluations, baselines, etc.).
- Consult available sociodemographic data and statistics on gender-based violence in the region and the country where the women's economic empowerment project will be held.
- Contact local women's rights associations for information.

> GATHERING PRIMARY DATA

The aim in gathering primary data is to respond to shortcomings observed in secondary data gathered and answer questions specifically related to the implementation of the women's economic empowerment initiative. This data is collected directly from the population concerned and may take the form of a quantitative or qualitative study as needed. It can take the form of questionnaires, individual interviews, focus groups, life stories, photo albums, direct observation, etc.

It is advisable to combine gender analysis questions with other studies, especially for the purpose of reducing "respondent fatigue" to questionnaires, and thus maximizing the quality and representativeness of the results obtained.

It is also important to realize that obtaining a representative sample can prove complex, especially in an intersectional perspective. Among the parameters to consider when seeking to gain an understanding of the social dynamics are the complexity of the sociocultural context and plural identities (social class, caste, ethnic origin, gender, age, etc.). Sensitivity to cultural diversity and to the power relations that prevail in the specific setting where the economic empowerment initiative will be implemented is therefore essential.

Given the complexity of gender and power relationships, which are rooted in a set of political, economic, cultural and social structures and institutions, **a mixed methodological approach** is recommended – that is, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, in order to optimize our understanding of gender and power dynamics in the community concerned.⁹ Qualitative data gathering methods may allow marginalized groups (e.g. women and girls living with HIV) to directly express their experiences, their vulnerability or empowerment contexts, and to set out their visions for change. Quantitative data, on the other hand, can reveal and illustrate in figures the severity and extent of a problem, and also serve persuasion or advocacy purposes.¹⁰

⁹ Srilatha Batliwala (2011). Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Twelve Insights for Donors. Association for Women's Rights in Development. https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewjcq_q30fzpAhVBtTEKHVwVCE4QFJAe_gQIARABsurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.awid.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fatoms%2Ffiles%2Fstrengtheningme.pdf&usq=A0vVaw1tUMnIWSznB_cs5QyuV0kv

¹⁰ International Women's Development Agency (2017) Feminist Research Framework https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/FeministResearchFramework_online_minustemplates-1.pdf

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS**FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (FROM THE WHO)¹¹**

- The safety of respondents and the research team is paramount.
- Prevalence studies on domestic violence need to build upon current research experience and reflect best information-gathering practices in order to minimize the risk for those surveyed.
- Protecting confidentiality is essential to ensure both women's safety and data quality. Confidentiality also applies to the storage, ownership and management of data gathered.
- Research team members must be experienced and trained in gender justice and the gathering of sensitive data.
- The study design must include actions aimed at reducing any possible distress caused to the participants by the research.
- Research team members should be trained, particularly in psychological first aid, to refer women requesting assistance to available local services and sources of support. Where there are few resources, research team members need to be able to make recommendations aimed at creating short-term support mechanisms.
- Organizations and donors have an ethical obligation to ensure that the findings of the gender analysis are properly interpreted and used to advance gender justice within interventions.

QUESTIONS ABOUT VIOLENCE SHOULD ONLY BE INCORPORATED INTO SURVEYS DESIGNED FOR OTHER PURPOSES WHEN ETHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET.

¹¹ World Health Organization (2017). WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43709/9789241595681_eng.pdf?sequence=1

➤ Additional tools and resources

Gender at Work Framework
<https://genderatwork.org/>

Global Women's Institute Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2018). Ethical considerations for Research and Evaluation on Ending Violence against Women and Girls. Guidance paper. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/ode-evawg-ethical-considerations-for-research-and-eval.pdf>

Graham, A., Powell, M., Taylor, N., Anderson, D. et Fitzgerald, R. (2013). Putting women first: ethical and safety recommendations for research on domestic violence against women. World Health Organisation. https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/media/en/130.pdf

Oxfam's guide to feminist influencing. : https://oi-files-d8-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/file_attachments/oxfams_guide_to_feminist_influencing_french.pdf

International Women Development Agency (2017). Feminist Research Framework. https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/FeministResearchFramework_online_minustemplates-1.pdf

Jewkes, R., Dartnall, E. and Sikweyiya, Y. (2012). Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on the Perpetration of Sexual Violence. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233428120_Ethical_and_Safety_Recommendations_for_Research_on_Perpetration_of_Sexual_Violence

Jhpiego (2019). Gender Analysis Toolkit for Health Systems. <https://gender.jhpiego.org/analysistoolkit/gender-analysis-framework/>

World Health Organization (2007). WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies. https://www.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43709/9789241595681_eng.pdf?sequence=1

Oxfam (2018). Rapid care analysis. <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/rapid-care-analysis-training-modules-620449>

Oxfam-Québec (2010). Policy on gender justice. https://oxfam.qc.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2015/04/OQ_politique_justice_femmes_hommes_20100930.pdf

Oxfam Quick Guide to Gender Analysis (2014). <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/312432/ml-quick-guide-to-gender-analysis-300114-en.pdf?sequence=1>

Oxfam Safe Programming in Humanitarian Response: A Guide to Managing Risk. <https://www.oxfamwash.org/mainstreaming/safe-programming>

Srilatha Batliwala (2011). Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: Twelve Insights for Donors. Association for Women's Rights in Development. <https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/strengtheningme.pdf>

USAID (2011). The KAP Survey Model (Knowledge Attitudes and Practices). <https://www.spring-nutrition.org/publications/tool-summaries/kap-survey-model-knowledge-attitudes-and-practices>

World Health Organization (2010). Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women. Taking action and generating evidence. https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/publications/violence/9789241564007_eng.pdf?ua=1

PREVENTING THE RISKS OF (RE) VICTIMIZATION OF WOMEN TAKING PART IN AN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

GUIDANCE NOTE OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this guidance note is to identify risk factors of victimization and revictimization of domestic violence, in order to enable the development of appropriate, holistic prevention strategies.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Domestic violence is the most widespread form of violence against women throughout the world¹. It is also greatly underreported, for a number of reasons (taboo subject, fear of reprisals, or fear of not being believed). Since it is generally perpetrated in private, it is often an “invisible” form of violence that is difficult to detect for anyone not trained to recognize the signs and the factors that put women at risk of suffering domestic violence. Consequently, domestic violence is rarely taken into account in development projects, particularly in women’s economic empowerment initiatives. And yet it is vital that such initiatives should recognize and be able to prevent the potential risk of victimization or revictimization for women participating in the project. A gender analysis² provides an understanding of the context and makes it possible to determine issues and potential risks that are differentiated based on gender and also on other identity and socio-economic factors, including gender-based violence.

RISK FACTORS FOR (RE)VICTIMIZATION

Repeated victimization, or revictimization, is a phenomenon that is recognized, but is still difficult to explain satisfactorily because the causes are many and there is no consensus on the various hypotheses. However, a series of aggravating factors³ have been the subject of many studies: these have enabled several countries to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence by intervening at different levels.

For example, we know that violence experienced (either by direct victimization or by exposure) during childhood or adolescence is a major factor leading to the experience

or perpetration of violence in adulthood⁴. Studies also show that women who are survivors of domestic violence are at high risk of being re-victimized. A combination of individual, relational, community and social factors contribute to the risk of experiencing, re-experiencing or perpetrating violence. Understanding the multilevel interplay of these factors can facilitate the identification of prevention strategies. The approach based on the cycle of domestic violence also explains that, with its periods of tension and aggression, followed by periods of remorse and reconciliation, the cycle of domestic violence has the effect of exhausting the survivor, reducing her motivation

¹ World Health Organization (2007). WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43709/9789241595681_eng.pdf?sequence=1

² See guidance note 2.

³ Refer to guidance note 1 for more detail on some of these factors.

⁴ Bjørnholt, M. (2019). The social dynamics of revictimization and intimate partner violence: an embodied, gendered, institutional and life course perspective, *Nordic Journal of Criminology*, 20:1, 90-110. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14043858.2019.1568103>

RISK FACTORS FOR (RE)VICTIMIZATION (CONTINUED)

and her ability to face up to the violence, thereby putting her at increased risk of revictimization. A history of domestic violence in childhood, inappropriate outside and institutional reactions to violence experienced during childhood, together with gender socialization, are also risk factors for revictimization. In a context of vulnerability, an institutional environment that perpetuates inequalities and insufficient or inadequate provision of assistance to

survivors of domestic violence are also potential factors increasing the risk of revictimization. For example, a woman who reports an experience of domestic violence to a police officer not trained to receive revelations of this type could experience revictimization. Lastly, restricted access to psychological or healthcare resources or to financial assistance programs can also have an impact on continued victimization.

MULTILEVEL PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Prevention efforts are often aimed at **transforming the power dynamics and gender inequalities that are at the root of violence** against women. **Interventions to combat violence against women**, on the other hand, are generally aimed at **providing services, resources and support to survivors as a priority**. The prevention of, and the response to, violence against women are both essential.

The ecological model is commonly used as a framework for analyzing domestic violence on four levels (individual, relational, community context and societal factors) and identifying prevention strategies for each of these levels. This model can easily be integrated into the Gender at Work theory of change⁵, for those familiar with this theory.

EXAMPLES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV) RISK FACTORS AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES, ACCORDING TO THE ECOLOGICAL MODEL⁶

LEVELS	RISK FACTORS FOR (RE)VICTIMIZATION	PREVENTIVE APPROACHES FOR WOMEN
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young age • Having grown up in a violent environment • Low self-esteem • Low level of education in the family • Low income or unemployment (e.g. high financial dependence) • Attitudes trivializing DV • Belief in patriarchal norms (e.g. sexual division of labour) • Depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and awareness of human rights and women's rights • Psychosocial support for survivors and perpetrators of DV • Strengthening of confidence and self-esteem • Skills development • Women's access to and control over income generated by their work • Access to social services

⁵ See: Gender at work conceptual framework

⁶ Heise, L., Ellsberg, M. and Gottemoeller M. (1990). Ending violence against women. Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, Center for Communications Programs.

LEVELS	RISK FACTORS FOR (RE)VICTIMIZATION	PREVENTIVE APPROACHES FOR WOMEN
Interpersonal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jealousy, possessiveness and other negative emotions/behaviours • Isolation (weak social support network) • Marital discord or conflict with other family members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions with children, spouses and family (e.g. nonviolent communication) • Social empowerment (e.g. participation in networks) • Initiatives to reduce the household's economic stress (e.g. training opportunities for spouses and family members)
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and overpopulation • Weak community sanction of DV • Low community cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders involved and informed about their role as facilitators of social acceptance of WEE initiatives, and made aware of their role of providing support in DV contexts • Positive models of masculinity disseminated and support given to gender justice ambassadors (e.g. supporting youth coalitions for equality and the right to a life free of violence) • Awareness-raising activities about DV in connection with school programs • Communication and awareness campaigns about DV throughout the community to encourage a change in social norms (e.g. edutainment, social theatre)
Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservative and patriarchal social norms • Socio-economic inequalities • Weak or absent protective policies in the fields of healthcare, education, etc. • Discriminatory system (institutions) • Weakness of government (e.g. wars, prolonged conflict, forced migration, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating with and raising the awareness of authorities and institutions about DV • Coalitions with women's rights organizations and feminist movements to strengthen advocacy for gender justice and the fight against GBV in policies and legislation (e.g. gender-aware budgeting, criminal code reform, enforcement of existing laws) • Awareness raising and training on DV for police forces, traditional authorities and institutions

EXAMPLE OF A PROJECT THAT INCORPORATED A DV PREVENTION STRATEGY

PLACE: GAZA STRIP, OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

ORGANIZATION: OXFAM

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER: AISHA (ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN AND CHILD PROTECTION)

One component of an economic empowerment project was aimed at improving access to quality psychosocial services and at raising awareness of respectful confrontation and conflict management for women engaged in income-generating activities and experiencing gender-based violence. With this aim in mind, the initiative also worked with male members of these women's families, using the Promundo manual, to improve family well-being by creating awareness-raising sessions on the transformation of gender relations and sharing domestic work and unpaid care. Over numerous meetings and conversations, the initiative created a space of trust and safety allowing men too to open up about their personal experiences of violence when they were children, which had the effect of reducing their violent behaviours towards their wives and children. Lastly, the initiative resulted in the production of a video on responsibilities for care and domestic work shared between women and men in the household. The video triggered numerous discussions in the local community, reaching more than 73,000 people.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING HOLISTIC PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Build the awareness of project staff and partners and provide training on the prevention of domestic violence right from the planning stage and throughout the entire project cycle.
- During project development, formulate preventive and mitigating strategies aimed at the risk factors identified in the gender analysis.
- Ensure that preventive strategies are closely tied to monitoring-evaluation indicators in order to track risk factors periodically, thus enabling strategies to be adjusted to suit the changing context.
- Support the development of community partnerships and a network of women's rights organizations and centres providing psychosocial support to women survivors of violence.
- At the community level, promote communication and the circulation of information about women's and girls' rights to live free of violence for the purpose of encouraging dialogue and potential prevention strategies on this frequently taboo subject; involve authorities and community leaders in these conversations.

➤ Additional tools and resources

Bjørnholt, M. (2019). The social dynamics of revictimization and intimate partner violence: an embodied, gendered, institutional and life course perspective, *Nordic Journal of Criminology*, 20:1, 90–110. : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14043858.2019.1568103>

Gender at work. The Gender at Work Framework. <https://genderatwork.org/analytical-framework/>

Médecin du Monde (2010). Prévention et réponse aux violences liées au genre. Guide méthodologique. https://www.medecinsdumonde.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2017/08/201002_Pre%CC%81vention-et-re%CC%81ponse-aux-violences-lie%CC%81es-au-genre-Guide-me%CC%81thod.pdf

World Health Organization (2007). WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43709/9789241595681_eng.pdf?sequence=1

Oxfam (2012). Ending Violence Against Women. Guide for Oxfam. https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/ending-violence-against-women-oxfam-guide-fr-nov2012_1.pdf

Raising Voices. SASA! Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV. <http://raisingvoices.org/sasa/>

WORKING WITH RESOURCES THAT HELP AND SUPPORT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

GUIDANCE NOTE OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this guidance note is to guide workers in women's economic empowerment projects by defining their role in supporting survivors of domestic violence. It sets out to help workers understand survivors' adaptation strategies and stresses the importance of working with existing resources set up to help them.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Organizations that implement a women's economic empowerment initiative have a role to play in supporting survivors of domestic violence. Their main role is to create safe opportunities for addressing the issue of domestic violence with participants. Their secondary role is to provide support or necessary referrals to meet the needs or the fears expressed by women. By creating a bond of trust with the participants in an economic empowerment project, workers become resource persons in the event that a domestic violence situation is disclosed. It is their responsibility to be able to support these women and accompany them in the desired recovery process. However, economic empowerment agents are not professionals specializing in gender-based violence, and their role must be limited to observing, listening, and guiding¹. Moreover, they must not engage in active detection, for example by asking intrusive questions or approaching women whom they suspect of being victims of domestic violence.

DISCLOSURE OF EXPERIENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

➤ STRATEGIES TO FOSTER THE DISCLOSURE OF EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE

- Have recourse to a safe space that is closed, confidential and adapted for women.
- At various stages of the women's economic empowerment project, demonstrate to participants that you are there for them in the event of difficulties in their marital and family relationships.
- Ensure that women who wish to testify or disclose experiences of violence individually have an opportunity to do so with a woman they trust.
- After a woman has testified, make sure that you can, in accordance with her needs and wishes, support her and facilitate her transition to an assistance resource. Having to relate a situation of violence again can be difficult and the relationship of trust developed with a survivor is precious.
- Set up discussion/support groups that are focused on mutual help to end women's isolation and are conducive to collective empowerment.

¹ See: Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2015). Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action. <https://gbvguidelines.org/fr/>

DISCLOSURE OF EXPERIENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (CONTINUED)**> HELPFUL ATTITUDES TO TAKE IN CASES OF DISCLOSURE OF EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE**

- Show humility and recognize the limits of the support you are able to provide.
- Listen and believe the difficulties of the woman's experience of domestic violence.
- Show empathy in response to the situation related (non-judgement).
- Take an interest in the needs expressed by the woman and recognize that she is the expert about her situation.
- Respect the woman's pace regarding recognizing the problem issues in her life and the actions she chooses to take.
- Acknowledge the survivor's strength and believe in her ability to overcome the domestic violence situation.

Providing help and support can also mean directing women towards appropriate assistance resources that specialize in domestic violence and violence against women and girls. The act of sharing situations of domestic violence with another person can reactivate the trauma that women have experienced. In such cases, handover to a specialized resource is required.

If you feel that the needs expressed by women go beyond active listening and the psychological first aid approach² that you are able to provide, you must refer them to a resource specializing in violence³. Two conditions that will facilitate a referral are a knowledge of the resources available in the territory and maintaining close links with the agents at these resources.

IDENTIFYING ASSISTANCE RESOURCES AND UNDERSTANDING REFERRAL

Services (psychological and legal resources, helplines, accommodation resources or other social services) may sometimes be available in the community in which survivors of domestic violence live. **A good knowledge of resources and services will facilitate the creation of partnerships** in WEE projects. These partnerships can lead not only to the development of prevention, awareness-raising and intervention tools regarding domestic violence, but also to the creation of a referral protocol. Women participating in economic empowerment projects can thus have access to concerted, adapted complementary care and attention.

Any organization developing a women's economic empowerment project should, before launching the project, first make sure it is aware of the assistance resources and services available to domestic violence survivors in the territory in question.

"Official" assistance resources may, for example, provide specialized support in the form of healthcare, social work or psychosocial support. Working with specialized resources brings many advantages, particularly complementary expertise, better use of resources and a more complete service offering for women. However, these resources need to be prepared to receive women referred to them, and **women need to be supported in consulting the resources identified** (and if necessary, accompanied in person).

If resources, services or a referral system are non-existent or insufficient, measures must be taken ahead of the project in order to ensure a minimum level of quality support for women and girls experiencing situations of violence. It is therefore important to seek out information on survivor adaptation strategies in the event of domestic violence. For example, it has been observed that

² See: Canadian Red Cross (2019). Psychological First Aid: Pocket Guide. https://www.redcross.ca/crc/documents/19-0420PS-PFA_Pocket_Guide_2020_EN_FA.pdf

³ If disclosure occurs in the context of an individual interview, the Psychological First Aid (PFA) approach can be implemented immediately. If it occurs in a discussion group, it is important to find a strategy for implementing the PFA approach individually and confidentially. It may be useful to set a rule prior to a group discussion to indicate that this is not an appropriate context for reporting cases but, if participants have things to say, they can share them individually afterwards with the facilitators.

IDENTIFYING ASSISTANCE RESOURCES AND UNDERSTANDING REFERRAL (CONTINUED)

women who report experiencing domestic violence in economic empowerment projects generally turn to their community network for support. An understanding of the main issues involved in using, or not using, services specializing in violence will help in guiding interventions with women expressing the need for support because of domestic violence that they are experiencing or have experienced in the past.

If no referral system exists, three steps are suggested:

- 1** Conduct research to find out whether a directory of assistance resources regarding violence already exists in the territory.
- 2** Compile one's own directory by identifying assistance resources and telephone lines in the territory of intervention whose mission is to fight violence against women and girls.
 - For each assistance resource identified, list their location, the services they offer, the clientele served (women, girls, men, LGBTQI+, etc.), the cost of services (if any), the language in which services are provided, the possibility of using technology in the service offering, and how to make appointments.
- 3** Contact these resources to fill in information missing from the directory and create a partnership, mainly for the purpose of coming to a referral agreement.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS**FOR SETTING UP COLLABORATION WITH EXISTING ASSISTANCE RESOURCES**

- Develop a directory of resources before beginning implementation of the economic empowerment project.
- Present the women's economic empowerment project to local organizations and explain its potential implications regarding domestic violence.
- Seek out the help of a gender justice specialist. They can provide guidance for the creation of a directory of resources and services regarding violence against women and girls and for the creation of partnerships. In this respect, collaboration with women's rights organizations and LGBTQI+ rights organizations is essential.
- When gathering data for the gender analysis, survey the community network and find out who (neighbours, marriage witnesses, community agents, village elders or chiefs, religious leaders, etc.) women experiencing domestic violence generally turn to. If possible, involve these persons in the creation of the directory, thereby raising their awareness and training them in the support process.
- Among assistance resources dedicated to fighting violence against women and girls identified in the directory, target those which:
 - develop action plans to ensure women's safety and confidentiality
 - favour an intervention approach focused on the survivors of violence and their empowerment
 - do not victimize women on account of DV situations they have suffered
- Provide technical and financial support for building the capacities of organizations and institutions that will receive referrals, together with networking between them, in order to foster concerted action.

**DISSEMINATE THE DIRECTORY TO ALL PLAYERS IN THE PROJECT
SO THAT EVERYONE CAN TAKE IT ON BOARD.**

➤ Additional tools and resources

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2015). Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery
<https://gbvguidelines.org/en/>

Médecins du Monde (2010). Prévention et réponse aux violences liées au genre. Guide méthodologique. www.medicinsdumonde.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2017/08/201002_Pre%CC%81vention-et-re%CC%81ponse-aux-violences-lie%CC%81es-au-genre-Guide-me%CC%81thod.pdf

World Health Organization (2012). Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers.
https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/44615/9789241548205_eng.pdf?sequence=1

Canadian Red Cross (2019). Psychological First Aid: Pocket Guide.
https://www.redcross.ca/crc/documents/19-0420PS-PFA_Pocket_Guide_2020_EN_FA.pdf

THE PLACE OF MALE PARTNERS IN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS

GUIDANCE NOTE OBJECTIVE

This guidance note sets out the advantages and challenges of involving male intimate partners and other men in women's economic empowerment initiatives and proposes various approaches, strategies and measures to foster a positive contribution from them.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

The process of women's economic empowerment risks transforming gender relationships within couples, and having repercussions on the family. For women, participating in economic empowerment projects may make them more vulnerable to domestic violence, particularly because the man's role as provider for the family is likely to be challenged¹. Involving male partners in women's economic empowerment projects and in developing positive models of masculinity can be used as a strategy to prevent domestic violence. Their involvement can be at several levels, while ensuring that the benefits of the economic empowerment project are not diverted away from women to their male partners.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF MALE PARTNERS' PARTICIPATION IN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS

- Increased understanding by intimate partners of the economic empowerment project process and objectives.
- Understanding of women's activities (roles, responsibilities, in their businesses, leading to increased acceptance and empathy from their intimate partners.
- Women's involvement in decision-making in the household.
- Facilitation of joint financial planning of household expenses.
- Improved quality of the marital relationship (for example, time shared between partners, respect for the woman's needs and demonstrations of affection from her spouse).
- Discussions initiated on gender norms, power dynamics and domestic violence, with a view to transforming gender relationships.
- Lessening of control, jealousy and domestic violence exercised by the spouse.
- Development of positive models of masculinity and the opportunity for men to express their vision of a couple free of violence.

¹ See guidance note 1

APPROACHES TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF MALE PARTNERS

The literature suggests various conflict resolution strategies involving intimate partners and the construction of positive models of masculinity focused on dialogue and sharing, in the context of both the couple and the group. Choices regarding the makeup of groups (mixed or non-mixed and the number of participants) must be deliberated beforehand based on the theme and objectives. Participants must feel comfortable to express themselves freely in front of other members of the group – hence the necessity to create a safe, trusted space suitable for the chosen theme. It is also important to create spaces for discussion that are exclusively male; these are essential for questioning hegemonic models of masculinity and expressing emotions. A host of themes can be addressed in these group activities. The following sidebar contains examples.

➤ THEMES THAT CAN BE PUT FORWARD IN GROUP ACTIVITIES FOR SPOUSES OR COUPLES IN A WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WEE) PROJECT

- Presentation of the goals aimed at by WEE projects and stages of the initiative.
- Discussion of fears regarding WEE.
- Socio-economic benefits of spouses' participation.
- Social norms and traditional roles of men and women; power relationships and toxic masculinity in couples.
- Raising awareness of human rights, particularly women's and girls' socio-economic rights.
- Sharing of domestic work and egalitarian decision-making between the woman and her partner.
- The right of women and girls to live without violence versus a society in which domestic violence is broadly accepted.
- Marital well-being; strategies for conflict resolution and appropriate communication.
- The peer-based approach in male discussion groups with examples of positive masculinity.
- Community mobilization campaigns with gender-justice champions / ambassadors / influencers.

➤ EXAMPLE OF STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE SPOUSAL PARTICIPATION IN WEE PROJECTS IN AN INITIATIVE IN BURKINA FASO

An Oxfam project, "Appui à l'autonomisation des femmes restauratrices de rue," implemented by World March of Women Burkina Faso, was designed to develop the economic potential of women street restaurateurs and to reduce the risks of violence in their homes. One component of the project was specifically devoted to training and raising the awareness of the women restaurateurs' husbands and partners in order to achieve better communication and understanding in the home, and ultimately to prevent domestic violence. Here are some of the strategies that were deployed in this component:

- Sharing the testimony of spouses who, thanks to financial support from their wives, had a better quality of life:
"I have a friend who was against his wife's opening a restaurant. One day, he called to see me; I was busy helping my wife. He helped me cook and deliver to the market. When he saw the money, he realized that there was money to be made then he has been encouraging his wife to start her business." - Husband of a woman restaurateur, BF.
- Encourage men to find out more about their wives' work:
"We have to force husbands to spend time in the restaurant so that they can understand what their wives are doing." - Woman restaurateur, BF.
- Include husbands in information sessions when the project is launched.
- Organize activities involving spouses and families in the evenings and on weekends, rather than during the day in the week.
- Make multiple home visits to mobilize husbands:
"The fact that the project team came to see me several times galvanized me into participating in the activities." - Husband of a woman restaurateur, BF.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR MALE PARTNERS

It is important to recognize that male partners may have been the survivors of certain forms of violence, whether in childhood or as a result of the social and political context in which they live. Discussions of these themes may reactivate traumas resulting from these events. This is why it is vital to be able to acknowledge and reach out

to this suffering by offering the necessary psychosocial support. Depending on the situation and the needs of the male partner, it may be necessary to refer him to an appropriate resource and support him in his way forward². This approach can also prove effective in reducing the risks of domestic violence³.

THREE MAJOR CHALLENGES ARISING FROM INVOLVEMENT OF MALE PARTNERS

- One of the main challenges posed by the involvement of male partners in women's economic empowerment projects is the risk that the orientations of initiatives and the income generated by women are misappropriated by men.
- Another challenge comes in the finding that efforts to involve male partners do not benefit women and girls unless they are accompanied by a profound calling into question of the social structures underpinning the imbalance of power between women and men⁴.
- The last major challenge is that of developing positive masculinity. The provision of psychological support, and raising men's awareness as to their capacity to change certain attitudes and beliefs about the roles of men and women regarding socio-economic rights and personal autonomy, open the way to the emergence of positive masculinity.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

MITIGATING THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE INVOLVEMENT OF MALE PARTNERS

- Ensure that the involvement of male partners remains within a feminist perspective and is principally aimed at improving women's living conditions and autonomy⁵: men's participation is primarily recommended in order to reduce the risk of violence associated with the setting up of these projects.
- Conduct a feminist monitoring-evaluation throughout the project to measure the situation and gauge the balance between benefits for women when their male partners are involved in activities in which the women are participating, and the growing protagonism that these male partners might develop (periodic assessment of the place of male partners in the project).
- Plan strategies for transformative work and conversations on positive masculinity with groups of men, including the testimony of men whose experience of their wives' economic empowerment has been positive.
- In collaboration with women engaged in the economic empowerment process, plan options for actions and interventions that minimize the risks of revictimization in the event that resources are misappropriated by male partners.
- As for the emergence of positive masculinity, since social norms are more easily challenged by young people, awareness-raising campaigns aimed at both young men and young women represent a strategy of choice for reversing prejudices and addressing taboo subjects such as power relationships and gender-based violence.

² See guidance note 4

³ See guidance note 3

⁴ COFEM (2017). Men as allies and activists. Feminist Pocketbook, Tip Sheet #6.

<https://cofemsocialchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/TS6-Men-as-allies-and-activists.pdf>

➤ Additional tools and resources

COFEM -Coalition of Feminists or Social Change (2017). Men as allies and activists. Feminist Pocketbook, Tip Sheet #6. <https://cofemsocialchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/TS6-Men-as-allies-and-activists.pdf>

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Instituto Promundo (2012). Engaging Men to Prevent Gender-Based Violence: A Multi-Country Intervention and Impact Evaluation Study. <https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Engaging-Men-to-Prevent-Gender-Based-Violence.pdf>

Instituto Promundo. Healthy Masculinity Gender Equality. <https://promundoglobal.org/resources/?type=educational-materials>

Men Engage Alliance. Working with men and boys for gender equality. <http://menengage.org/>.

Todd Minerson, Humberto Carolo, Tuval Dinner and Clay Jones (2011). Issue Brief: Engaging Men and Boys to Reduce and Prevent Gender-Based Violence. Status of Women Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. https://www.whiteribbon.ca/uploads/1/1/3/2/113222347/wrc_swc_issuebrief.pdf

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KEDV (www.kedv.org.tr)

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For more information: <https://www.raiv.ulaval.ca/equipes/violence-conjugale>

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