



United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Working Paper Series
on
Men's Roles and Responsibilities in Ending Gender Based Violence

Working Paper No. 2

**Giving Men Choices:
A Rozan project with the Police Force in
Pakistan**

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ROZAN

2001

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Acknowledgements

This Working Paper would not exist were it not for the contribution of a number of people who were involved with the project. I would like to acknowledge

- Dr. Ambreen Ahmed for her faith in the process and for her vision in designing the module
- Senior Superintendent of Police, Nasir Khan Durrani for providing us with the opportunity to work with the police force and his sustained support of the project
- Syed Saghir Bukhari as Project Coordinator, for his devotion and sheer hard work.

I would also like to thank the 495 participants of the 21 workshops for their openness and honesty in sharing this process and their vision for a better tomorrow with us.

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I INTRODUCTION

1. Men as ‘Essential Partners’

Rozan, a local Islamabad, Pakistan based NGO, was set up in December 1998 to protect and promote the emotional health of its people, in particular that of women and children. Violence against women and children is seen as a major threat to emotional health, and, as such, has become a special focus within the organisation. It is our belief that violence needs to be addressed in the broader context of emotional health encompassing not only self-esteem but also concepts of gender and power. Services and interventions offered are preventive, raising consciousness and sensitivity, and supportive, in terms of direct victim support and referral.

A serious and tragic manifestation of a gender insensitive society is the abuse of power perpetuated by the more powerful against the less powerful. This imbalance of power ‘allows’ for violence to occur - it exists all around us in countless different contexts. Although the majority of sufferers are women and girls, they can also be men and boys, in other words all of us. Yet despite this we continue to label this as a women’s problem almost as if we (women) want to stake the claim on being victims. When a man beats up a woman, his wife for example, there are many victims in the room: mainly his wife and children, but in a different way, also society and himself. All these victims hurt in different ways, and so the necessary attention they need or deserve should vary accordingly, but this may blind us to the totality of the picture.

To present the man as victim is an idea that many feminists have difficulty swallowing, especially since the difference between the image of a female victim, the bleeding, raped woman and the image of a sneering and powerful male, is so pronounced. Often the perpetrators of this violence sometimes seem as ‘helpless’ as the women they humiliate, kick, rape and beat, trapped as they are in a web of societal norms, culture and tradition. Victims not of a visible enemy, but victims of a society that restricts, restrains and moulds in ways that are so destructive and powerful, of a society that breeds and rewards

a culture of 'masculinity', where values such as aggressiveness, competitiveness, dominance, strength, courage and control rule supreme.

Western studies have confirmed that although boys 'benefit' from gender preference, in the long run, society's harsh and unrelenting demands and expectations from them often lead to unhealthy life styles and a detrimental impact on health. Where women's ill health has been linked traditionally with pregnancy, overwork, gender discrimination and violence, men's rising morbidity rate is more to do with 'life style' factors such as road accidents, work injuries, sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS and cardiovascular illnesses. Today men make up 80% of the six to seven million injecting drug users worldwide, (Foreman 1999, 128). We see these trends mirrored in Pakistan in our work with men.

I say this not necessarily out of a sense of sympathy for men who use violence. It is difficult to sympathize with a batterer, but I say this because we lose so much more when all men are seen as enemies. The former view by which we see men as enemies is more about blaming and shaming men, than about giving them the insights and support to help them stop their abusive behaviour. This is a gender polarizing approach that only serves to perpetuate the "battle of the sexes." A strategy that sees men as the 'problem' is not only shortsighted but also destructive in the long run as it serves to make men defensive and resistant. Therefore, as part of Rozan's over all mission to "work for a society which is aware, confident and accepting of it self and others," 'men' have always been considered essential partners.

Interventions that seek to understand the underlying dynamics of men and women's lives and provide them with opportunities to reflect on their own problems, challenge norms that are detrimental to their emotional health, hear and understand each other's perspectives, and gain the confidence to take charge of their own lives, are essential. Sensitization to violence, its clear link to gender inequalities, and hence power structures must be approached in the context of our personal lives and how the responsibility for change rests with all of us in challenging these prescribed norms. It is important that

instead of just focusing on each case of violence or on individual men's acts of violence against women, the entire culture that creates current male roles and identities - defined as 'masculinities' - needs to be analyzed and challenged. "This means recognizing the various pressures placed upon men that may result in violent reactions, as well as the need for men to take responsibility for their actions", (UNIFEM, Fact sheet No.5). Men need to take responsibility for their role in bringing about change, otherwise this transformation will remain not only incomplete, but also unrealistic.

In keeping with this approach a recent, innovative programme initiated by Rozan is working with policemen on the issue of violence against women and children. This working paper elaborates on the rationale of the approach to the sensitization of police officers and shares experiences of this project.

2. The Context of Pakistan

Numerous studies have confirmed that in Pakistan's strongly patriarchal society, women and girls are considered less competent and less worthy than boys. In addition their needs - whether those needs are in the field of education, nutrition, health, physical safety or any other - are often not taken seriously nor met adequately. There is a strong 'son preference' where the girl child is seen as a liability, dependent and incapable of looking after herself, as someone who must be 'protected', fed and clothed by a man, be it her father, brother or husband. Such 'perceived' dependence leads to the devaluing of women as well as creating resentment amongst men who have to shoulder the 'burden'. The dependence is 'perceived' because statistics show that a large number of women work in agriculture, livestock and the informal sector, in addition to their reproductive role. Violence against women is endemic and closely linked to society's prescribed role and to the status of women, which is in clear subordination of men. In its 1998 report, "Pakistan, no progress on women's rights", Amnesty International wrote that rape and other forms of violence against women (in the custody of the state, or by private individuals in the domestic sphere or in the wider societal context) remained widespread but grossly under reported, either out of ignorance, fear of social stigma or retribution by

the perpetrators. According to the Human Development in South Asia Report 2000, domestic violence occurs in every third household in Pakistan and almost 80% of women are subject to some form of domestic violence in their lives.

"Among the most lethal forces which impact [on] women's dignity and security are customary practices which aim at preserving female subjugation. Often defended and sanctified as cultural traditions, they are usually fiercely defended by those who practice them, shrugged off by society and condoned by law-enforcing agencies and the courts. As a result, most of these inhuman practices continue unabated."

Report of the Commission of Inquiry for Women, August 1997

Take for example the case of 'honour killings', a special type of gender based violence that has been increasingly highlighted within the last decade or so. Honor killings ostensibly take place to avenge family honor when a woman violates tribal or cultural norms. It is carried out by the males in the family when a woman and man are perceived to have illicit relationships. Far more women are victims than men and there is very often little or no legal repercussion. According to Tahira Khan, a Pakistani activist, "women are considered the property of the males in their family irrespective of their class, ethnic or religious groups. The owner of the property has the right to decide its fate. The concept of ownership has turned women into a commodity which can be exchanged, bought and sold," (Khan, 1999). Women's bodies are considered to be the "repository of family honour" as the Report of the Commission of Inquiry for Women put it. Male control extends not only to a woman's body and her sexual behaviour, but also to all of her behaviour, including her movements, her language and her actions. In any of these areas, defiance by women translates into undermining male honour, and, ultimately, family and community honour, and she pays for it by restricted mobility, early marriages, 'purdah', and limited access to education and other choices, and often by her life.

These values are perpetuated by men and sadly also by women because of the debatable virtue of the sanction of culture, tradition and distorted religion.

3. The Current Police System

The general public considers the police system in Pakistan to be grossly inefficient, unskilled and corrupt. The police in Pakistan tend to be predominantly male, underpaid, understaffed and under trained.

Domestic violence, including honour killings of girls and women, is often ignored by police officers and treated as a 'domestic' issue to be resolved within the family or community. Even when women are seriously injured by their husbands or families, police often discourage them from registering complaints and advise them to seek reconciliation with their husbands or families as any matrimonial or family dispute would bring dishonour to them and their families if pursued. This is in keeping with society's perception of the issue. It is further compounded by the fact that police training on such issues is insufficient and clearly prejudicial. Police officers report how they have been actually 'taught' to believe that women often falsify reports of rape. The police have also been accused of custodial rape referring to the rape of female detainees in lock up. Similarly, bonded labour, child labour and trafficking are frequently not dealt with by the law, either because of ignorance of it, or because of the fear of or collusion with the offenders.

Other examples of police abuse of human rights such as extra judicial killings and custodial torture have also risen steadily in number.

II PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. The Rationale

In the police in order to effectively address not only the abuse prevalent in the police system with reference to the ineffectual and insensitive handling of victims of gender based violence, but also to the actual violence committed by the police against women and children, the factors linked to the attitudes and behaviour prevalent in the police force, needed to be addressed. Attitudes that stem from childhood, societal norms and

expectations from men and women, a high level of job stress, the training which encourages the use of violence and punishment as a tool, ineffective life skills and coping mechanisms for anger, and others.

We, as products of a patriarchal society, act upon and actively propagate certain harmful attitudes, without seeing just how destructive they are for ourselves and others around us. These attitudes can range from deeply personal issues such as how we express anger to more societal issues such as indifference to cruelty to others and crimes against women. Moreover, crimes are multifaceted, and, often in a traditional society like ours, woven so intricately into the fabric of our culture that it is hard and sometimes impossible to discern them through the deceptive haze of our prejudices. In order to bring about change we need to acknowledge the biases that we carry with us, and be willing and able to take up the challenge of questioning and changing them. Only then can attitudinal change be achieved.

The pathway to attitudinal change, which involves an analysis of our socialization process and the development of healthy life skills is through self awareness, or what we call “self development”. Each individual carries within him/herself, in varying degrees, the capacity to learn and grow, and this capacity needs to be exploited and worked with. Rozan believes that sensitizing people to their own emotions and needs allows individuals to connect better with the needs of others and paves the way for a more sensitized human being, and ultimately, a more humane society. This link between society and our personal lives is crucial if attitudinal change is to be sustainable. If men are sensitized to women’s issues, then they have to first learn to be sensitive to their own needs. Any other approach will be undermined by the perception of these issues as the ‘other sex’s agenda’ or similar.

One way of bringing about this change is through training workshops where a non-judgmental, supportive environment is created. An atmosphere of mutual trust and respect allows people to explore such issues freely, question attitudes that we have

incorporated within ourselves, as well as assess whether or not they have an impact on us and, in turn, on society in both healthy or non healthy ways.

2. The Parameters

The workshops with the police (our principal project activity) therefore focused on self awareness, expression of feelings, anger management, power and stress management along with raising awareness on gender and sensitizing them to issues of violence against women and children.

Although work on gender and sensitization to violence against women and children was viewed as an essential component, and, in some ways, the final goal of this exercise, it was deliberately not touched upon in the initial brief pilot study due to its sensitive nature. The two pilot workshops (conducted with 40 police officers) focused more on testing the methodology rather than just content, and we were confident that if this methodology proved to be effective, then more sensitive issues like violence and gender could be built in more easily.

The module on gender and violence against women and children was a challenging component to design and went through a number of modifications through a trial and error process as the project progressed.

The first phase of the police project trained 480 policemen and 15 policewomen in 21 workshops over eighteen months (Oct 1999 - March 2001). Each workshop entailed an intensive interaction between three facilitators (mostly trained psychologists) with groups of about 20-25 trainees and lasted for an average of five to six days each. The six day experiential workshop called the “Attitudinal Change Workshop”, was sub-divided into two parts separated by a gap of 10-14 days.

Part One: Self growth (4 days)	Part Two: Gender and violence against women & children (2 days)
Topics included:	Topics included:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self awareness ➤ Communication skills ➤ Assertive behaviour ➤ Anger management ➤ Vision of an ideal society ➤ Prejudice ➤ Power ➤ Stress Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding the social construct of gender ➤ Implication of gender stereotyping men and women in the society ➤ Sensitization to issues of violence against women and children ➤ Sensitization to the role of the police in working on these issues
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III THE JOURNEY

1. Project Process

a. Setting the Stage: Learning to work together

Setting the tone and context for an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality was crucial if the methodology was to work. Initial responses from the police trainees ranged from curiosity, interest, and cynicism, to frank disbelief. A concern repeatedly shared by the participants in the first few sessions was the fact that this was a “spying” exercise to find out more about them or to assess them mentally! Some even said that they felt they had been chosen because they were seen as ‘bad’ or violent needing psychiatric help.

Through a number of exercises carried out in the beginning of the workshop these concerns were either addressed directly, or indirectly by holding exercises such as building norms for the workshop, explaining and encouraging questions on the objectives of the workshop, asking about their hopes and fears from the workshop, and using ice breakers like personal introductions. However, by the end of the first day most of the participants were visibly relaxed and seemed motivated and eager to continue.

b. Self Awareness: Knowing ourselves

A number of exercises in this module focused on beginning the process of self awareness. This was done through first clarifying the meaning of self awareness and its link to

behaviour, identifying the blocks that hindered them from becoming self aware, building motivation to do the same, and then finally providing participants with the tools to constructively work towards being self aware.

Common constraints identified by them were lack of time, fear of being perceived as weak, fear of becoming weak, fear of knowing the truth, ego, peer pressure and a lack of skills leading to feelings of hopelessness.

An exercise on childhood memories often turned out to be a moving experience for participants, and for some even painful. Participants repeatedly shared how they had been given differential messages as boys, messages that they felt bewildered about but, regardless felt compelled to follow...messages about tears, about strength, about conflicts, about sexuality, about control and about the other sex. As one participant shared, “you should not cry like girls, this was a message given to me in my childhood and was not healthy because even today I cannot express my sad feeling to anyone.”

c. Communication: Improving relationships

The sessions on communication skills focused on the ways and dynamics of communication and emphasized the practice of various skills introduced, i.e. reflective listening, assertive behaviour, feedback etc.

Not surprisingly, we found that for police officers, the difference between aggressive and assertive behaviour seemed hazy perhaps because of society’s expectation that men are naturally aggressive and the fact that policemen, because of the nature of their work, must always be in control and in command. Facilitators were struck by how these trends were almost mirrored by women when it came to passiveness and assertiveness.

When it came to receiving affection or positive feedback, it was interesting to see how this was something they craved from their senior officers but were hesitant to give it at home in their relationships with those weaker than them, such as their wives and complainants. However, once this connection was made for them, especially with

reference to the dynamics of power, they seemed to be struck by it and felt that they should be actively using this tool to improve relationships at home and reduce their perceived sense of distance.

d. Prejudice: Overcoming barriers

The destructive impact of prejudice was shown through role-plays. This was a noisy, emotional and thought-provoking experience for the police trainees. They felt that although they had been conscious of the prevalence of these prejudices in society before, they had never really thought about their role in promoting and propagating these values until now. It seemed to be an issue close to their heart as many police officers shared stories of how they had been to scenes of hate crimes such as a Shia Sunni feud (two sects in Islam). From here, once there were able to connect with the brutal impact of prejudice that was easily visible to them, it was fairly easy to lead them onto a discussion of prejudices against women, especially women who dared to transcend the norms of society through actions such as cutting their hair short, to working outside the home, to simply living independently. As one policeman very honestly shared, he found it a ‘terrifying experience’ to role-play a women in this society. Another shared that “prejudices not only divide us into groups but also put us in a specific glass through which we can view only the group and not the individual.”

e. Anger Management: The right to let off steam - the right way!

We realized that anger was viewed as a negative and destructive emotion that should be suppressed. But this suppression puts men under undue pressure to continuously hold back what is very natural and, when it can no longer be controlled – anger is expressed in unhealthy and often destructive ways. Anger is also one of the few emotions men are allowed to express. There seemed to be strong conflict when it came to the dynamics of this emotion, and we sought to clarify this, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, as we worked through the anger management exercises. At the end of the session one participant shared almost as a reaffirmation, “we can express our feelings without hurting others.”

f. Power: Accepting our vulnerabilities and trusting our strengths

This component was seen as an essential link to understanding and acknowledging the dynamics of gender based violence. However, in keeping with our approach, we first aimed to understand the role of power, its presence or lack of it in our lives and the feelings associated with it.

The sessions never ceased to leave the facilitators with a sense of incredulity about the extent of powerlessness felt by the police men about their role in society, about their ability to make a change for the better, and most of all, about their decisions in life.

Understanding the abstract concept of power, and connecting with our own powerlessness and the sources of power in our lives is crucial for the growth of any person. This importance, however, becomes two-fold for those professionals who come into contact with victims or people who are distressed. Denying our powerlessness, which is something many of us do, not only distances us from the powerlessness of others, but can also make us insensitive, or worse still, cruel. Coming face to face with our own powerlessness is important also because it also allows us to explore options and connect with our strengths to be able to overcome these feelings. But coming face to face with this powerlessness was not easy. The participants reported feeling ‘down’ and ‘depressed’ after this session. Many said that they had never allowed themselves to acknowledge this feeling as they felt they would be overwhelmed by it and did not have the skills to express it positively.

In the discussion on types of power, ‘Power over’ and factors leading to it were discussed in detail. ‘Power over’ is the type of power that is most commonly seen as ‘aggressive’, or dominating. It assumes that power is a finite quantity, which, if shared with others, would lead to a reduction in one’s own power. In “power over”, the strong use their power to dominate the weak. Facilitators were struck by how openly participants shared incidents of violence and abuse prevalent in the present police systems.

g. Gender: Looking beyond stereotypes

To work for a society free from gender based violence would not be possible if we did not take into account or address the role of women - women not only as mothers, daughters, sisters and wives or as objects whose existence is defined by their relationship to men, but women as entities in their own right, human beings who have the right to live, breathe, work, contribute, earn, be acknowledged and be safe. This is a very essential concept to understand in the context of women's roles as perceived in Pakistani society.

Addressing gender in a workshop with the police was indeed difficult, and often the intense yet smooth pace achieved in the self-growth process was unceremoniously shattered by conflicting opinions.

It was interesting to see how understanding the concept of gender and its difference from sex was a fairly easy construct for them to grasp. It was accepting the implications of this construct in their personal lives, and later their professional lives that aroused a certain level of resistance. These were emotional sessions not only for the trainees, but also for the facilitators themselves.

In an exercise on what women and men do and how much of that is determined by society and how much biologically, most of the participants were very clear about the inherent ability of each sex to do all types of tasks, but there was some hesitation to accept this practically. It was interesting to note, however, that in the few workshops with women police officers, there was less resistance during the session. This exercise was easy for these participants because being policewomen, their jobs were unconventional for women to begin with. Expectations from men and women were also discussed and here the men were quite frank in sharing how some of expectations and demands thrust upon men were unfair and damaging to their lives. Men openly shared how burdened they felt at having to look after the financial needs - not only of their own nuclear family, but, at times, their parents', unmarried sisters or younger siblings too. Fathers talked about the pressure of ensuring a good 'jahez' (dowry) for their daughters. They talked

about how the ‘shame’ of not fitting into the roles prescribed for men would lead them to not only comply, but also to actually feel angry and resentful of the circumstances and towards the people that had ‘led’ them to this conflict. For example, some said how they could not tell their wives they missed them except in sexual ways because it would seem that they were dependent. At the end of the session one participant shared a sentiment echoed by many: “ *Today I realized women’s contribution to my duties and my home. She is a hard worker, but I have never considered her work at home as ‘work’. We must now acknowledge her contributions.* ”

One of the participants wrote to us in the months following the workshop and said, “*Before this workshop I was a violent husband and police officer. Now I try my best not to abuse power at my home or office. Now I even help my spouse in domestic work.*”

Clearly a lesson for these men through this process has been to understand and accept their roles and responsibilities for bringing about a change for the better for both sexes, and that this change goes deeper than just sympathy for the less privileged.

h. Violence: Acknowledging the pain

Using a carefully designed module involving imagery, lectures on effects of violence on women and children, the sharing of case histories and experiential exercises, we attempted to bring about a change in thinking and attitudes.

In one exercise, participants were asked to list the types of violence that men and women were exposed to in their lives. The participants concluded through this exercise that both men and women were subjected to social, economic, physical, emotional and sexual violence, but the tendency to become the subject of certain types of violence was much higher in women than men. It was also concluded that in men, as they become older, the violence they faced decreased as they gained power, but in the lives of women there was no such change or corresponding increase in power. Another conclusion made by participants was that the violence against men was more because of economic pressures, but at the same time the nature of violence against women was different. ‘Often it is due

to her sex that she is subjected to violence” was a conclusion reached by many at the end session.

There was much said, debated and hotly argued, there were a few tears and some anger in the session on myths about violence against women and children. The purpose was to encourage all participants to share their views by taking stands on these topics in a way that allows for honest sharing of ideas rather than just intellectually debating these issues. Whilst there were some participants who argued that children and women encouraged abuse, there were many who were very sensitive to the needs of victims of sexual violence and even shared stories from their actual experiences at the police stations. We felt that this support went a long way in convincing the men from the ‘other side’ to listen and may be even to understand. As one participant said at the end *“I realized how violence and low wages affect women. When I ‘saw’ this from a woman’s perspective, I was shocked. We must trust women and think about our biases against them so that we can strive for justice.”*

2. The Evaluation

As part of the project design, a limited evaluation study aimed at assessing the impact of the project and the modules was also built in. The study relied on self-reporting on a pre, post and final workshop form (after six months) on knowledge, attitudes and practice on workshop related issues.

Certain areas where we feel Rozan’s module was especially effective were communication, expression of feelings and self-awareness. The increase in the ability of people to express anger (15 %) as evidenced by the study as a sign that the workshop was helpful to some extent in normalizing this feeling. Also, as a result of their being able to express anger before it intensifies, and due to the various anger management techniques shared in the workshop, there has been a 9% decrease in the anger experienced by the participants. This was further reflected in the 18% decrease in the number of people losing control when angry.

Many participants reported an inability to express their feelings comfortably in the pre workshop forms. The percentage of participants who shared that they were unable to express sadness and fear decreased by 15% and 13 % respectively after the workshop. The percentage of participants who were able to express worries and concerns went up by 25% after the workshop.

The heightened awareness about their perception in the community, the enhanced sensitivity to stress and powerlessness that they feel as policewomen and policemen are areas that we feel serve as an impetus in initiating a change for the better.

Attitudes towards gender and violence against women and children showed a marked and dramatic change for the better (ranging from 8% to 47% on various items checking sensitivity to issues). Interestingly, there is a slight but distinct regression to earlier attitudes (in the final workshop forms) especially when it came to the issues involving women such as domestic violence and rape. It seems that attitudes towards these issues – in particular rape - have been internalized for so long and are so much a part of us that this change in thinking cannot be sustained if it is not reinforced regularly. This regression highlights the need for stronger modules and continual refreshers.

3. New Directions

Formal and informal feedback from participants and other sections of the community has been and continues to be extremely positive and has provided Rozan with the momentum to continue working with the police.

In an effort to share our experiences and build interest and support for such initiatives Rozan held a seminar in collaboration with the police in July 2001. The seminar was attended by over 400 people - policewomen and policemen, NGO workers, government officials, the donor community, business women and men and the general community. The Commandant of the National Police Academy in Islamabad chaired the seminar.

Rozan also printed and disseminated a project report, which details the process, the evaluation study and recommendations for the future.

Nearly two years into the project, we are in a position to assess what our strengths and limitations have been and also further determine the need for, and explore the possibility of, the institutionalization of such initiatives. One learning has been that attitudes do not exist in a vacuum, and, thus, cannot be addressed in exclusion. Throughout the workshops policemen shared how they felt ridiculed and unappreciated by the community. They also shared how they felt alienated from their families and their work conditions, which forced them to work under situations where their life was under threat. These are the realities of their lives and they exact their toll on police attitudes and personalities. Phase two of the project aims to address some of these needs through encouraging community-police dialogue and their positive portrayal in the media in an effort to support and sustain this attitudinal change.

We also feel that linking issues of violence faced by women and children to broader development goals can improve the module. Although we did address the issues at a macro level in terms of statistics, the emphasis was always to look at the dynamics from a societal and personal point of view. The module can be further improved to include more intensive work on violence and would need to be followed by a refresher to ensure that they get a chance to debrief on how they have been able to apply their learnings to their personal and professional lives. This is a need expressed by participants, some of whom have retained contact with Rozan - it also seems a logical follow up to this process.

Phase two of the project ranging over three years, started in July 2001, and will be aimed at three main areas.

- Ongoing training workshops (followed by refreshers wherever possible) with modified modules on gender and violence
- Advocacy for institutionalization in the police system and building capacity for the same

- Enhancing community-police collaboration

IV CONCLUSION

1. Strengths and Limitations

The methodology, with reference to setting up an atmosphere of respect, trust and safety as well as working in small groups emphasizing participation and experiential learning - was especially effective. Moreover, we feel that the self-growth component before the introduction of gender and violence helped for three main reasons:

1. It provided men with the space to connect with their own needs, identify and express their feelings, their areas of powerlessness and the feelings associated with it.
2. It allowed men to learn about and practice healthy life skills i.e. communication skills, stress and anger management and assertive behaviour. This empowering process in turn provided the motivation and impetus to change.
3. It built a strong sense of trust and alliance between the facilitators and the participants and laid the foundation for the rest of the more 'sensitive' and even 'volatile' work to proceed.

We strongly feel that had we approached the issue from an objective, rights-based approach only, we would not have had the kind of intense sharing we did. Moreover, we would have had much more covert resistance.

Looking back we are also keenly aware of the limitations of this kind of approach in terms of the specialized and 'slow' nature of work as well as the underlying assumption that all men can be allies, and once they become 'aware' of the unfairness of the system and how it detrimentally affects their lives and the lives of others, they will want to change. Our values and identities are ingrained deep inside us and for some a change may be too great a challenge to undertake. Others may deliberately 'choose' to opt for a

power imbalanced society. They were many examples in the workshops of men who sat silently through the process clearly finding it too difficult to open up and share. Some men may be seriously hampered by deeply ingrained personality disorders or problems like substance abuse and therefore have limited capacity to change. These men cannot be accessed through such work.

2. A Shift in Ownership

Rozan continues to seek innovative and more effective ways to deal with the difficult and sensitive issues that we work on. A very exciting lesson has been to see the impact of our work with the police, and how it effectively complements our work with women. We feel that we are now moving towards initiatives that involve, in sensitive and non threatening ways, both men and women as active partners in working for a change in society that will benefit both. To summarize what has been said above we see working with both men and women as important because:

1. Targeting women alone, on issues that clearly affect men as well as women, can only serve half the purpose and can even be destructive. We feel that men's exclusion from gender initiatives can significantly jeopardize success. It also overloads women with the responsibility of change. Any intervention that addresses the issues of women without acknowledging or addressing the concerns of men can sometimes even be dangerous as studies have confirmed that individual and collective anxiety over the perceived loss of male power can provoke violence and psychological abuse by men, (Castells 1997, 136, UNESCO 1997, 6).
2. Men and women both pay a heavy price for gender stereotyping and, as a result, both are limited in the growth of vital human dimensions of their being.
3. As changes come about in the fabric of gender relations due to the spread of development work, both men and women have to come to terms with their changing gender roles where masculine and feminine values are being analyzed or questioned. We feel strongly that men, like women, also need the

space and opportunity to explore and discuss their feelings in this context and that it is crucial that both sexes be able to have opportunities to share their concerns and perspectives with each other in ways which are non-confrontational and based on mutual trust. Research has also revealed that men are confused about their changing gender roles and are seeking opportunities in which to discuss these changes, (Barker 1997, 4).

Our work with the policemen (and women) has reaffirmed our faith in the belief that allowing men the space to express their own feelings, fears, deconstruct their social conditioning and ‘tell their stories’ is critical. Men need to talk to themselves, amongst themselves and to women - only then can the bridges be built. As one participant shared *“Before this workshop these issues were Rozan’s issues, but now these are our issues; men’s and women’s.”*

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