

GUIDANCE NOTE #1: ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS: DEFINITION AND APPROACHES

Introduction

The SGBV TF expressed the need to have an overview of the different approaches to engage men and boys in order to differentiate them.

This guidance note aims at providing:

- A definition of what engaging men and boys to prevent SGBV is (1)
- The men and boys engagement currently implemented in Lebanon (2)
- The type of intervention commonly used to engage men and boys (3)

1 Definitions

Men and boys can be seen as part of the problem (perpetrators) and as part of the solution to overcome the violence against women and girls (agent of change).

Engaging them means to implicate them to prevent SGBV from happening, i.e. to contribute changing gender norms and power relations in favor of more equal and non-violent relationships between both men and women. When engaged before the violence occurs, we refer to primary prevention. Perpetrators of violence can also participate in programs that aim at stopping the violence they are causing. It is then called “secondary prevention”.

There are two main ideas behind men and boys engagement against SGBV:

- men and boys are partners in reducing women and girls’ vulnerabilities due to the relational and power dynamics of gender;
- men and boys suffer from gender-specific vulnerabilities.

Men and boys can be engaged as part of one-off intervention, specific projects or larger programs that aim to contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment. Involving men, boys or male youth in SGBV prevention is a challenge; and is mainly linked to the fact that SGBV are still commonly believed as a women and girls’ concern only.

Working with men survivors (including LGBTI) is not part of the engagement of men and boys to prevent SGBV. Men survivors of SGBV should be included in specific SGBV response programs that are not covered by this guidance note.

2 Type of engagement

The below categories clarify the types of male engagement in Lebanon. Nevertheless, these categories are often complementary.

2.1 Engaging men and boys through primary SGBV prevention programs

- Engaging adult men as community members

This is the most common type of engagement implemented in Lebanon. Men and male youth, as husbands or relatives of women and girls, play a role in SGBV prevention. For instance, they can stand against child marriage and push for girls' education. They can avoid perpetrating domestic violence. They can become agent of change and participate in peer education. They can take part in community mobilization to spread awareness on SGBV and stand-by women and girls to prevent SGBV.

Many designed curricula exists in Lebanon along with informal tools (such as awareness sessions, and focus group discussions)

- Engaging fathers in positive parenting to promote gender equality

Engaging fathers in such programs aim at protecting girls from early marriage, encouraging non-violent communication and relationships inside the family and promoting gender equality by involving fathers in all aspects of their children's lives. It can include positive parenting skills to participate in child-care and raise non-violent boys. It highlights the fundamental role that can play fathers in family relation.

Two specific curricula specifically target fathers in Lebanon, including one on the topic of early marriage. One of them is currently at the pilot phase (adaptation of Program P).

- Engaging youth in their communities to promote positive masculinities

Engaging children at an early age has a strong impact on social norms and gender equality, and therefore within SGBV prevention: youth are more receptive to the gender equality discourse and are keener to share it and promote it within their peers.

Either through the school system or directly in communities, this type of engagement is tailored for male youth and aimed at promoting gender equality and non-violent relationships between male and female youth. Topics can include street harassment, power relations and their consequences and negative aspects of gender norms and aim at promoting non-violent behaviors and creating supporters of non-violence at the community level.

Male youth can be engaged through schools in collaboration with teachers or outside schools: within a place where male youth gather (sport or community centers, street...).

For instance, 'Program RA' has been used in 6 different projects to engage male youth within their communities.

2.2 Engaging men and boys through secondary prevention programs

- Working with perpetrators of SGBV

This engagement is part of what is called "secondary prevention" and is used to avoid violence to be repeated. This approach is not widely used in Lebanon, and is very sensitive: it requires either obtaining the survivor consent before engaging with perpetrator, or perpetrators to self-refer themselves.

In Lebanon, men centers have been set up where men can share their experience and receive counseling on violent behavior and anger management. Other organizations work with perpetrators of violence at the individual level and with the survivor consent in the frame of family mediation.

This approach is mainly used because of the lack of social services to protect women and children survivors of domestic violence and is not considered as a good practice. In fact, no specific guidelines exist at Lebanon's level to engage perpetrators in a safe way for survivors.

2.3 Engaging with men and boys through specific profession

In addition to engaging men and boys as described above, men and boys can also be engaged via their profession or the role they play in the society. However, these profiles can also include women. Thus encompass SGBV prevention and response in general.

For instance:

- Engage local journalist or media students: promote gender equality and non-violent behaviors via the content of media materials;
- Involve teachers: include a gender equality component in the school curriculum; develop teachers' knowledge on SGBV prevention and response. Give information on services and how to deal with disclosure.
- Work with security forces: ensure SGBV survivors receive adequate response from the law enforcement sector and are referred to appropriate services;
- Engage religious leaders: spread positive message against SGBV including child marriage and domestic violence; play a key role in counseling families on these topics.

3 Type of intervention

Once recruited, men and boys' engagement can take several forms and here are the main common interventions used to engage men and boys to prevent SGBV at the community level.

3.1 Group education

This intervention refers to discussion sessions, educational sessions or awareness-raising sessions with men and/or male youth/boys in a group setting. This is the most common used intervention in Lebanon¹.

Groups need to be formed and allow a good interaction. As such, it is advised that the group do not include more than 15 and less than 7 participants. This will allow discussion within the group, interaction and safe space. Indeed, participants need to feel safe and comfortable to share their opinion, which might not be possible in a larger group. On the opposite, a too small group with less than 8 participants will lack of discussions and debates.

As for the age of the participants, it is advised to include participants from the same age range to ensure that everyone feels comfortable to express his opinion. It is recommended to use non-mixed groups to create safer space for participants and ensure power dynamics between men and women or boys and girls do not impact negatively on the session. Mixed groups (men and women, boys and girls) can be used on an ad-hoc basis to engage participants in gender equality discussion and to understand better each gender's experience. This has to be very carefully implemented (ensure that participants agree, that they feel safe sharing their ideas).

Number of sessions and frequency

If one-off interventions can have a proven impact if very well designed, it is however advised to commit for 10 to 16 weeks, including sessions of 2 to 2,5 hours per sessions, leaving a few days or a week between 2 sessions to leave time to participants to reflect on the session content.

Topics recommended to discuss

Ideally, group education should be comprehensive and deal with causes and consequences of SGBV, be contextualized so participants can identify themselves and find out solutions to prevent violence.

It generally includes sessions on: masculinities and gender norms and their role on power relations and relationships, sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, non-violent communication. Other topics such as drug use, healthy relationships, family planning and positive fatherhood can also be included depending on the participants' age.

¹ 78% of the reported activities use group education interventions (see mapping – Aug 2018)

Group education curricula should be adapted to the audience's interest and experience and connected to their real life. It should help the participants to reflect on their own experience and to analyze how gender norms affect their relation with their partners, families and relationships in general.

Ideally, practical and skills-building activities should be included throughout the sessions to reinforce the participants' knowledge:

- role plays (e.g.: include a session on how to express feelings, how to solve conflict without using violence in the context of a couple relationship)
- real-life exercise (e.g.: learn how to change diapers on a baby)
- team work activities (e.g.: experiencing collaboration, positive communication and leadership with the pyramid challenge)
- 'what-if' activities: using a real life situation and ask the question: "what would you do in this case?"
- reflecting on self-experience (e.g.: analyzing life events and what role had gender norms played)

Note:

The role of the facilitator is central to a group education intervention and this aspect should not be neglected: creating a safe space for participants to express their views and ideas and asking questions without fearing their peers' judgment or being mocked is essential to a sustainable change towards gender equality.

To ensure sustainable change in attitudes and behaviors, group education interventions should ideally be part of a larger project that includes community mobilization or service-based activities.

Possible curriculum:

For youth: 'Program Ra', ABAAD. For fathers: 'Program P', ABAAD (pilot phase currently implemented). For trainers/facilitators: 'Outside the box' ABAAD, 'TOT parenting skills' IRC, 'Engaging Male Caregivers to End Early Marriage in Lebanon: Training Modules to Accompany Programs with Adolescent Girls', DRC-WRC.

3.2 Peer-to-peer approach

The peer-to-peer approach is "a process whereby well-trained and motivated (...) individuals undertake informal or organized educational activities with their peers".

'Peer' refers to a person who shares the same social characteristic / belong to the same social group than another person or group. The social characteristics can be age, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or interests.

Outreach and selection of peers

Because of the social characteristics they share, individuals involved in peer-to-peer trainings around the topic of SGBV have greater influence on the group in which they interact and the message they carry has higher chance to be heard and understood.

In addition to the steps needed to outreach communities in the frame of a SGBV program – i.e. reach out communities to involve them in such programs, informing them about the programs and services related to the programs, understanding their

needs and challenges in participating in such programs – the peers should be selected in the community according to their profile and interest. The selection phase is determinant to make sure chosen participants are willing to participate in the programs, will commit for the entire duration of the programs, hold equitable views and are likely to influence others. In fact, they should be trustworthy and credible within their community.

Process

One of the mentioned good practices in Lebanon is to involve the peers in non-specialized PSS sessions first to gain their trust and offer them a space where they can express the problems and issues they faced in their communities. This is also a way to understand better the participants and assess their knowledge of gender and SGBV.

After being selected, it is advised to give to the participants life skills programs that provide them with necessary competencies for the designated project.

Then, the peers need to receive a ToT that will help them carrying key messages to their communities. The ToT should be organized around 4 main elements: Participation: the peers gain knowledge by practicing using role-plays, theater, other group activities. Reflection: the peers share thinking around the task, ask questions, understand the main concepts. Generalization: the peers get general conclusion on the topic and lessons learnt are identified. Application: the peers practice the lessons they learnt throughout the training.

After the above-mentioned steps, the peers are considered ready to carry the different messages to their community. Additionally, and to ensure the sustainability and positive impact of the project, a mentorship system can support the peers throughout the process, make sure they pass on key messages, help them to improve their skills and gain experience.

Topics

There are many ways to train peers and include SGBV topics as part of their role. Depending on the audience (youth, men), curriculum should be adapted to peers' interest. For instance, a positive way to engage youth is to include topics about violence, anger, drug use and relationships. To engage men as husbands, including topics such as family planning or life skills is a way to implicate them by tackling subjects that are directly of concern to them.

Possible curriculum

This approach has started in Lebanon but is still at the pilot phase. No specific curriculum is yet available to share: UNFPA and ABAAD have developed a curriculum that includes life skills, SRH and family planning components to engage men as husbands and fathers.

3.3 Service-based intervention

In this type of intervention, men and boys are engaged through the services they are using. The most documented service-based intervention in the context of male engagement relates to the health sector and SRH services. Through trainings

delivered to health care providers, men and boys are sensitized about gender norms and equality regarding SRH, family planning and children's care. Health care facilities need to be adequately equipped: provide a space where women and girls as well as men and boys feel comfortable and safe and include trained personal that apply culturally sensitive approaches, understand the structural and cultural factors that contribute to SGBV and the gender inequalities linked to the SGBV risks.

This type of approach can also be done through working with security services (police forces, local authorities) in the context of secondary prevention. As for the health providers, security personals need to receive adequate trainings and follow-up to ensure that SGBV are responded in a principled manner.

In Lebanon, a manual to engage health providers exist but is not yet implemented. Initiatives have been carried out but no specific manual or documentation was found in the context of this guidance note.

3.4 Community mobilization

Mobilizing communities supports the dissemination of gender equality messages and influence individuals in becoming supporter for change or to stand against SGBV.

The community mobilization is based on developing community relationships with groups, community leaders and community-based organizations. It helps in identifying community needs in terms of SGBV prevention and response and the problems related to gender norms. It operated a connection between the community and services and informal support. It aims at changing the social and community conditions that lead to violence.

This intervention comprised the following steps:

- **Outreach**

Identifying community members, activists for change, willing to be involved in a more active way to prevent SGBV in their community. This can done through dissemination on key messages that inform on the program and the services.

- **Training**

Using group education participants to gain knowledge. Community members should be trained on gender, gender roles and relations, power and violence, non-violent communication, stress management to ensure they have a solid understanding of causes of GBV and how to stand against it.

- **Build community structures**

Additionally, the training can include project management components, general protection principles, SGBV principles, child protection and childcare. This way, the participants can be engaged in projects to concretize their engagement such as community projects, referrals to services or raising awareness of the community.

Designing a community project can help empower the volunteers. It provides a space where they feel safe, secure and supported

- **Implement activities with the community volunteers**

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Involve community volunteers on violence prevention and gender equality through specific activities. For instance, using sport, art, theater or media to spread awareness on SGBV is a type of community mobilization. Community 'volunteers' or 'activists' are involved in the design of the activity and the dissemination of information about services. They can also refer survivors to specialized and non-specialized services.

Engaging community leaders is another way to mobilize communities to prevent SGBV: by the position they have in the community, they can influence and encourage individuals to stand against SGBV.

Possible curriculum:

'Engaging Men to Promote Resilient Communities', Concern. 'Resilient Communities through Community Based Interventions', DRC

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