

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES ON ENGAGING MEN AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY



± SOMETIME IN JUNE 2015

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in Lebanon, in partnership with ABAAD – Resource Centre for Gender Equality, decided, as part of its prevention activities with communities on gender-based violence (GBV), to develop a manual to support the provision of sessions to men in their communities.



ABAAD – Resource Centre for Gender Equality is a non-profit, non-politically affiliated, non-religious civil association that envisions a world in which men and women live as equitable partners and work together to secure better lives for their future. Women are effectively empowered, and participate in democratic processes that affect their lives and their communities. In this world, there is no violence or discrimination, and women live in freedom, dignity and inner peace. Women also have fair access to assets and resources within their communities.

ABAAD aims to achieve gender equality as an essential condition to sustainable social and economic development in the MENA region. **ABAAD** also seeks to promote women's equality and participation through policy development, legal reform, and gender mainstreaming, engaging men, eliminating discrimination, and advancing and empowering women to participate effectively and fully in their communities.

ABAAD also seeks to support and collaborate with civil society organisations that are involved in gender equality programmes and advocacy campaigns.



The Danish Refugee Council (**DRC**) is a humanitarian, non-governmental, non-profit organisation working in Lebanon since 2004. In May 2011, **DRC** responded to a call from UNHCR, when the Syrian crisis started and the first Syrian refugees came into Lebanon.

DRC believes that refugees must be able to access protection and durable solutions, and hence the emergency response aims to provide immediate relief and protection both to displaced refugees and to their vulnerable hosts. This is done in an impartial, inclusive, and neutral manner, adhering to the Code of Conduct of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

DRC's emergency strategy focuses on four core sectors of intervention: Provision of Protection, Food (FI) and Non-food Items (NFI), Shelter, and Livelihoods.

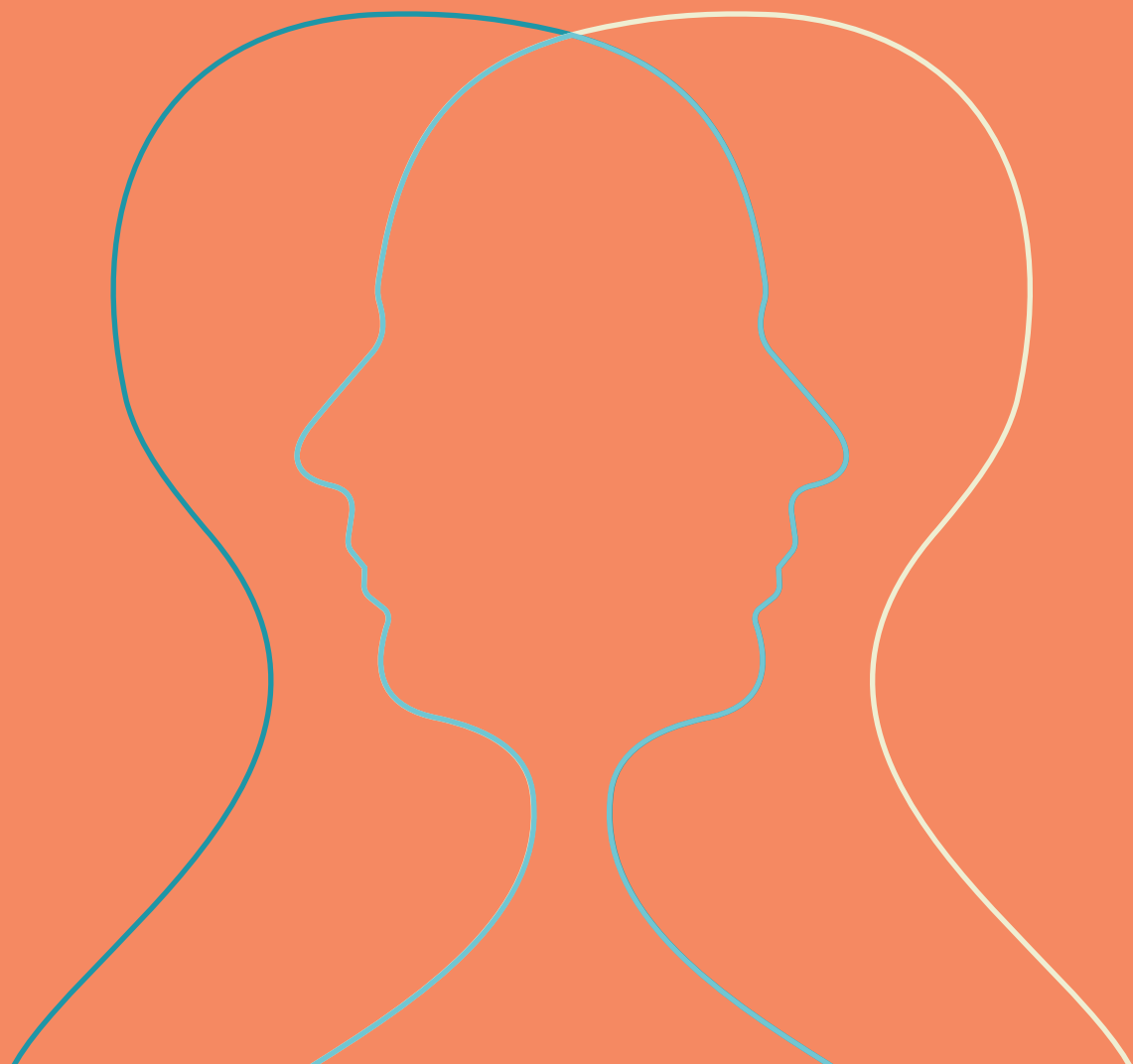


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WHY THIS MANUAL?

This manual is part of a pilot project on engaging men among the Syrian and Lebanese communities for them to understand and become active partners in managing their own stress and anger, as a primary means of preventing and responding to gender-based violence.

The training programme is designed in a practical way that addresses the GBV contributing factors of stress and anger as well as the GBV root causes of gender discrimination. Trainers/facilitators are invited to support men to become actors of change who can assist the process of delivering, evaluating, and fine-tuning the programme. To achieve this end, facilitators are asked to deliver the sessions in the same order in which they are presented within this manual.

Over five sessions, participants and facilitators will share a learning journey through which they build on and consolidate new ideas, and gain confidence about why stress and anger are often expressed by men through violence, why that violence, and how to become proactive to prevent such violence from happening again.

The learning process has been designed to engage adult men through an experimental approach. Participants will become familiar with each topic either through direct discussion or by being guided to draw comparisons with things that have happened in their own lives, using interactive games and group work. All of the games are followed by open discussions with participants about the exercise and the concepts conveyed. It is during these discussions that participants can be encouraged to share more personal experiences and beliefs, and work through their questions and concerns with the support of the group.

The games were developed in Lebanon and tested with Lebanese and Syrian communities, and they take into account the cultural background and challenges faced by men and boys dealing with gender ideologies in Lebanon and Syria.

WHY ENGAGE MEN & BOYS?

DRC's GBV prevention and response programme has traditionally been focused on supporting women and girls to prevent and address the consequences of such violence.

92% of reported incidents are perpetrated against females by males¹.

Therefore, there is a critical need to engage men, not only to help them understand why they are using violence, but to guide them away from perpetrating violence against women and girls, and finally, to offer them an opportunity to become allies against GBV.

¹DRC's GBVIMS data 1 DRC's GBVIMS data for 2014 Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy, Harvard Student Paper.

² Stress and anger have been identified in recent studies as contributing factors to GBV which has worsened after the displacement of refugees in Lebanon (cf. Oxfam GB and ABAAD, Shifting sands, Changing gender roles amongst refugees in Lebanon, September 2013).

WHAT IS THIS MANUAL TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

This Manual was designed as part of a pilot project that aims to empower men to understand their stress and recognise how it may lead to anger and violence.

This approach aims to engage men to avoid and prevent GBV through a phased approach. The first phase aims to encourage men to become allies in ending violence by enabling them to understand stress as a factor that contributes to and perpetuates a culture in which men use and even condone GBV.

The objectives of the Manual are the following:

Objective 1:

Men are able to better identify and manage their stress and anger and to direct it differently, away from a reliance on gender-based violence.²

Objective 2:

Men are able to understand basic concepts of gender equality and become aware of how unequal power relationships are a root cause of gender-based violence.

GUIDING FRAMEWORKS IN ENGAGING MEN

- While men are neither inherently bad nor violent, the majority remain unaware that they live in cultures that confer privilege on males. One such ‘privilege’ is that men are allowed, or even expected, to use violence against women and girls, and can do so without punishment.
- Cultures promoting gender inequality often rely on men being socialised according to a patriarchal (**male-centred**) and binary (**male versus female, strong versus weak**) understanding of gender and gender relations.
- To engage men is to invite them to transform themselves, and, by this means, to change the whole of society. If men are given the tools and the know-how to change, they can make a choice to live differently. They can move from believing in traditional and hegemonic gender roles that hurt and control, to choosing behaviours that promote personal and social peace.
- Human Rights and Gender Equality are not abstract concepts: they provide frameworks within which men and women can live more equal, fulfilling lives.
- This process of transformation should be one where the men engaged can move at their own pace and do not feel judged. Almost all men who attend the course will have been deeply shaped by patriarchal norms and will never

have learned to question why they behave as they do. They are likely to feel challenged by the subject material in this course and may feel blamed when they recognise how they have been socialised to support and perpetrate GBV.

- Men and women alike are socialised within the patriarchal system. Until they see its values as problematic, they will not feel motivated to challenge it. They are also likely to face resistance from others – both men and women – when they begin to see themselves as responsible for changing a violence-promoting system. The process of engaging men to support real and sustainable gender transformation is one that will take both, time and resources. It usually cannot happen in just a few sessions. The system being challenged is centuries old. This means that long-term effort, resources, and commitment are necessary to create the capacity for individual change. Trainings are an invaluable tool in starting and facilitating the transformation process: but they are only a tool.
- Masculinities and interpretations of ‘correct’ gender behaviour may differ from culture to culture. While trainers and programme developers must make extra efforts to ensure that trainings (**venue, trainers, discussions, etc.**) are sensitive to the cultural environment, it is also important not to get so caught up in ‘cultural sensitivity’ that the transformational message behind this training gets lost.

WHO IS THIS MANUAL FOR?

This Manual is an internal document addressed at DRC staff working on GBV prevention and response. It will support DRC’s psychosocial support (PSS) assistants to provide structured sessions to men through outreach interventions.

HOW SHOULD THIS MANUAL BE USED?

- Engaging men should take place in refugee settlements (e.g. ITS³, collective shelters, or other gatherings) where DRC operates through other outreach activities. There should be a prior engagement with the community through ongoing DRC presence in other sectors (**e.g. CSMC⁴ activities**).
- Protection monitoring visits should have been conducted in order to better understand the community and risk factors for women, girls, boys, and men.

³ ITS: Informal tented settlements

⁴ CSMC: Collective Site management and coordination.

⁵ During an evaluation of DRC Lebanon’s community-based approach, it has been recommended to avoid relying on transportation for community-based intervention due to the lack of sustainability.

⁶ The PSS curriculum to male caregivers is based on the International Rescue Committee (IRC)’s curriculum on parenting skills and includes a set of 4 mandatory and 4 optional sessions. The present curriculum will be used following the 4 to 8 sessions provided to male caregivers.

⁷ See DRC Lebanon, Manual on Community-Based Committees, January 2015.

- Initial information sessions to men on available services and other activities should be conducted prior to the beginning of the sessions in order to build trust with communities.
- Safe and confidential space in the settlements should be identified to conduct the sessions (**e.g. specific tents, municipalities, local service providers, etc.**)⁵

The sessions will be delivered as part of the psychosocial (**PSS**) curriculum with male caregivers on parenting skills.⁶ Following the four core sessions on parenting skills, DRC’s PSS assistants will deliver the five sessions outlined in this manual to the same group of men.

Following the completion of the five sessions, DRC will be able to support the men’s group, if they wish, to build community-based committees according to DRC guidelines.⁷ The mandate of these committees will vary from one committee to another but should be linked to gender equality and GBV prevention and response.

WHO SHOULD FACILITATE THE SESSIONS?

Each field office should identify, amongst its PSS team, one or two focal points to deliver the Engaging Men sessions. The PSS assistants identified should meet the below competencies and skills in order to deliver the sessions:

01. The facilitator should have a social work background (educational and/or professional) and, genuine interest in gender equality issues.

02. The staff member should be trained on the following topics:

- GBV prevention and response (including how to deal with disclosure of GBV both by survivors and perpetrators; both by females and males). N.B. Never assume that GBV is directed towards females exclusively, especially in the context of war/armed conflicts, during which sexual violence can be directed towards men. Staff should have a strong understanding of the root causes, contributing factors, and consequences (social, psychological and physical) of GBV as well as the response services available for survivors of GBV.
- Holistic behaviour change communication with communities: while focusing on engaging men and boys, women and girls also need to be supported to understand positive masculinities and gender equality.

It is important to build trust with communities of women and girls in the areas where work is being done with men and to explain these interventions with men. It is crucial to prepare everyone within the community for the new ideas that are to be discussed.

- Psychological first aid (PFA)
- Understanding war trauma and post-traumatic stress

03. Staff members should know how to facilitate PSS sessions, including how to deal with resistance, conflict resolution, and emotional distress (this is also why the holistic behaviour change communication with communities approach is strongly recommended).

Without in-depth knowledge in these fields, the messages contained within the activities will not be delivered properly and may even be skewed in a manner that would be harmful to participants and their families (GBV affects all members of a community, so it is important for everyone to be able to learn new concepts and vocabularies for efforts to work, and to “Do No Harm”).

CHOOSING THE RIGHT FACILITATORS

The preferred approach is for two staff members to facilitate sessions so that they can support each other, manage any conflict that might arise, and observe any unanticipated effects that need to be taken into account in the evaluation process.

Individuals who demonstrate a high degree of comfort and familiarity with the materials presented will make more effective and accountable session leaders. Facilitators must keep a field-journal in which they record what happened in each session, dynamics, unexpected issues, breakthroughs, and so on, so that they can accurately and responsively report on the impacts of the sessions and changes over the weeks of work.

When you choose co-facilitators, consider different issues such as the following:

- Will it work best to have a mixed female-male facilitation team?

- Will it work best to have a combination of an older and a younger man facilitating?
- Do you need to consider differences in religion, region, ethnicity, exposure to war, or other such variables in constituting your team?

Much of the resistance to learning new gender approaches comes from intergenerational differences between men. Patriarchal hierarchies rely on older men controlling and shaping younger men. Especially when war has disrupted traditional social structures, including methods of passing on learning and socialisation, there might be mistrust, resistance, and rivalry between men of different generations. The intergenerational dynamic between men could negatively affect the outcome of the sessions.

Similarly, depending on the group, a mixed-sex facilitation team may be difficult to work with, especially since the female co-facilitator will be the only woman in the group. When delicate issues are discussed, it may be impossible for men to speak with a woman present. In this case, depending on available resources, both facilitators conducting sessions may be male, and one or two parallel sessions can be held with women (utilising the whole-of-community approach); bringing both groups together to discuss particular topics of shared importance. This will create gender parity in the group, and serve to demonstrate the similarities between both women and men.

TIPS TO THE TRAINERS:

Tip 1:

This manual is meant to be used on the ground with communities. It is thus important to allow enough time and open discussion in order for participants to begin to assimilate knowledge they will gain (**with respect to gender**) into new attitudes and behaviours. DRC has observed – in its work within Lebanese and Syrian populations – patriarchal ideas of male control often result in increasing violence. However, social habits and beliefs that promote male dominance become even more challenging when men themselves feel powerless: patriarchy tells them to protect and provide for women and children. However, armed conflicts and displacements weaken men and make them more vulnerable materially, physically, and emotionally. Armed conflicts and displacement undermine traditional concepts of masculinity – including the idea that older men have control over younger men – in devastating ways. This may, however, provide an opportunity to revisit and re-balance gender roles.

Tip 2:

Given that this training programme hopes to trigger new conversations about positive masculinity in situations that are already very unpredictable, trainers should expect to find that target populations may be **resistant to certain concepts** that defy established cultural norms. This can be particularly true in displacement settings when, sometimes, reinforcing culturally accepted gender discriminatory behaviours is the only way men may get a feeling of security and control.



Men are told they are strong, but war and displacement show them they can be weak and vulnerable. Thus, facilitators need to be able to empathize with men affected by displacement. Facilitators should therefore have a strong understanding that all refugees are particularly affected by the displacement which can result in a range trauma, behaviours and attitudes, including violence. When the participants show resistance to certain concepts, it is crucial that facilitators adopt a non-judgmental reaction but rather sees this resistance as a starting point to open discussion with the participants. This will create a safe space for participants to discuss difficult issues, and question traditional gender roles.

Tip 3:

The trauma that these populations have recently undergone and are currently undergoing due to their displacement can be overwhelming. Facilitators might find it challenging to show the participants the relevance of discussing gender equality in people's lives while basic needs such as food, water, and security are not met. The training sessions have to be very practical and give tangible and immediate benefits to participants – stress relief, improvements in interpersonal dynamics in the family or at work. Therefore, participants can actually see how managing their anger and stress is a starting point for promoting greater gender equality, and recognise that this can enhance their daily lives and the lives of those around them.

HOW TO RECRUIT MEN?

Recruiting and retaining men for the training sessions might prove challenging [...] As much as possible, participants should be grouped together around their similar life experiences.

Recruiting men and ensuring their commitment throughout the sessions can be challenging. The target group is likely to prioritise livelihood activities that allow them to meet their basic needs (e.g. finding work). Thus, they might not consider these sessions important to participate in.

Given the challenges they face in their daily lives, finding appropriate and relevant methods to recruit and retain participants is the cornerstone of a successful implementation of this manual. It will determine the group dynamics and outcomes.

01 . As much as possible, participants should be grouped according to their similar life experiences. The more they share with each other, the more they will connect, develop positive group dynamics, and identify with each other.

02 . Participants should be within the same age range.

Once participants are identified, and before the sessions begin, DRC should ensure that the following pre-requisites are addressed:

- The activities and their objectives are all presented to the participants.
- Participants should sign a registration form committing them to attend the full set of sessions.⁸

⁸ NB. Since this is a pilot project, DRC may draw some lessons-learned from the training sessions on what tools can be used to increase commitment from participants.

As a side note, two things are particularly important to mention:

First, one strength of the games in this manual is that they do not focus on gender in an obvious manner, but rather convey gender-sensitive messages in an implicit manner. Most of the games in this manual are focused on stress and anger management. The activities are most effective when presented to participants as such. Following the game, discussions can begin on gender roles, ending men's violence against women, and Gender Equality.

Second, DRC will, in the recruitment of men for these trainings, be able to rely on the trust that it has established previously with these men and their communities. Other services provided to the community, professionalism, confidentiality, effectiveness of programmes, and unconditional positive regard towards beneficiaries on the part of the DRC staff and consultants are crucial elements in fostering and building trust. It is on this basis that DRC can recruit men for these trainings, both through other services provided, and by 'word of mouth' as a result of DRC's reputation among members of the community.

Building Trust:



- Share with participants in an empathic way your awareness of their daily struggle.
- Explain why these sessions are important and what the major objectives are.
- Appreciate the effort of participants to attend the sessions.
- Give the participants the choice of whether or not to attend. However, once the curriculum starts, participants should commit to attending all sessions.

BEGINNING THE SESSIONS: BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Duration and timing

- Each session should not take longer than 1 – 1.5 hours. The total time frame for conducting these sessions should be one and a half months – i.e. one session a week.
- The schedule of the sessions should, to the greatest extent possible, be adapted based on the participants' availability and concurring commitments. The venue at which the sessions will be conducted should be within easy reach of the participants.

Number of participants

- It is recommended to keep the number of participants between 8 and 12. Small groups are more effective to help develop a dynamic that will foster the group's feeling of safety and building trust.

Group's specificities

Once the participants are identified, prior to forming the groups, it is recommended to identify the group's specificities and organise them accordingly.

What are the commonalities of this particular age group, in terms of age, life experience (e.g. **marital status and fatherhood, war and displacement experiences, etc...**)?

- Have they had any previous sessions on stress management?
- Have they had previous sessions on preventing GBV?
- What level of understanding do they already have of GBV?
- Why are the participants interested in this training?
- What are the participants' goals/expectations?
- What do they hope to achieve by joining the sessions?

STRUCTURE OF EACH SESSION

Each session should be structured in a similar way. Participants should be informed about this structure in order to know what to expect.

- 01.** Opening ritual: checking in with each other, finding out how participants are doing, and whether they are feeling any benefits from the previous session they attended.
- 02.** Discussion to introduce the plan for the session that is about to begin.
- 03.** Exercise of the day.
- 04.** Discussion about the exercise of the day.
- 05.** Participatory evaluation of the session and introduction of the subject of the next discussion.
- 06.** Ritual of closure.

STRUCTURE OF EACH SESSION

This general plan can be adapted based on the group dynamic and on the facilitator's observations. Energisers might be suggested during the session if the facilitator feels that the group is tired or not engaged in the discussions/exercises. However, the choice of rituals, exercises, and points of discussion should be logically related and interlinked throughout the session. In other words, each of the steps within the session should logically introduce the following:

Example of ritual of beginning/end:

Check-in/check-out exercise:

Invite participants to talk about the importance of talking about emotions/feelings – both our own and other people's. Then go around the room and invite each person to say one word about how they feel today. This will help them to identify and express their own feelings, and switch from the “doing” mode (**as we are conditioned to be every day, getting our work done and keeping our homes running**) to the “feeling” mode. Feelings are not always treated as important, so it is a chance to get in the practice of noticing and respecting feelings. Check-in may feel awkward at first, and that is perfectly fine. It will probably feel less strange as time goes on. The facilitator should start the first check in, to model it for the participants.

Four rules for check-in:

- Must be brief
- No interrupting, and no conversations or responding to what people say
- It is always okay to pass — you do not have to check in — just say “pass”
- All feelings are okay —sometimes it feels like you have to say something positive just because other people are, but you do not. You can share whatever feelings you are having.

Some sessions might lead to conflict or tensions amongst the group. In these cases, it is recommended to ask the group to conduct a relaxation exercise⁹.

AGREEING ON GROUND RULES

Ground rules are essential to create a safe and caring environment. It is recommended to develop a short list of ground rules with the participants at the beginning of the support process, as it generates a greater sense of ownership and engagement. The setting of ground rules is one means of establishing safety and trust among group participants before they begin interaction.

Ground rules may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Listening
- Being open to others' opinions
- Honesty
- Patience
- Respecting confidentiality
- Willingness to learn
- Supporting and assisting each other
- Working at a pace convenient to all individuals involved
- Arriving on time and attending the full session
- Avoiding distractions: cell phones to be switched off for the duration of the session
- Attending all the sessions

Ground rules can be further integrated into the group dynamics if each concept is developed in the group by the participants themselves. For example, the facilitator can ask participants to work in subgroups on defining some of the core concepts, like the concepts of confidentiality, patience, and being non-judgmental. Each sub-group should come out with a clear definition of the concept and should explain why this concept is important when individuals speak in the group.

⁹For an example of relaxation, refer to Annex 1: Psychosocial intervention: Relaxation exercise

SESSIONS OF THE MANUAL

This Manual includes five sessions based on resources already tested in Lebanon. The facilitator might switch sessions based on the dynamic and expectations of the group, and with their consent.

Session 1:

UNDERSTANDING STRESS FACTORS IN OUR LIVES

Session 2:

UNDERSTANDING NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER

Session 3:

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPRESSING STRESS AND EMOTIONS

Session 4:

UNDERSTANDING GENDER ROLES (PART 1)

Session 5:

UNDERSTANDING GENDER ROLES (PART 2)

WHY IS THIS SESSION IMPORTANT?

In order to understand the necessity of stress and anger management, it is important to understand what triggers stress and anger. A **'stressor'** is a trigger that leads to a stressful response. If they are not understood and overcome, stressors can accumulate over time, and can build even greater tension, amplifying the levels of stress that an individual experiences. Despite an individual's tolerance of stress, without ways to release his/her stress, negative psychological and physical expressions will occur. Especially in communities that are tolerant of men's anger and violence, whether physical or emotional, can become a 'normalised' behaviour that men use.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD LEARN...

- Stress builds up if it is avoided. It does not disappear if not released or attended to.
- It is important to understand and manage one's own stress: other people are not the triggers for it and cannot be blamed for one's anger, frustration, or sadness.
- Stress can manifest differently for men and women, because social expectations of men's and women's behaviours are different – including how they are allowed to respond to triggering events.

Suggested Materials:

- Plenty of marbles/similar object (300-500) depending on the size of the group
- Cups (1 per participant)
- Water
- Tissue paper/Paper towels
- Medium sized bowls (1 per participant)
- Tape (scotch or masking)

Instructions:

The set-up for the game should be as follows:

- Cover the top of the bowl with a paper towel, and fix it with tape.
- Fill cups (1 per participant) with marbles and water. You may have to continue filling the cup with water throughout the game as the marbles in the cup should be constantly immersed in water.
- Participants will take marbles, one at a time, from the cup and place them on the tissue.
- Participants repeat the above step until the tissue breaks.

The objective of the game (for the participants) is to place as many marbles on the tissue as they can before the tissue tears and the marbles fall into the bowl.

Opening the discussion:

Ask participants how many marbles they managed to add before the tissue tore at the end of the game.

Ask participants if they think it would be possible to endlessly place marbles upon the tissue without it breaking.

Begin analogous discussion relating the game to stresses in our lives and the importance of stress and anger management:

- The tissue represents a threshold of an individual's capacity to hold stress.
- The marbles represent different stressors in an individual's life.
- Regardless of how strong an individual's capacity to hold stress is, without the proper release of stress in their lives, the threshold will break.
- When stressors compile, psychological and physical responses to those stressors will begin to negatively affect the individual's life.
- Avoiding or failing to acknowledge the stress in our lives does not make it go away; it still weighs on us as individuals and affects those close to us.
- The only way to prevent the negative effects of these stressors is to release them in a healthy manner (taking marbles off the tissue before the tissue breaks).

Open up the discussion for the participants:

Share experiences of when there have been a large number of stresses in their lives, and how it affected their mood, interactions with others, health, etc...

What are some of the things that are sources of stress for you? What stresses particularly have a negative effect on you? Can you explain why?

What do you do to relieve stress when there are many stressors in your life:

What are positive stress management techniques, how do they become good habits, and what happens when you use them?

What are negative stress management techniques, what makes you resort to them, how do you and others feel when you use them?

QUESTIONS: BRINGING GENDER INTO THE SESSION

Have you observed whether men and women have different sources of stress? How would you describe these?

Have you observed whether men and women use different approaches to face and deal with stress? How would you describe these?

Have you observed whether stress changes at different points in our lives/across the life cycle? Do you remember when you learned the responses to stress that you practice today, and who you learned them from?

Have you observed any differences in these stressors? If so, what do you attribute them to?

Have you observed whether your stress levels, and how you respond to them, affects your inter-personal relationships, for example, your relationships with your family members? If yes, how?



TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR

Tip 1:

If there are not enough materials, a few individuals may play the game while the other participants observe. Participants can observe their own and other players' stress responses: do they get excited or anxious as they play and if so, how do they respond? All participants can take part in the discussion, as this is not an experiential technique.

Tip 2:

Trainers should be aware that water might spill in the area that the game is being played and make sure players are safe.

Tip 3:

If the trainer so chooses, they can begin discussions while the game is actually going on about the importance of communication and emotional expression in managing stress and anger. Should any participants affirm that they do not speak about their stress, the trainer should open up a discussion about "why do we not openly speak of the stresses in our lives"?

Tip 4

Trainers should keep questions during discussions open-ended, to allow for discussion and self-expression.

Tip 5:

It is important for participants to observe how they became gendered in their responses – for example, learning from father or mother or other elders, and/or being expected to behave as they do, or expect certain behaviours from others.

WHY IS THIS SESSION IMPORTANT?

Anger is a natural emotion. To feel anger is not a negative thing. It is how we express our anger that can be either healthy or problematic. An unhealthy expression of anger is one that is too severe or too constant/regular, or leads to violence.

This exercise will address extreme behavioural manifestations of anger. An expression of anger, and the severity of that expression, can do major damage to a person's psychological, physical, and social well-being, and cause harm to those around them. It is necessary for participants to understand this cycle of cause and effect in their attempts to monitor and manage their own anger reactions.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD LEARN...

- The negative consequences of expressing anger through violence, and how to manage their anger before they lose control.
- That should their anger reaction be too severe, it can damage their health psychologically and physically, as well as affect social relationships that they value.
- That rage often leads to emotional, verbal, psychological, and physical violence.
- Whether and how the expression of anger can be different for men and women, and how we are often taught to handle anger based on stereotypes about appropriate masculine and feminine behaviour, usually even before we are old enough to question what we are being taught.

Suggested Materials:

- Medium sized bucket with holes in it
- Large bucket
- Enough sand, water, or any similar available material to fill 2 large buckets

Instructions:

The facilitator will begin by demonstrating the exercise to participants.

- The facilitator will show that the smaller-sized bucket has some holes in it.
- The facilitator fills the larger-sized bucket with sand, water, or similar, and pours it into the medium bucket all at once (the sand/water should overflow from the top).
- The facilitator waits for the medium bucket to empty, and runs a second experiment.
- The facilitator again fills the larger-sized bucket with sand, water, or similar and pours it into the smaller sized bucket, but this time stopping before the bucket overflows from the top (the sand/water is contained in the bucket and does not overflow).

The facilitator leads the group in open discussion of the experiment, and its relation to stress and anger management.

Opening the discussion:

The facilitator asks participants what the difference between the 1st and 2nd experiments was (i.e. why did the bucket not overflow the second time?)

The facilitator should draw the analogy that the bucket symbolises how much stress an individual can hold before they start to express it in a way that is unhealthy for them and those around them. When too much water/sand (i.e. rage/anger) is poured into the bucket, it overflows. The extreme expression of anger/rage, can have negative effects on the individual psychologically and physically, and damage others in the individual's life – it cannot be contained.

The facilitator points out that in the second experiment, when the level of sand/water could be contained, this symbolised holding anger in, or redirecting it, before it spills out and makes a mess.

The facilitator can lead the group into a discussion on rage and the adverse effects of such a reaction to stress and anger.

The facilitator might ask:

- Can anyone give me an example of rage that you have seen, or have yourself, expressed?
- What are the effects of uncontained rage?
- On the individual?
- On those in the individual's social circle?
- Why does rage so often result in violence, of whatever form?
- What effects did/does rage produce – on you and on others? Is it helpful, does it get you what you want? If yes, is there a price to pay for getting your own way? If no, what do you have to do afterwards to 'clean up the mess'?

QUESTIONS: BRINGING GENDER INTO THE SESSION

Have you observed whether you and others show anger differently or direct rage in different ways, depending on whether the person you are directing it at is male or female, older or younger?

Have you observed whether men and women have different responses to rage (whether your own or that of others)? If yes, why do you think they react differently?

Are there any social expectations about rage that are conditioning your responses and those of others?

When and where did you learn what you can do with anger and how to express anger? Who did you learn from?

How did the people around you react when you first began to act angrily – was there any punishment for your behaviour?

Did you observe differences in expressions of rage between male and female household members, siblings, parents etc...?

How does anger/rage hurt us and our close ones? What, if anything, do you do after you see rage expressed or become furiously angry yourself? What consequences are there of rage – and are they different for women and men?

If you, and others, did not rely on or tolerate violent expressions of anger, what difference do you think it would make in families and communities?

TIPS FOR THE FACILITATOR

Tip 1:

The purpose of all these discussions should be to allow participants to take some distance from their behaviours and think mindfully about how they are produced. What is their social intention? How are gender 'norms' actually reinforced when men are taught they can be as angry as they like, with no consequences? What happens to us when we begin to see our responses as 'learned' rather than 'innate'? What happens when we see that male privilege is both put in place by and kept strong through violence? Discussions of issues like this are really helpful to enable men to see that what they do is because they are taught and enabled/allowed to behave in destructive ways. When they grasp this, they can think about personal change.

Tip 2:

If the facilitator wishes to, they can have a participant volunteer to help them with the experiments to make them a bit more interactive.

Tip 3:

When discussing examples of rage, be aware of the potentially personal nature of these stories. Kindly ask participants to use discretion in their examples of rage, or to speak about what they have observed rather than what they have done. If disclosure of specific GBV incidents happens, thank the participant for sharing and tell him that he will have an opportunity, at the end of the session, to discuss the matter privately with you if he so wishes.

Tip 4:

Facilitators draw upon the importance of stress and anger management in terms of controlling the severity of our reactions to stressors and situations in our lives in order

to prevent or control rage. To elaborate, a preventative strategy is the ideal strategy for the trainer to promote to the participants. When an individual reaches a state of 'rage' (extreme anger) they will not be able to control their actions, reactions, behaviours, or communication skills with ease.

The hypothalamus in the brainstem – the 'primitive brain' takes over during heightened emotional states. There is often regret and remorse after the episode of rage has passed, but by then the violence has already occurred. The damage is done and now there is a personal mess to clean up. Individuals are often incapable of positive and non-violent communication and empathy during fits of rage.

The facilitator does not need to explain the neurology behind rage, but in knowing how the brain biologically responds to rage, the facilitator can understand and communicate to the participants that the best way to deal with rage is to become mindful about when your anger is growing, to look for your own warning signs, and to develop a conscious set of tools through which to prevent your own anger from escalating. This is done by focusing on the stressors in one's life that eventually increase the probability of entering into a fit of rage and mitigating those stressors before they catalyse a rage reaction. This is also in line with proper lifestyle changes such as proper diet and sleeping habits, physical fitness, and being able to emotionally express stressors in your life with friends and family you trust.

Tip 5:

The most important aspect of controlling one's own rage, however, is to accept that other people are not responsible for your rage and do not have to bear the consequences of you lashing out. They are not the problem, even if you find their behaviour provocative. The only person you can control is yourself, so ending anger and violence is a personal journey that begins with each one, individually, choosing not to use angry and destructive behaviours.

WHY IS THIS GAME IMPORTANT?

Now that the participants understand the negative effect of stress and anger (expression, frequency, and severity), it is important to realise how healthy methods of stress relief are necessary for their mental well-being, and for keeping healthy interpersonal interactions with others.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD LEARN...

- The importance of expressing one's emotions in a non-destructive way, as a strategy for stress relief and management.
- To cope differently with stress, especially through learning about taking personal responsibility for your feelings and not blaming them on others, or making them the objects of your bad feelings. This is especially important to learn when we hope to facilitate positive changes in interpersonal gender dynamics: men are taught, from birth, that females are less valuable and important than they are, and therefore do not deserve men's respect and care, although they have to care for men and meet their needs. A huge part of unlearning that paradigm is to become responsible for how you feel and behave and not to blame another or make excuses for your violence towards others. Behavioural change can only come from within, through learning a new set of responses and making different choices about how to react when things are difficult.

Suggested Materials:

- Tennis balls or similar
- Paper and pens

Instructions:

The group is divided into teams of 3 people.

- The different participants in the group have specific roles for the upcoming game: participant **A** will toss tennis balls at a regular rate to participant **B** (they need to stand about 3 meters apart), who will catch the tennis balls. Participant **C** will count the number of tennis balls caught by participant **B**.
- The point of the game is for **B** to catch as many tennis balls as he can without dropping any.
- At the end of the game, **C** records how many tennis balls were caught and how long it took for **B** to drop a ball.
- The first time they play the game, there should be 'no mercy': **A** should throw fast and hard and **C** should shout out when a ball is dropped. **B** will feel isolated and overwhelmed – his performance is being 'judged' by **C**, who is counting his missed balls, and he is being 'attacked' by **A**, who is throwing too many balls, too fast.
- Ask **B** to explain to the others how he is feeling at this point. Is he in control? What feelings are coming up? How does he feel about the game and the other players?
- The game is then played again with one adaption: in the second version, the competitive and stressful edge is taken out of the game. At any point of the game, **B** can say "pause" whenever he feels he is carrying too many balls, in which case, **A** will not throw any more balls while **B** transfers the balls currently in his possession to **C**. When they are ready for **A** to begin throwing balls again, they say "un-pause". The game ends when **B** drops a ball, or after 5 minutes of play. With **C**'s help as ball holder and **A**'s cooperation (not throwing balls during the pause), **B** should be able to collect many more balls than previously.

Again, debrief: what feels different the second time? What feelings are coming up for the players? Which version of the game is more fun and fulfilling?



Opening the discussion:

The game is related to analogies to stressors in life, and how one deals with them.

The facilitator explains that the balls represent stress in our lives. The other players are the ‘triggers’ of stress in **game 1** and they help us manage our stress in **game 2**.

In the first game, **B** (the one receiving the balls) attempts to deal with all of the stress he experiences. When the balls are thrown too fast and he is forced to make errors such as dropping the ball(s), **B** is exposed to stress and can observe his responses, including any negative reactions that come up. **B** will not be able to withhold this stress and will be affected by it, too (i.e. he will not be able to carry all the balls). He will also feel isolated, picked on by the others, and a loss of control. He may even feel vulnerable, hurt, and angry.

In the second game, by pausing and handing over the balls to **C**, **B** is analogously relieving the stresses in his life by “sharing them with another person”. The “sharing” can range from simple emotional expression to asking for help, both of which relieve stress.

The facilitators lead a discussion about how many more balls the team was able to catch and hold in the second experiment when **B** transferred balls to **C**. Compared to the first experiment, how is everyone feeling? Which version of the game did they prefer and why?

Facilitators then discuss how individuals can be much more efficient and withhold stress when stressors are relieved through emotional expression, cooperation, and positive sharing with others.

Facilitators should further highlight how men are taught, from a young age, that emotional expression is a negative thing and to keep their emotions to themselves. Stress does not, however, dissipate if ignored, and eventually is expressed in a negative way.

The facilitator can discuss discretely the implications of how men deal with stress and violence. This conversation should be facilitated carefully as it can lead to disclosure of GBV incidents and should be managed by highly qualified social workers that have significant experience in GBV prevention and response.

QUESTIONS: BRINGING GENDER INTO THE SESSION

What have you observed in your society about relying on others to help relieve stresses in our lives?

Have you observed a difference between how men and women cooperate with and support one another?

What have you observed about how women and men share – or do not share – their emotions?

Can you think of any lessons you have learned about when and whether men can talk to or rely on women?

What happens if men do ask women for help?

Have you observed whether it is easier for men or for women to express their emotions in our society? Why? Have you observed whether other people respond differently? Does anyone ‘break the rules’ on sharing stress? If yes, what have you seen happen? Why?



WHY IS THIS GAME IMPORTANT?

Lebanese and Syrian societies are built around deeply entrenched gender roles and norms that are passed on to children from birth and reinforced throughout their lives. It is important to understand how the role models presented to boys and girls are influenced by social expectations of ‘proper’ and ‘acceptable’ gender roles and how those role models influence the choices, actions, beliefs, and attitudes that shape the adult lives of men and women. Even though they are usually presented as ‘innate’, ‘given’, ‘traditional’ or in other ways unchanging, gender roles and norms are, in reality, surprisingly flexible and fluid. This is the case during displacement when women and girls might gain increased responsibilities and roles compared to men. Sometimes it is this very fluidity that causes the most stress in individual lives: some people spend a lot of energy trying to keep things the same way they imagine them to have been in the past. When what they long for is not true anymore, they can experience alienation, anger, rage, stress, and loss. In Lebanon, the displacement of Syrians has caused some men to lose their position as providers and protectors of the family. This can push them to reinforce their dominant role by resorting to violence.

If participants spend some time unpacking how and why gender expectations are shaped as they are, exploring the past for insights into how such roles came about and what purpose they fulfill in creating social structures, and if they think carefully about which of the ideas they inherited are still relevant and useful, they can start to think about what they would like to change to make their lives better. They will be able to grasp the idea of gender transformation. They will gain the skill and courage to imagine a future, and act in the present, in ways that relieve them of the negative and burdensome aspects of received, inequality-based gender roles. They will thus be able to live more peaceful and truthful lives enriched by relationships that are mutually supportive and life-affirming.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD LEARN...

- How their role models affect their understanding and expectations about how women and men “should” behave in their society.
- How this socialisation affects their thoughts, actions, and behaviours – how it shapes their choices.
- How they themselves now participate in maintaining and enforcing gender ideologies; and how they can make different choices in the future that will change their lives and the lives of those they love for the better.

Suggested Materials:



- Flipchart paper
- Markers

Instructions:

- Facilitators divide the group into two sub-groups. One group will reflect on who men look up to and the other group will reflect on who women look up to. It is crucial that the trainer be well-trained on gender and how gender ideologies come about, in order to challenge entrenched beliefs that men may have both about their own, as well as a woman's or a girl's socialisation processes.
- Both groups are asked to reflect on the role models that they and women had as children – the people they learned their own gender ideologies and behaviours from (i.e. celebrity, fictional character, family member, sayings, expressions of mottos about what men and women are supposed to do and be like, etc.): who were they? What did they do that made them role models? How did they shape the participants' image of what it means to be a woman/man? Can participants think of ways in which they resist any of the ideas handed on to them, or are there any that they insist on even more strongly than they were taught? Why?
- Do they see the same role models influencing the lives of young people/children today or do they see changes in how gender is modelled? Here, talk about whether there is more conservatism at work today, or more liberalism – what has changed in the social sphere that has led to changes (good or bad) in how individuals 'perform' gender? Are the changes perceived as a source of stress and anger? If so, how and why can individuals change their responses?
- What linkages can participants make between 'role models' and 'stressors'? Is it still possible and desirable to 'be a man' the way your father, uncles, or grandfather were? What happens when traumatic and unexpected events (like a war) occur: do men's memories of their role models help them in such situations? Or do they have to find new ways of being? Is this stressful? What feelings come up? (Link this discussion to ground already covered in weeks 1-3: the point is for participants to start thinking about how 'performing gender' can itself be a stressor. If they see this, they will better understand why it could help them to change).



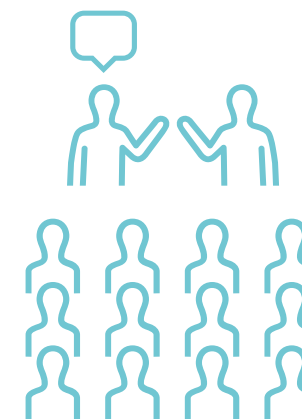
Opening the discussion:

All the main points are written on a flip chart in both groups, and a group presenter is designated.

Both groups reconvene into the original larger group. Presenters from each group present the content of their discussion to the larger group.

Facilitators lead a discussion on the importance of role models that aid in constructing our concepts of societal gender roles, like what is acceptable for men and women to act, think, etc....

Facilitators then take the discussion further: where, how, and why do we see changes in the 'given' gender order? What brings about such changes? Are they helpful or negative (or in terms of 'stressors' – do they create stress, or reduce it)? What changes have participants seen or experienced in their own lives, or in how they themselves act as role models today?



QUESTIONS: BRINGING GENDER INTO THE SESSION

What characteristics of being a 'proper man' or 'proper woman' do we learn from our childhood role models? What happens if we challenge them? What happens if we conform? What happens if we want to behave like our role models but find ourselves in such different circumstances that we cannot? (Relate back to the 'stressors' conversations).

If there are major differences between the role models of men and women, why? What weight have participants noticed society giving to 'good' man and woman? What happens to those who cannot or will not follow their society's trends?

How did our role models impact our concept of what it means to be a woman or man in our society? What happens if an individual behaves differently from social expectations, and as we watch the treatment given to those who are 'different', what do we ourselves learn?

How influential do you feel a role model could be in teaching and modelling gendered behaviours that defy or challenge the social norm, including by modelling behaviours that minimise inequalities between women and men?



WHY IS THIS SESSION IMPORTANT?

It is important to understand how gender socialisation is deeply rooted in, and strongly reinforced by, social norms, and how it shapes and organises men/women's expectations based on their sex. A lot of the stress we face in our daily lives – as well as the ways in which we react to this stress – is determined by our gender socialisation. When we start to invite new questions and ideas into our lives as a means to reduce our stress, we often come up against anger, pain, frustration (but also comfort!) in our personal expectations of ourselves as 'successful' men or women.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD LEARN...

- How their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours about 'appropriate,' 'normal,' or 'successful' gender roles are influenced by their upbringing and reinforced by the social norms expected within patriarchal societies.

Suggested Materials:

- Flipchart paper
- Markers

Instructions:

- The facilitator divides the participants into two groups. Each of the groups will have two flipchart papers. The facilitator will ask each group to draw a box on each of the sheets. One is the **“Act like a Man”** box, and the other is the **“Act like a Woman”** box. The groups will also be requested to leave some space outside the boxes, where they can place anything that seems not to fit in, to defy, challenge, or reshape social expectations about appropriate gender behaviours. They can also record anything they have noticed that is not normative – people who make choices or live lifestyles that make them different from the rest.
- The facilitators ask participants in each group to write what is expected of a man inside the **“Act like a Man”** box. All behaviour that is not expected of a man or that is not considered ‘manly’ outside the box. Repeat the same instructions for the **“Act like a Woman”** box, this time focusing on society’s expectations from women. Participants record all their insights on flipcharts.
- Each group nominates a presenter and the two groups reconvene in the big group.

The groups each present the information on their flipchart to the larger group, and the facilitator leads a discussion where the differences are discussed (see “Opening the discussion” and “Questions: Bringing gender into the session”)
- Once the discussion regarding the behaviour expected of the two gender binaries as well as the behaviour that does not conform to each is wrapped up, the facilitator brings up a third flipchart sheet. This time, the sheet is entitled **“Act like a Human.”** The facilitator asks participants to select the behaviours they feel are positive, and that any person should carry out as human beings, rather than as “men” or “women.”

Opening the discussion:

The facilitator leads a discussion on the differences between the expectations for men and women contained within the boxes.

The facilitator informs participants that in the discussion, they may say words or use phrases that are sensitive or offensive to some people. And though it is important that these words are said and discussed, participants need to engage in this activity as respectfully as possible.

QUESTIONS: BRINGING GENDER INTO THE SESSION

How are men taught, and then socially pressured, to be different from women and vice versa?

What feelings are a “real man”/“real woman” supposed to have? What about shared feelings? Are there social spaces in which to be ‘the same’ or ‘just human’ together? If yes, how do we find and nurture these spaces?

What have participants observed about how “real men” are expected to express their feelings? What about their observations on “real women”? What happens to people who do not know, or cannot, or will not, behave within socially accepted norms? How do people generally treat such individuals? What does this treatment tell everyone else about how to behave – and what are the consequences for not behaving ‘normally’?

Are there any common qualities in each of the boxes? What about the qualities outside them?

How many men here are in the box all of the time? Does anyone know any women who are 'inside the box' all the time? What are our reactions to the behaviours that are outside the box? What do we do when we find ourselves or others unable to stay in a box? How would we describe our feelings when we find ourselves or see others 'outside' a box or behaving in a way we (individuals or society at large) think is 'other'? Think about what society values and rewards – staying 'boxed' or being 'free'?

What is said about men inside the box? What is said about men who do not fit into a box? What is said about women who do not fit into a box?

What happens to people who are labelled 'other' or 'outsiders'?

Have you ever observed a situation in which a man went outside the 'real man' box? What happened to him? How did others respond? What did you learn about being an 'insider' or an 'outsider' in your community? What did the person do to try to 'get back in the box'? How did others respond to his efforts? Have you ever observed a man who always stays 'inside the box'? What have you seen happen to him – are there benefits and privileges from being able to do that? Are there any personal costs?

What about women: have you observed any who 'get outside the box'? What about those who always 'stay in the box'? What are the rewards and costs for a woman to do that?

What have you observed about women's safety and their access to social power? Does their relationship to the boxes help them attain some power? Does it protect them and keep them safe?

Do human beings really fit neatly into a 'manly' or 'womanly' box? What about behaviours we share? What about things we do that are not based in or reinforced by 'normality'? Remember that the exercise seeks to look at stereotypes and expectations, and not necessarily at individual behaviour.

Now you have had an opportunity to think about different social 'boxes' and the ways in which they promise individuals power, success, and security if they can conform to certain ideals and behaviours. Do the boxes still seem true to you? Do they deliver what they promise? Do you see ways in which the boxes might be limiting, not freeing? Do you see opportunities for positive change – for example, when people are choosing to move outside the box?

CLOSING REMARKS

Following the last session, the facilitator should help the participants to reflect back on their learning process throughout the sessions.

Ask the participants:

- After these five weeks together, can you see ways in which you might be able to live more freely, seeing the boxes and keeping what is helpful from them but also allowing yourself and others to move outside the box without stress or guilt?
- What do you think would happen to you, your family, and your society if you chose to do some things differently from now onwards?

EXIT STRATEGY

Following the completion of the five sessions, DRC should ensure to follow up on the group of participants once after the sessions.

In addition, DRC should support the participant to identify strategies to further engage in stress-reduction especially to enable better GBV prevention and response. Reducing stress is an integral aspect of this work: GBV can be largely prevented when people learn to develop better anger management skills and ensure practicing them to see the tangible benefits in their lives.

- Community-based committees: DRC can support the participants to form committees whose focus will continue to be on stress management, with an emphasis on how it supports GBV prevention and response.
- Development of IEC materials: Participants can be involved in development and testing of specific key messages that are appropriate for the community.
- Other community-based interventions, including deeper discussions of issues, themes or new questions arising from the initial sessions.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In order to measure the effectiveness of the approach adopted throughout the present Manual, DRC has a built-in monitoring and evaluation system. Prior to beginning and after the end of the sessions, DRC will ask participants to fill in a survey on their knowledge and attitudes towards gender roles and stress/anger management. Facilitators will play an important role in keeping a weekly evaluation record that can be reflected on after the pilot training is over. Each week, they should use their field diary to record what questions or solutions came up, any unanticipated responses, any issues that arise between sessions and get reported on, or other relevant information that can be fed back to make the training stronger and more relevant. Facilitators should take photographs of any written responses – charts etc. – for later discussion with the training programme manager.

A separate debriefing session for all facilitators should be offered, if possible, so that shared learning can be captured and different responses understood.

ACRONYMS

- **CSMS:** Collective Site Management and Coordination
- **EVAW:** Ending violence against women
- **GBV:** Gender-based violence
- **GE:** Gender equality
- **ITS:** Informal tented settlements
- **PSS:** Psychosocial support
- **VAW:** Violence against women

