

**DRAFT; developed collaboratively by ADAPT and FIXED for Domestic Violence Support.
Now adapted for GBV**

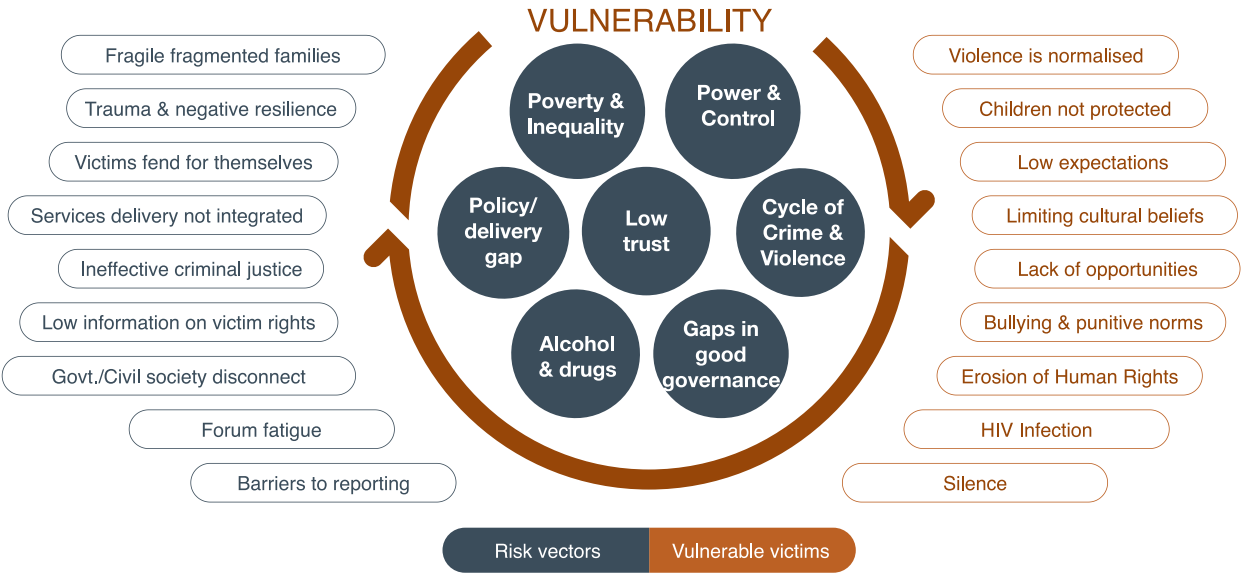
Supporting victims of gender based violence
Workbook

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1. CYCLE OF FLAWED GBV RESPONSE

The Cycle of Flawed GBV Response



The Cycle of gender-based violence demonstrates that it is not the behavior of the victim that causes or perpetuates violence. Gender based violence occurs in all socio-economic settings, but it is more prevalent and often impacts in settings where people have less resources. The cycle provides a context for how difficult it is to “solve” the problem of gender-based violence.

In the center of the cycle, low trust sits at the core of a number of societal issues that impact gender-based violence.

We are a society with very low levels of trust, this feeds into the negative relationship of power and control over those who are more vulnerable.

As a result of decades of violence and brutality many live in a perpetual state of fear to some extent or another.

Traditional and cultural practices exacerbate power and relation across cultures where patriarchy drives norms and women are expected to submit and tolerate the behavior of men in their lives without complaint.

At all levels of South Africa gender equality is a significant barrier to women's independence, agency and choice for many women this results in being trapped in relationships that are characterized by abuse.

Approximately 40% of South Africans do not drink at all but the remaining 60% keep us at the top of the tables of drunkenness and alcohol abuse. Alcohol and drugs are no excuse of gender-based violence but often feed and intensify bullying and abuse. All these things combined increase vulnerability of the women.

At the outside of this cycle we see the pathway that describes the journey from normalization of violence to the silence and disempowerment of vulnerable victims who then experience power responses that leave them to fend for themselves often dealing with long term trauma and building negative resilience that renders fragile and fragmented families, so we see the cycle perpetuate.

Exercise: Cycle of gender-based violence

a. What is the problem we are trying to solve?

b. How do the problems you face in your community have an impact on gender-based violence?

c. How does the cycle repeat itself and why?

d. What kinds of actions are defined as gender-based violence?

2. EXPECTATIONS AND VISION

Supporters will be capacitated to:

- Understand gender-based violence
- Support victims/survivors to get the right information and refer them to other types of help

Benefits to supporters:

- Learn appropriate responses to gender based violence
- Understand rights and processes
- Have greater agency and choice in your life
- Be able to help others

Exercise: Expectations and vision

- a. What benefits do you expect from this capacity building session?

3. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: RESPONSE OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Steps to follow after an incident of gender-based violence:

Contact the police and they should come to the scene immediately. When they arrive at the scene, the police should:

- Provide you with any assistance you may require, including making arrangement for shelter and medical treatment; arresting the perpetrator (if police reasonably suspect)
- Explain to legal options, including laying a criminal charge which will be investigated; a decision will be made to prosecute, and the matter will go to trial.
- Explain about opening a criminal case

3.1. STRUCTURES FOR ASSISTANCE OF SURVIVORS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Below are essential supporting structures to the Criminal Justice System.

Civil Society Organisations (CSO)

These organizations assist with supporting survivors of violence against women, and the support will be in a form of:

- Psycho social services;
- Legal advice;
- Court support;
- Court preparations;
- Provisions of shelters for survivors and their children;
- Skills development; and
- Shelters for survivors.

Social Workers

In the context of violence against women, social workers assist with the following services:

- Provision of direct service in a form of counselling;
- Proper referral for a survivor guided by the problem a client is experiencing;
- Securing a place of safety or a shelter for survivors of sexual violence and their children;
- Supporting a survivor throughout the process as they receive the necessary assistance to exit the abusive relationship and find closure to their problems.

Legal Aid South Africa

According to Legal Aid Act No.39, 2014 Section 4, the legal Aid's power, function and duties are:

- Provide legal services, representation and advice. Provide legal representation at state expense as envisaged in the Constitution.
- Conduct programmes to promote public awareness of constitutional and other legal rights and public understanding of the objects, roles and activities of Legal Aid South Africa.
- Legal Aid South Africa's role is to provide legal aid to those who cannot afford their own legal representation. This includes poor people and vulnerable groups such as women, children and the rural poor.
- Anyone who is victim of gender-based violence can contact them through telephone 0800110110 or can visit their website on <http://www.legal-aid.co.za>

3.2. YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM OF CRIME

When a crime is committed your basic human rights, as set out in the Constitution are violated. You are entitled to gain access to the mechanisms of justice and to seek expeditious redress as provided for in legislation and through procedures outlined in this Charter and in other government publication, such as:

- The National Policy Guidelines for the Handling of Victims of Sexual Offences;
- The Patients' Rights Charter; and
- The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) Policy Guidelines.

In your contact with the criminal justice system the following rights, as governed by legislation, will be upheld:

a. The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for your dignity and privacy.

You must be treated with respect by all members of any given service provider. All efforts will be made to prevent you from being subjected to secondary victimization by the processes in the criminal justice system.

b. The right to offer information.

As an important part of the criminal investigation, you need to be heard and allowed to offer information as a valuable contribution to the investigation and prosecution of the case. You can participate (where necessary and where possible) in criminal justice proceedings, through attending the bail hearing. You will have the opportunity to make a statement to the court to bring the impact of the crime to the attention of the court.

c. The right to receive information.

You have the right to be informed of your rights and all services available to you by service providers. You should be informed of your role in the case and of the duration of the case. You can request information regarding court dates, witness fees and the witness protection programs. You can also request to be informed of the status of the case, whether or not the offender has been arrested, charged, granted bail, convicted and sentenced. You have the right not only to be informed of your rights, but also on how to exercise them. You can also, as part of the right to receive information, ask for explanations of anything you do not understand. You can request to receive notification of which proceedings you can attend. You can also request the prosecutor to notify your employer of any proceedings, which necessitates your absence from work.

d. The right to protection

You have the right to be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process and to be free from fear and abuse. If you act as a witness, you will be protected, as far as possible, from harassment or intimidation in order not to have your testimony influenced or to have you withdrawing from testifying.

e. The right to assistance

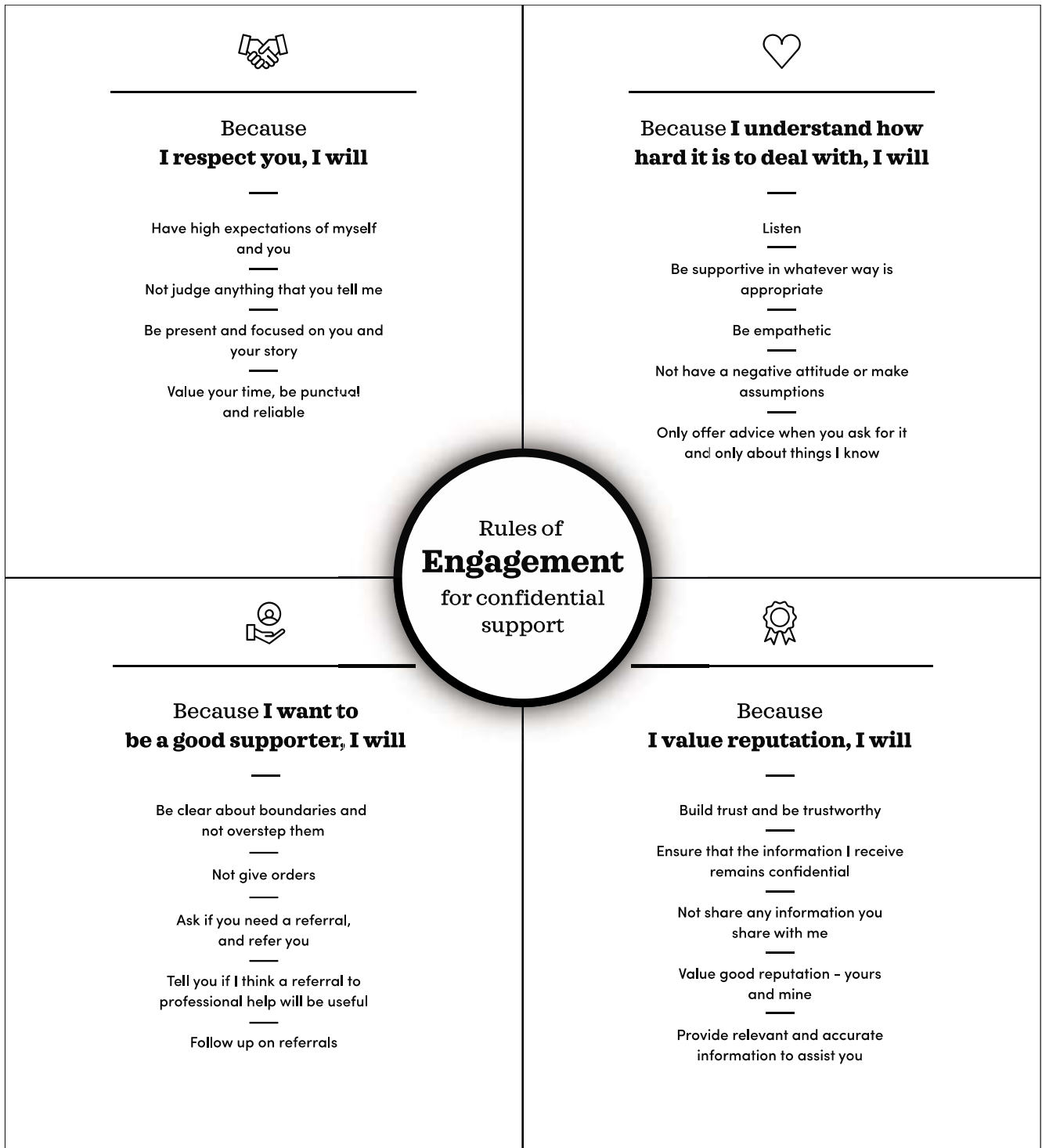
All service providers have the duty to take all reasonable steps to accommodate victims with special needs and treat them in a sensitive manner. You have the right to request, accept and access (when necessary) available social, health and counselling services as well as legal assistance responsive to your needs.

Exercise: Gender based violence legal process

- a. List and discuss barriers that can delay or impact or stop the legal process of gender-based violence?

- b. Which Constitutional rights apply for a survivor who goes through the legal process?

5. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT



Exercise: Rules of engagement for confidential support

- a. Which rules of engagement for confidential support are most important to you and why?

6. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COUNSELLING AND VICTIM SUPPORT

Volunteers can offer support to victims of gender-based violence but not counselling.

Support

A supporter of victims of gender-based violence is someone who has learned about victimization, understands the law and knows what options are available to victims. A volunteer will offer to listen to the victim’s story, will provide practical support and referral for counseling when needed. As a supporter you will often be someone who can ensure that the victim reports the case to the police, and who can help the victim understand what will happen in the Criminal Justice System, victims’ rights and what the role of the victim is. There may be other practical help you can offer, such as contacting family or friends, depending on the circumstances of the crime, and finding somewhere safe for the victim to be.

Counselling

Only someone who has been trained as a professional counselor should counsel a victim of gender-based violence. It can do more harm than good for a person who is

inadequately trained to attempt to counsel a victim. In this training, you will be equipped to identify when someone needs counseling and to refer for counseling, but not to offer it yourself. Counselling is process that enables a person to sort out issues and reach decisions affecting their life. This process involves talking to a person in a way that helps solve a problem or helps to create conditions that will cause the person to understand or improve their behavior, character, values or life circumstances. Counselling can be conducted face-to-face or telephonically. The role of a counsellor is to facilitate another's own growth rather than advising, directing or imposing his/her own solutions.

a. What is the difference between victim support and counselling?

b. What is your role as a supporter?

7. TRAUMA

Trauma is what happens when you think that you or someone close to you may die or might have died or when you are exposed to a life-threatening event. Post-traumatic stress (PTS) is a way of describing what happens in recovery from trauma. It's a normal response to an abnormal event. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is used to describe what happens when recovery doesn't occur. In this instance, the response cripples you in some way, changes what you do and how you do it. Most people however recover fully from trauma with very little intervention. There is no reason not to recover. The mind needs to process what happened and then contain it, store it and recover.

These are common symptoms of trauma:

Anger: you are angry at the invasion of privacy, at the loss of dignity, at being intimidated, bullied, at the injustice, at having your things taken from you, at the police, at yourself for not being able to prevent the incident, at whoever caused the trauma, at society as a whole.

Guilt: somehow you feel you should have been able to avoid or prevent the incident and you didn't, so you feel responsible for it.

The need for revenge: you want someone to pay for what happened.

Anxiety: you worry about all sorts of things that don't normally worry you.

Panic attacks: shortness of breath, a sense of being trapped or powerless, overwhelmed, often by things totally unrelated to the incident.

Irritability: nobody around you gets it right, nobody understands.

Distance: you feel some space between yourself and those closest to you.

Sadness: a sense of loss, sometimes bordering on hopelessness.

Inability to plan optimistically for the future (for instance a holiday) **Forgetfulness:** Your brain is struggling to process big stuff and lets go of the small stuff.

Fear: allow yourself to feel vulnerable; you don't need to be a hero.

Avoidance: not wanting to go back to where it happened or to do what you were doing at the time.

A heightened startle reflex: you'll probably get a fright more easily, be more jumpy.

Flashbacks: late nights and early mornings are often difficult, and it's likely that flashbacks are about what didn't happen, more than about what did.

Fear triggered by smells or sounds: there are often things you don't consciously associate with the incident, but that your brain will recognise.

Seemingly irrational responses to small crises: just when you think you're doing really well, some small incident can set off an unexpected or apparently disproportionate reaction.

The stages of trauma



Exercise: Trauma

a. Have you been in a traumatic situation?

b. How do you deal with trauma?

8. LISTENING SKILLS:

The goal of listening is understanding. A good victim support volunteer has to be a good listener. In this setting, we refer to you listening to the victim, your client.

Pay particular attention to non-verbal behaviour (e.g. posture, facial expressions, movements, tone of voice) and to verbal messages and be able to integrate what the client is doing and saying, and place it in context of his/her life and the helping process.

It is important in this setting to listen attentively and quietly but to pay close attention to any discrepancies, particularly between what is being said and how it is being told. Look for repetitive patterns, actual links to previous traumatic experiences and contractual events, then try to connect some themes. This will help to build up an orderly sequence of events, to keep the client focused on what happened in previous events as compared to what has just happened.

Non-Directive listening

The purpose of this skill is to try and get as many facts as possible by allowing the client to relate the situation as she/he experienced it. You don't need to push for accuracy at this stage, the telling is the important feature. Interpretation or confrontations are also not needed at this point. It is also important to de-brief about the traumatic situation fairly soon after occurrence in order to allow for emotional catharsis and to get immediacy of the traumatic situation. De-briefing usually happens once and helps to create a sense of location, reducing mental confusion.

Sympathy

Sympathy can be defined as feeling a concern for someone else without necessarily becoming involved in a close helping relationship. The sympathetic person, although concerned, remains apart from the caller without establishing a meaningful relationship.

Identification

Identification can be defined as taking on the feeling and characteristics of the other person to the point that their problems become your problems. When this occurs, you lose yourself in the helping relationship. He is no longer objective, which is necessary for helping to take place.

Empathy

Empathy can be defined as feeling another's problems as once own without taking them on you. Empathy involves 'walking in the shoes of the other' without letting his

problems become your own. Empathetic helpers get personally involved while maintaining control of themselves in the helping relationship. At any time they wish, they can hoist themselves out of the well.

BARRIERS AND ROADBLOCKS IN LISTENING

Listening is an art, a skill and a discipline. As in the case of other skills, it needs self-control.

Hearing becomes listening only when we pay attention to what is said and follow it very closely.

Poor listening habits, to avoid:

- On-Off Listening
- Red Flag Listening
- Open Ears-Closed Mind Listening
- Glass-Eyed Listening
- Too-Deep-For-Me Listening
- Do not rock the boat listening

Some do's and don'ts of Victim support

DO

- Listen patiently and constructively
- Convey empathy by reflecting feelings
- Enable the person to discover his/her own power
- Assist the person to discover feelings which he/she may be unaware of
- Focus on the person, not the problem;
- Be aware of how the person is experiencing the problem
- Clarify together the pros and cons of the person's options

DON'T

- Don't preach or tell the person what to do
- Don't generalize, e.g. "Most of us feel this way some times"
- Don't judge the person, e.g. "You shouldn't be feeling that way"
- Don't moralize; enable the person to reach his/her own evaluation
- Don't reassure: "You'll feel better in time"
- Don't give orders: "Tell me more about it"
- Don't advise

Now let us do some role playing!

You have been capacitated to offer victim support, it is a Monday morning and you find a colleague sitting at your desk waiting for you. You greet her and before you can even complete your sentence she burst into tears and tell you about the terrible situation. She tells you that she know that she has to leave but she is staying for the sake of the children. How would you react?

Use the following questions to assist you to give feedback:

- Did the victim supporter hear what the victim/survivor was saying both verbally and non-verbally?
- What did the victim supporter worker do to attend to the victim's safety and security needs?
- What evidence indicates that the victim understood and owned realistic options?
- What typical dynamics did you see occurring- denial, guilt, awareness, withdrawal, fear, rationalisation, and so on in the victim? How did the victim support worker handle them?

9. WHAT ARE SUPPORTERS EQUIPPED TO DO?

10. TERMS OF SERVICE

