

IFMSA PROGRAM FOR GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Background

Gender-based violence (GBV) is violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2014). Gender based violence includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty (UN WOMEN, 2009).

The expanded definition of sexual and gender-based violence used by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Implementing Partners shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to the following (UNHCR, 2003):

- a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse of children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation
- b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution
- c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State and institutions, wherever it occurs.

Domestic Violence is one of the most aggressive forms of Gender based violence. In 2013 a report of the World Health Organization (WHO) found that intimate partner violence affects about a third of women worldwide. Therefore it is the most prevalent type of violence against women. Moreover it reports that about 42% of women who had been sexually or physically abused by their partner were injured as well.

Human trafficking is a complicated phenomenon. Perhaps the strongest factor is a desperate economic situation, which impacts the availability of satisfactory employment in many countries for women more severely than men. Women may become victims of trafficking when they seek assistance to obtain employment, work permits, visas and other travel documents. Traffickers prey on women's vulnerable circumstances and may lure them into crime networks through deceit and false promises of decent working conditions and fair pay.

Men and boys also experience sexual violence, increasingly documented in conflict countries and especially when gender identity conflicts with gender norms (USAID, 2014). However, globally women are much more likely to experience gender based violence due to widespread gender equality. In many societies, women are seen as inferior to men

and/or their property or sexual objects. This leads to women not being empowered to negotiate safe sex or renders consent for sex almost impossible to determine. Girls worldwide are also affected by this and are not seen as important to educate as boys are. Worldwide, more than 700 million women alive today were married as children (below 18 years of age). More than one in three—or some 250 million—were married before 15 (UN WOMEN, 2014). Many factors contribute to this including lack of education and poverty.

As future health care professionals, we will be at the forefront of recognizing violence, whether physical or emotional. However, we are not equipped in our medical school training on how to recognise gender based violence, or how to manage it. Although, as future physicians we are powerful and respected in our communities, we are unable to make a valid contribution to this important issue due to lack of proper training and knowledge. That is why this program is so important, as we are a key asset to bridging the gap between the general public and governments and services. By using this unique perspective will be able to make positive changes in our societies towards gender based violence and reduce the stigmatisation of victims of gender based violence.

Problem Statement

Ignorance is the main problem we face in gender based violence the main reason for the progressive increasing rate of different forms of women rights violation. Unfortunately despite of the great percentage of gender based violence in all it forms and women rights violations in many cases the victims never speak out to stand for their rights nor the society stand for them or admit with their rights even if the law does. As medical students we have the responsibility to learn how to deal with the victims and treat them as they need a special and sensitive approach when dealing with their problems which we are rarely encountered with education about how to deal with these patients in healthcare, or how to help them in social and mental problems they face.

TARGET GROUP

Due to the increasing rate of gender based violence and the necessity to stop them and protect the violated rights the program targets:

- **Medical students** as the future health care workers: to educate them how to deal with the victims also to know their responsibility to report any case of violation. Also Female Genital Mutilation and how it violates the women rights, physical and psychological harm caused from it as it is still being conducted by health care workers.
- **Medical schools/universities:** engaging medical schools/universities to provide training through their medical school curricula about gender based violence, how to recognise it in a patient, and how to deal with the psychological and social effects of gender based violence of the victims.
- **Education systems:** we should engage the educational systems such as schools, institutions etc to teach children and older students about different forms of gender based violence, including violence against women and its negative impact to the society.
- **Communities - local authorities** - changing the climate in society towards victims and encouraging local authorities to make people aware of services people can access.

- **The public especially the youth:** Awareness for the society on the importance of supporting the victims and avoid stigma against them. Also care for awareness of the society for women rights and protect them.
- **Local and national governments:** Work with governments for binding strict law also work with them to reach a strategy to change the view of the society specially in countries facing society refusal to the women rights.
- **International Organisations:** They can help on advocating for women rights and make a bigger impact

BENEFICIARIES

- **Medical students:** medical students will benefit from extra training about gender based violence enabling them to be excellent care providers for patients who experience gender based violence.
- **The victims of gender based violence:** Aiming to encourage them to speak out and to stand for their rights. Also this will help in clarifying to the society the size of the problem and how massive it is
- **Communities:** communities will be able to play an active role in stopping gender based violence and engaging young people within the community to understand what gender based violence is and its harmful effects.

LOGISTICAL FRAMEWORK OF INTERVENTIONS

End-goal and assumptions

End goal

The aim of the program is to raise awareness and empower the society specially the youth and the health care workers about their crucial role to put an end to violence based on gender, while encouraging societal change in the society towards women's and men's rights.

Assumptions

- Complete ignorance of the society of specific type of violences against women specially Human trafficking and domestic violence.
- Specific violations are part of the beliefs and traditions of some societies as Female Genital Mutilation.
- Stigma and severe discrimination against the victims which force them to hide and never stand for their rights
- Ignoring the responsibility of health care workers on reporting violence cases specially domestic violence

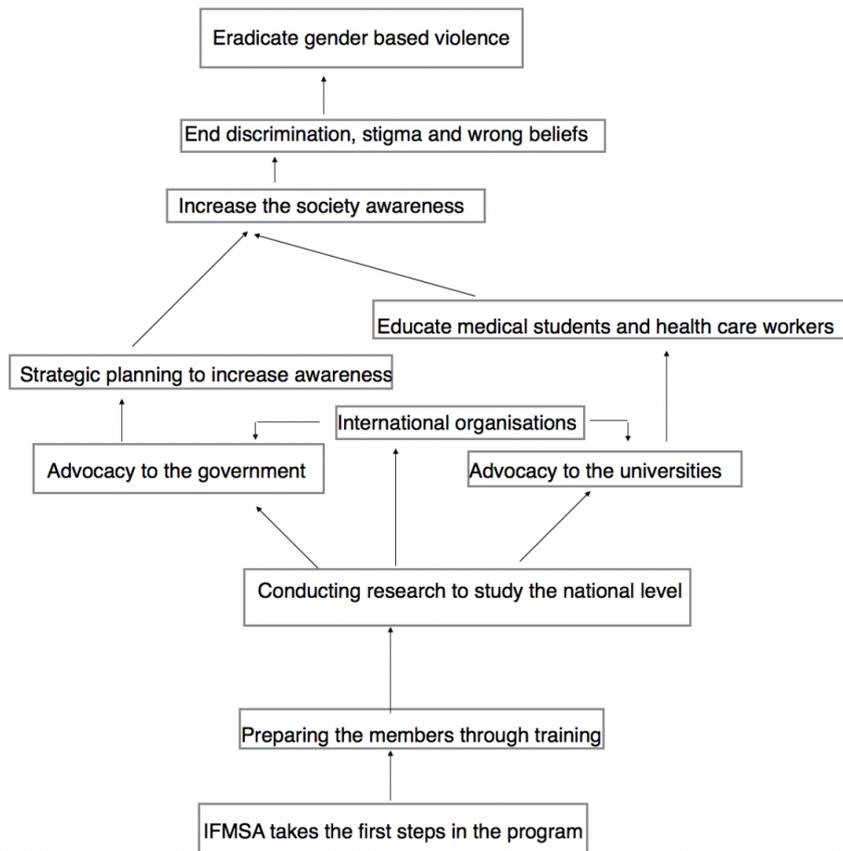
Objectives

1. to make health care professional and future physicians aware of their important role in ending gender based violence, and understanding how their unawareness contributes to the increasing rates of different forms of women's rights violations, and
2. To change society's view on women's rights, especially societies in those countries where women's rights are disregarded.

Preconditions and backwards mapping

The society to stand against gender based violence and to reject violations of women rights is the only way to eradicate it in any society. This starts raising awareness in the society of the different forms of violence in their committee. This can be reached through public education on the different gender based violence and fighting the habits that are clearly violating the women rights and change their thoughts in the society and also through full understanding of the medical students and health care workers of the importance to detect the victims and their responsibility to report the case.

- Preparing the members is essential before starting the program and also assuring the sustainability of the work through conducting research on national level.
- Advocacy toward governments are essential for binding laws to protect the society and to encourage them to reach a strategic plan for standing for women rights
- Advocacy toward universities specially medical schools for including gender based violence and how to deal with the patient psychiatry to the curriculum



Milestone and indicators

- **Outcome 1:** International educational activities for medical students on gender based violence and women rights that is culturally sensitive
 - **Indicator:**
 - Number of activities.
 - Number empowered participants.
 - **Population:** Medical students
 - **Threshold:** International training events evaluated feedback
- **Outcome 2:** National education activities for medical students on country specific gender based violence issue
 - **Indicator:**
 - Number of trainings.
 - Number of NMOs organizing trainings.
 - Number of empowered participants.
 - **Population:** Medical students
 - **Threshold:** Organization of high quality trainings to ensure proper empowerment.
- **Outcome 3:** Local, national and international activities working with people affected by gender based violence
 - **Indicator:**
 - Number of activities.
 - Number of NMOs taking part.
 - Number of beneficiaries (people affected by gender based violence)
 - **Population:** People affected by gender based violence
 - **Threshold:** Take care of psychology of the victim during dealing with them
- **Outcome 4:** Creation of effective policies in local, national and international level influenced by medical students
 - **Indicator:**
 - Number of NMOs who influenced related policy in local, national and international level.
 - Number of policies influenced by medical students.
 - Number of active and effective participation in relevant meetings
 - **Population:** Local, national and international organisations, universities and governments.
 - **Threshold:** Involvement in national, local and international decision-making

Interventions

Research:

- Conducting research to know the reasons of the spread of these form of violence in different societies

Capacity Building:

- Preparing a guideline booklet for the main reasons and causes behind GBV to be a strong based platform to build upon training
- Training the members how to deal with the societies that are highly sensitive to various topics of gender based violence as they need more effort to stand for women rights

Reaching public:

- Advocacy through policy statements to change the governments situations and encourage them to bind laws and put strategic plans for awareness of the public
- Human trafficking topic is one of the topics that medical students and the whole public lacks enough knowledge upon it and need to increase awareness upon them through conducting outreach projects to educate young people and families in rural communities about it
- Public events to encourage gender based violence victims to speak out and to show to the public the psychological and physical damage that results from such horrific acts
- Awareness and educational campaigns to the public on different form of gender based violence and change the society vision toward women rights
- Advocacy campaigns to the medical students to get them more involved to the various forms of violence especially sexual harassment and female genital mutilation and stand against them

Educating Medical students:

- Training medical students and health care professionals on how to manage patients who have experienced Gender Based Violence using a sensitive and non-judgemental approach
- Training medical students and health care workers on the importance of detection and reporting any form of gender based violence
- Working on medical student curriculum to include aspects of Gender based violence as well as the psychology of victims and aggressors and how to deal with them

Narrative

Our main goal for this program is to create awareness of gender based violence (GBV) and to take steps to prevent or solve the harmful effects of GBV on the victims and communities. We have a huge role to play as medical students in achieving this. We will do this through capacity building, advocating and research; we will provide international and national training for medical students worldwide about GBV and its affects so that they are equipped with the knowledge of how to recognise GBV and how to act to protect

those in danger. We will also work with local and national governments to advocate for laws to be put in place to ensure the perpetrators of GBV are answerable to the law. This will enable us to have a strong forefront in voicing our stand against GBV and will aid in pushing the general public that way too. We will also focus on young people in our awareness campaigns as GBV stems from learn gender stereotypes and gender norms within our societies. So, by working with educational systems such as schools and teaching children about GBV and addressing those gender stereotypes, we can teach boys and girls that they are equal and should be treated so. We will have public awareness campaigns on GBV and gender equality to make people aware of the harmful effects of gender inequality and GBV. We will also advocate for universities to include GBV within their medical curricula so that medical students and future physicians are equipped with the skills and knowledge to deal with cases of GBV. As medical students, we have the first point of contact with many patients and can use opportunities such as health education to also educate our patients about GBV and its detrimental effects on humanity. We will also conduct research on why gender based violence occurs in different communities, so we can address GBV in different regions in a better way.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT AND RESOURCES NEEDED

The program to be effective and have a strong impact it needs:

- Well trained IFMSA members capable of raising awareness and fully understand the social variance and appreciate the sensitivity of the topic
- Encourage more medical students to get more involved and stand for the topic
- Regular assessment of different activities for quality assurance of the program
- Fundraising for supporting international activities to have a strong impact worldwide
- Collaboration with other international organisation specially UN agencies to have a bigger impact worldwide

REFERENCES

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