



DISCUSSION GUIDE

REFLECTIVE DIALOGUES WITH GRASSROOTS WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

A behavioral change pilot initiative

Enhancing Access to Justice for Women, Phase 2



Artwork on cover by Muna Bhadel from a series of images in
Rekha Devi Yadav: A journey to reflect on, 2021
(mixed media; photo collage with pen, paint, scratches, and text)

DISCUSSION GUIDE

REFLECTIVE DIALOGUES WITH GRASSROOTS WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

A behavioral change pilot initiative

Enhancing Access to Justice for Women, Phase 2



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This discussion guide was prepared as part of a joint initiative of UN Women Nepal and UNDP Nepal. The discussion guide was developed by Sharareh Bajracharya with conceptual and technical inputs from Ashma Shrestha, Communication for Development Officer at UN Women Nepal. The illustrations and layout design were done by Raju Babu Shakya. Colleagues at UN Women Nepal, Subha Ghale, Programme Analyst, and Navanita Sinha, Head of Office, a.i, provided their technical inputs on the discussion guide.

We would like to thank Anita Neupane Thapalia, Executive Chair, Saraswati Yonzon, Project Coordinator, and Bhagyashree Rawal, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, from Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre (LACC) for reviewing the discussion guide. We are grateful to the following team members associated with Dalit Women Right Forum (DWRF), Sabitra Ghimire, Indra Danpali, Pusp Bikram Shahi, Tika Kumari Chaudary Bhul, and Kaushilla Nepali, and team members associated with Village Community Development Centre (VCDC), Laxmi Singh, Manju Singh, and Pramila Basnet for sharing their experiences and reflections while developing the discussion guide. This discussion guide was pretested in Dhangadi, Kailali district, Sudurpaschim Province, in coordination with LACC Nepal and DWRF in September 2022. Following this, six women leaders associated with VCDC, Sarlahi district, Madhes Province, and DWRF were trained as facilitators for the discussion guide during a two-day orientation held in Kathmandu. Subsequently, the facilitators organized a series of dialogues with a total of 50 women (approximately) from 11 grassroots women's organizations in Kailali and Sarlahi.

The artworks used in this discussion guide are from the project titled "We for Us" developed by UN Women in 2021 as part of its project "Enhancing access to justice for women (Phase I)." The project was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The artworks in the discussion guide were developed by artists Muna Bhadel, Uma Bista, Pranav Narayan Manandhar, and Subima Shrestha and curated by Sanjeev Maharjan for "We for Us."

Photography credits, Cover: © UNWOMEN/Muna Bhadel

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
HOW TO USE THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE	3
EXERCISES	9
1. Warm-Up Stories in images	10
2. Warm-Up Setting ground rules	13
3. Storytelling Naming biases	15
4. Warm-Up A Woman Human Rights Defender's story	21
5. Storytelling Zoom-in, Zoom-out	25
6. Mapping biases Tree of possibilities	27
7. Warm-Up Listening to what is not said	31
8. Discussion Exercise This changes everything	33
MONITORING TOOLS	35
Pre and Post- test	36





INTRODUCTION

Connecting attitude, behavior, and outcome

UN Women has been working with Grassroots Women's Organizations (GWOs) in the Madhesh and Sudurpaschim Provinces to facilitate access to justice for women and excluded groups. GWOs play an active role in advancing human rights and justice mainly at the community level. In this role, GWO members can be considered women human rights defenders and for the purpose of this discussion guide, the two terms "GWO members" and "women human rights defenders" are used interchangeably. The GWOs who are a part of UN Women's Access to Justice project are supporting access to justice and services for a range of cases including discrimination, child marriage, domestic violence, rape, dowry, marriage registration, and citizenship. In this process, the wellbeing of the woman seeking justice as well as that of the women human rights defenders are essential. Clarity about the injustice alongside an identification of allies and available mechanisms and services can help all parties involved.

This discussion guide provides learning tools designed to facilitate behavioral changes among women human rights defenders who are GWO members in Kailali and Sarlahi districts, which are the project locations. The behavioral change focuses mainly on enhancing the analytical skills of the GWO members. These analytical skills include self-reflection on their own biases as well as the biases of key actors for access to justice. A heightened awareness of biases prepares GWO members to negotiate with possible allies or opponents and enables them to place the person seeking justice at the centre of the analysis and decision-making processes. The desired outcome is for the GWO members/women human rights defenders to exercise active listening and empathy when a woman seeks their support.

Assumption:

The tools are designed with an assumption that it is essential to approach discrimination and violence against women with an understanding of intersectional identities.

Pedagogy:

The tools used in this discussion guide seek to motivate self-reflective analyses using the three pedagogic stances shared below.

- 1. Working backwards - beginning with the goal:** beginning with an outcome and analyzing how this came to be to realize the connections between our attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes
- 2. Imagining something different - Fiction as a tool:** using fiction as a tool to find a safer space to imagine multiple possibilities and outcomes
- 3. Perspective-taking:** exploring someone else's perspective which may include someone like themselves, someone with 'more power', someone with 'less power', etc.



HOW TO USE THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

This discussion guide is designed to facilitate reflective dialogues across three sessions of 3.5 hours each, which includes breaks. Below is an outline of the activities for the three sessions including the time allotted for each activity, the type of activity, and a short description. A detailed description of each of the activities is presented in the “Exercises” section.

The **intended change** of the dialogue is for the GWO member/woman human rights defender to be equipped with key analytical skills listed below.

The GWO member/women human rights defender will be able to

1. listen with empathy
2. take action with an awareness of one’s own biases and the biases of key actors involved
3. place the well-being of the woman seeking justice at the centre



Guiding questions

How can I, as a GWO member/woman human rights defender, identify my own biases? How do I prepare myself to negotiate with people who are possible allies or opponents in the process of accessing justice? How do I support the well-being of the person seeking justice at the centre of the decision-making processes?



Materials

Facilitators of the dialogues need to prepare a learning kit ahead of time. The table below outlines the materials and their quantities.

Sessions	Materials	Quantity and details
Session 1	Printed pretest and post tests pencils/pens	Enough for each participant
	printed images, timer (on phone), chart paper, markers	54 images about Rekha Devi Yadav: 14 images by Muna Bhadel and 40 images by Uma Bista https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1WXyMkPgRtKveLXiw5F_jq_A5JwJdWsel https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/14IF3G-hBLXfSlp_bNrX1QaeQ1s-5yJyR
	Chart paper or whiteboard (needs to be kept for the duration of the dialogues), markers	2 chart papers for each group
	Projector, speaker, empty plain colored wall or a projector screen	
	printed cards with definition of biases Different colored transparent wrapping papers (at least 4 colors) and patterned wrapping papers cut in sizes of 8"x12" Two transparent hard papers that can hold the wrapping paper and act as a base Water bottle with drinking water	At least one set of printed cards, 1 set of colored/textured papers (pre-cut into rectangles 8"x12"), 1 water bottle needs to be transparent and filled with drinking water
Session 2	chart paper, markers (any color), strips of paper with the each of the scenarios written separately	10 pieces of chart paper, 1 pack of black markers
	chart paper, green, black, and red markers	10 pieces of chart paper, 1 pack of green markers, 1 pack of black markers, 1 pack of red markers
Session 3	masking tape/colored tape, white metacards	6 masking tape, at least 10 metacards for each group
	blue markers, white metacards that can be taped on to the diagram, masking tape	1 pack of blue markers

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Session 1 | 3.5 hours

Intended change: name common biases in oneself and one's surrounding community

Time	Type of activity	Activity Name	Description
15 min	Listening	Introduction	Sitting in a circle, each person introduces themselves (name and address). Facilitator runs through the schedule for the three sessions of the dialogue and the guiding questions. Complete pre-test
15 min	Pre-test		
30 min	Warm Up	Stories in images	In this activity participants see how the same image can have many different stories. The activity encourages participants to look for the details in images. In this process, we spend some time getting to know the former judicial committee member Rekha Devi Yadav and how she defines her role as a human rights defender.
30 min	Warm Up	Setting ground rules of conduct	The facilitator and participants set the ground rules of conduct for the workshop based on values of respect, inclusivity, kindness, generosity, and forgiveness. Through a metaphor of a rock in a river/lake the group discusses how there is a part hidden under the water and a part that is above water. The principles that are not visible or under water are the foundation for the behavior that one can see, hear, smell, taste, and feel - the rules.
10 min	Break		
90 min	Storytelling	Naming biases	Participants explore the metaphor of different colored glasses to understand the way biases color our thinking and how they can be taken off and on. Here we learn to name biases to bring what is unconscious into the conscious realm. Participants explore the definitions of a range of cognitive biases and relate it to their daily lives through role play. At the end, they return to the metaphor of colored filters on glasses to understand biases.
5 min	Break		
10 min	Reflection	Circle time	Reflection question: How can something we explored today be helpful in your responsibilities as a member of a Grassroots Women's Organization? Sitting in a circle, each person shares something in the whole group. People can pass if they do not feel like sharing.
5 min	Check-in	Expectations - Next sessions	Facilitator uses this time to share what will happen in the next session.

Session 2 | 3.5 hours

Intended change: analyze a case study of a woman seeking justice and the outcome through the lens of biases

Time	Type of activity	Activity Name	Description
15 mins	Check-in	Ground rules Review previous day	Revisit ground rules and add/change if needed Sharing by those who volunteer (up to 3 people)
30 min	Warm-up	A Woman Human Rights Defender's story	Through Gauri Bista's story, participants begin the day with a reflection on the ways she sees her roles and responsibilities as a human rights defender. Gauri Bista is a member of a Grassroots Women's Organization.
45 min	Storytelling	Zoom-in, Zoom-out	Based on their past experiences, participants create detailed stories of fictional cases that spotlight the woman seeking justice and GWO member/woman human rights defender. These stories will then be used to practice analyzing biases.
10 min	Break		
90 min	Mapping biases	Tree of possibilities	Participants map the actors involved and try to name biases they may have towards the woman seeking justice and GWO member/woman human rights defender and vice versa.
5 min	Break		
10 min	Reflection	Circle time	Reflection question: How can something we explored today be helpful in your responsibilities as a member of a Grassroots Women's Organization? Sitting in a circle, each person shares something in the whole group. People can pass if they do not feel like sharing.
5 min	Check-in	Next session expectations	Facilitator uses this time to share what will happen in the next session.

Session 3 | 3.5 hours

Intended change: To be able to imagine a different outcome by using an approach of empathy

Time	Type of activity	Activity Name	Description
15 min	Check-in	Ground rules Review previous day	Revisit ground rules and add/change if needed Sharing by those who volunteer
60 min	Warm-Up	Listening to what is not said	Participants immerse themselves into the perspective of the woman seeking justice and other actors involved when working as a GWO member. Here the participants attempt to listen to what is not said - see the unspoken thoughts that can help us identify our biases.
10 min	Break		
60 min	Discussion	This changes everything	Participants revisit the stories created from the previous day and lend a fresh perspective to see if they can change the outcome by shifting actors, their biases, and consequently their behavior.
5 min	Break		
20 min	Reflection	Circle Time	<u>Closing discussion</u> Discuss a bias that you think you would like to be more conscious of in your work as a member of a GWO. Complete pre-test
10 min	Post-test		
30 min	Check-in	Future plans	Discuss in pairs about expectations for the future. Share in the larger group. Facilitator uses this time to share if there is a follow up session and when.

Follow up sessions | 2 hours

Part 1: Checking-in

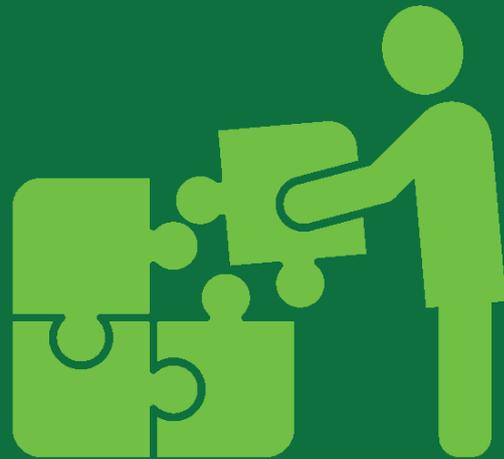
The facilitator begins the session with a check-in. The facilitator splits the group into small groups of 4 to 5 people. Each person recounts an incident/moment from the past few weeks/months where they felt they were able to identify and name a bias either in themselves or other people that helped them in their work as a member of a Grassroots Women's Organization. People can pass if they do not feel comfortable sharing. Listening is just as important. When finished, one representative from each group shares what came up in their group with the whole group.

The facilitator can end with naming and reading out the definition of all eight biases introduced in the dialogues.

Part 2: Revisiting analysis skills - identifying biases

The facilitator asks one person from the group to volunteer to share more details about their incident and to revisit the diagramming activity "genealogy of outcomes" to analyze it as a group. It will be important to articulate what kind of an outcome the participant is hoping for. Then, as a group discuss possible next steps. Repeat this as necessary for anyone else in the group who is seeking support. The facilitator can end the session by encouraging people to keep checking in with each other in their GWOs and continue this process among themselves.

EXERCISES



1

WARM-UP STORIES IN IMAGES

Whole group, individual, and pair activities



Time:
30 minutes



Goal:
demonstrate how people make assumptions based on their past experiences and tell stories based on preconceived notions



Materials:
printed images about Rekha Devi Yadav by Muna Bhadel and Uma Bista (54 images),
timer (on phone)

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1WXYmkPqRtKveLXiw5F_jq_A5JwJdWsel

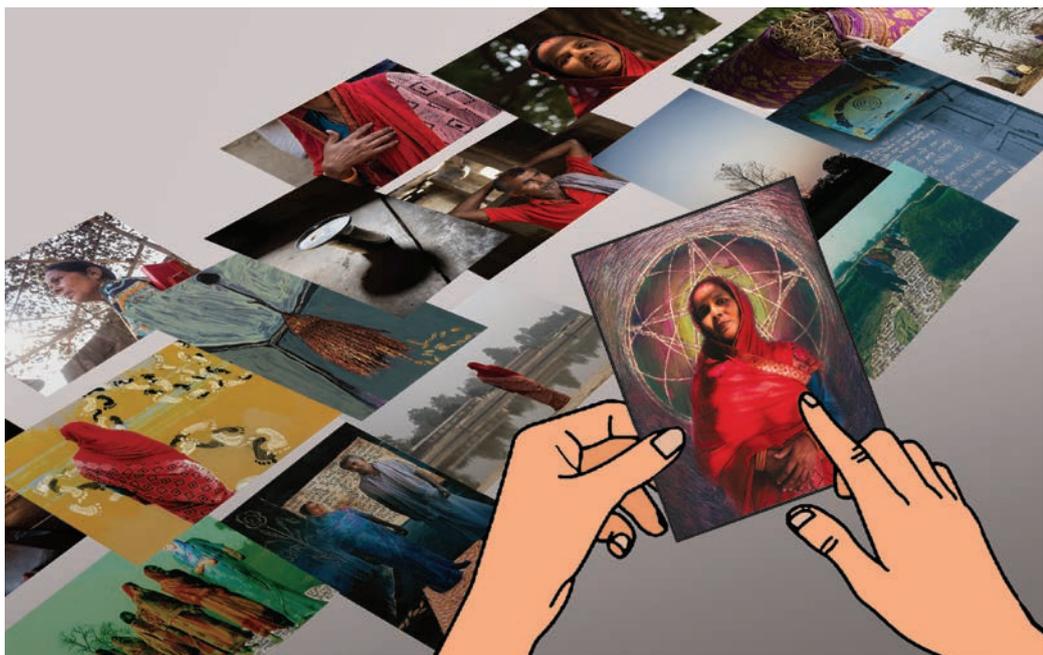
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/14IF3G-hBLXfSlp_bNrX1QaeQ1s-5yJyR

See more info about these artworks in **Annex I**



Activity:

1. Facilitator places all 54 of the printed images on the floor, face-up so that participants can see them clearly.



2. Each participant chooses an image and takes one minute to think about what they notice.
3. Each person turns to the person on their right and shares their thoughts with them - what did you notice? Did you come up with any possible stories? After two minutes, when each person has shared, they swap images.
4. Each takes another minute to think through what they will share with the next person about the new image then walks around the room to find someone they do not usually speak to. They repeat the process and this time share both their own interpretations as well as those shared by the person before them about that image. After two minutes, swap images again.
5. During the final round, participants sit in a circle making sure that both people on the left and right are people they have not spoken to in this activity. Each person turns to the left and shares about their interpretation of the image as well as the previous two interpretations.
6. Once this process is complete, the facilitator asks three people to share the stories with the whole group, asking them to recount all three versions of interpretations.
7. Facilitator closes the activity by asking them to notice how even though three people saw the same image they noticed different things and interpreted it differently based on their past experiences. The facilitator conveys how each of us look at the world through preconceived notions.
8. To give some context about the images, at the end, the facilitator shares that the images are about Rekha Devi Yadav, a local judicial committee member in Brahmapuri Rural Municipality in Sarlahi district. They were artworks made by Muna Bhadel and Uma Bista (indicated on the cards). In addition, the facilitator shares the short documentary about Rekha Devi Yadav and ends with the interpretive dance and music piece “**स्तर | Voice**” about how Subima Shrestha and Pranav Narayan Manandhar envision what it feels like to be Rekha Devi Yadav in the courtyard space of her home. Before watching the video, the facilitator reads the artwork description below. The facilitator can also read the background of how these artworks were made below.
 - Link to [documentary \(3:24 min\) here](#)
 - Link to artwork (4:44 min) [here Pranav Narayan Manandhar Subima Shrestha](#)

स्वर | Voice, 2021

Pranav Narayan Manandhar, Subima Shrestha

Media: Multimedia video in three parts (below showing two of the three works)

Artwork description

We felt a kind of comforting coolness on reaching the porch of Rekha Devi's house. This porch, where she sits with the village women to listen to their problems and to solve them, probably also give the women relief and safety.

The search to express - the imagination of dancing on the floor of Rekha Devi's porch, the comfort the village women find in her company, and her energy, drive and hopes – through body movements resulted in the dance improvisation that is Voice. Rekha and Subima paint each other's hands with the white they chose, in an attempt to connect with each other emotionally.

The music was improvised in response to the expressions and body movements.

Conceptualization and dance: Subima Shrestha

Music, direction videography and edit: Pranav Narayan Manandhar

Background on the artworks presented in this activity:

'We for Us' presents a collection of artworks that embody the lived experiences of women seeking justice, to help us understand what meaningful justice for women can look like.

The experiences of Rekha Devi Yadav and Gauri Devi Bista, two women from opposite ends of Nepal, have been brought to life through varied and innovative artworks by four artists and a curator in this online exhibition entitled '**We For Us**'. In the warm up exercise "Stories in images" we observed artworks about Rekha Devi Yadav by Muna Bhadel, Uma Bista, Pranav Narayan Manandhar, and Subima Shrestha. Through dance, visual representation and other media, the artists' empathetic exercise of discovery opens a conversation around individual perspective, intersecting identities, and gender equality, between the artists and the subject, but also with the viewer.

Rekha and Gauri are powerful individuals in their own right, each with her own story. But their lives and missions are worth diving into as they also illustrate the wider struggles that women face across Nepal, and to some extent more widely. Each in her own way is a shining example of what can be achieved with the right support from organizations and their community, and above all with the right attitude and perseverance from within.

In this warm up, we focused on Rekha Devi Yadav's story.

2

WARM-UP

SETTING GROUND RULES

Whole group activity



Time:

30 minutes



Goals:

1. Work towards creating a safer space for people to speak and act openly and responsibly towards each other
2. Set ground rules for dialogue based on respect, inclusivity, kindness, generosity, and forgiveness
3. Begin a discussion on how behavior we see are led by values not always clearly visible on the surface



Materials:

Chart paper or whiteboard (needs to be kept for the duration of the dialogues)



Activity:

1. The facilitator shares that this dialogue needs to begin with an understanding of how to create a safer space for people to speak and act openly and responsibly towards each other. It is essential that the most vulnerable person is taken into consideration when creating safer spaces. As members of Grassroots Women's Organizations, each woman is witnessing or being approached by other women who are facing challenges in their lives and we are looking to ensure theirs and our well-being. In the dialogue sessions to follow, we are working towards people feeling comfortable to honestly voice what they are feeling, their thoughts, and vulnerabilities. For this, it is essential that we create some ground rules based on **respect, inclusivity, kindness, care, generosity, and forgiveness.**
2. In order to explain this further, the facilitator draws a simple diagram of a rock inside a river/lake. Part of the rock is submerged underwater. The facilitator shares that the group will set their own rules of conduct for the workshop. These rules are like the part that is visible above the water. The foundation of the rock is submerged underwater and is not as clearly visible. This submerged part is the values based on which we make these rules – values such as **respect, inclusivity, kindness, care, generosity, and forgiveness.**

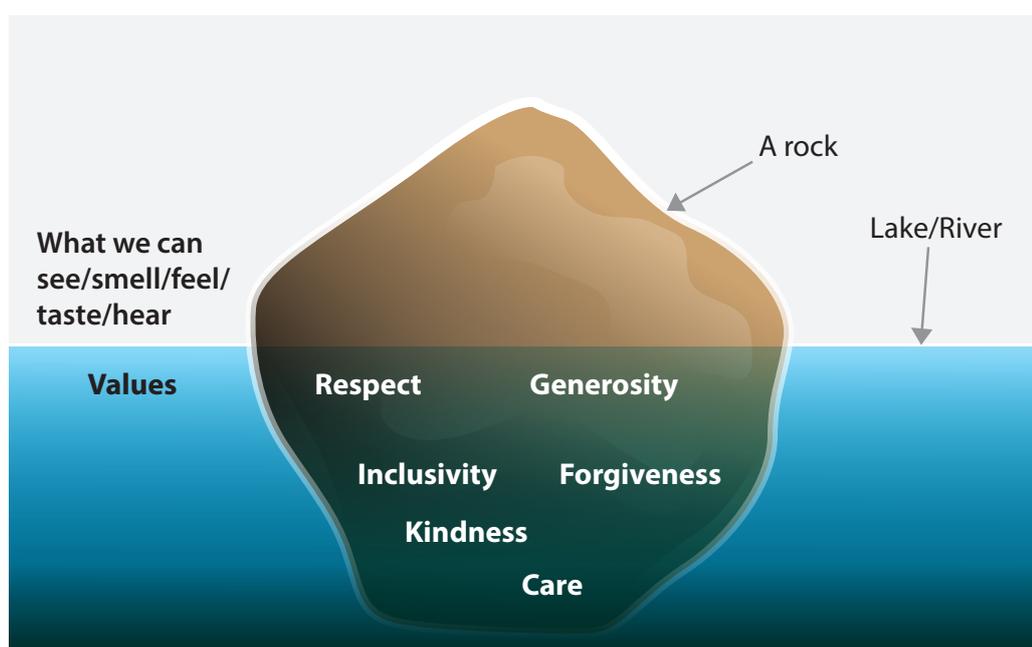
Note: the facilitator asks that the group imagine clear and clean water so that these values are as transparent as possible. After going through each of these values, the facilitator asks if there are any other values the group would like to add.

3. Participants then create a list for their own rules of conduct to follow during the dialogue sessions to ensure that the core values are followed. The facilitator asks using the question below and writes the answers on a chart paper that is hung in a visible place for the whole duration of the dialogue sessions.

What does _____ [respect, inclusivity, kindness, care, generosity, forgiveness] look/sound/taste/feel/smell like? List these on the chart paper/whiteboard.

The facilitator can begin with "Taking a pause of finding a friend when things get overwhelming." Some other examples that may come up: *keep mobile phones on silent; if there is an emergency, take the call outside the space; arrive on time and inform people if an emergency comes up and you cannot come; wait for people who are quiet to speak and share their knowledge; be ready to listen to different opinions; if someone is speaking wait for them to finish before speaking; maintain confidentiality; quietly go to the toilet or for water any point when you need to.*

At the end of this session the facilitator reminds the participants to remember that we want each person to honestly voice their thoughts in the dialogue sessions to create a safe place for us to work through our own ways of thinking. At the same time, each person should only share what they are comfortable sharing. They are always welcome to not share. The goal is for us as members of Grassroots Women's Organizations to prioritize the wellbeing of the woman seeking justice. These dialogue sessions are a way for us to try out some methods that may help us do this.



3 STORYTELLING NAMING BIASES

Whole group and small group activities



Time:
90 minutes



Goal:
to be able to name biases in oneself and others



Materials:

- printed cards with definition of biases
- Different colored transparent wrapping papers (at least 4 colors) and patterned wrapping papers cut in sizes of 8"x12"
- Two transparent hard papers that can hold the wrapping paper and act as a base
- Clear water bottle with clean water



Activity:

PART 1 - Understanding the metaphor of the colored glasses (30 minutes)

As a whole group, the facilitator reads the definition of bias.

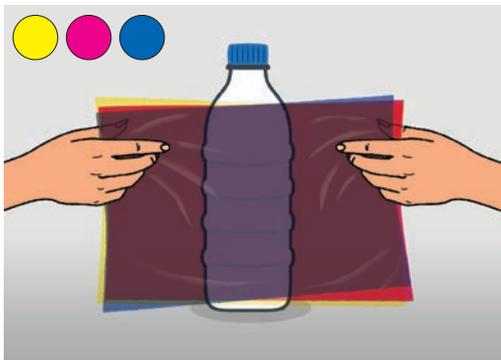
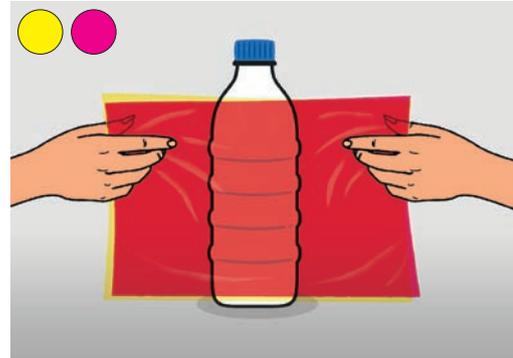
A **bias** is a strong, preconceived notion of someone or something, based on information we have, perceive to have, or lack that are unfair. These notions are based on an individual's own perception or points of view. There are different types of bias people experience that influence and affect the way we think, behave, and perceive others.

The facilitator then explains that this session is about exploring specific examples but to help understand the concept that we would explore a metaphor first.

"Let's think about bias like a pair of colored glasses. Each of us as we move in this world viewing the world through our own combination of colored filters. Two different people may be looking at the same thing but depending on their filters, they will see it differently. The filter is the bias."



1. After sharing this metaphor, the facilitator continues to demonstrate the metaphor. The facilitator places a clear bottle of water in a place where everyone can see. Participants explore what it is like to look at the water through different colored and textured filters. The group tries looking through different combination of filters and they discuss in the group what they see.



- Two people are asked to help with holding a transparent sturdy plastic surface in front of the water. The facilitator asks the group what they notice.
- They are asked to choose one color from the pile of transparent colored papers and place it in front of the water. Participants are asked what they notice.
- The participants are asked to continue to add more layers on top of the colored paper in front of the water. Each time, the facilitator asks what they notice.
- After a few colored layers, the participants are asked to pick a textured paper. Again, they are asked what they notice.
- The same process of discussing what people notice is repeated as the facilitator asks the participants to remove one layer at a time until the participants can actually see the clean water and can reach it to drink.

2. Once this process is complete, the facilitator uses this opportunity to discuss with the participants about how the metaphor relates to their lives.

The facilitator asks the group to imagine that the bottle represents a woman who is having a difficult time in their community. The different layers are the different ways people see her situation. As humans, different people can see the same thing differently, even adding things that may not actually exist. This can sometimes stop one from being able to access the clean water as they may think it is dirty when in reality it is just their perception. Each person will think they are correct. For people who share the same viewpoint, they may agree on what they see. For people who have a different combination of colors/patterns, they would disagree with each other even though they are looking at the same thing.

"In this process, sometimes we see things that may not exist in reality. As members of GWOs, we need to be careful about which lens we have on and what lens others have on because it may hurt the person whom we are trying to support. We are calling this lens biases that are prejudices we hold about someone that is unfair. The next part of this activity will involve learning more about how we can identify our biases so we can address them."

Facilitator rereads the definition of biases.

A **bias** is a strong, preconceived notion of someone or something, based on information we have, perceive to have, or lack that are unfair. These notions are based on an individual's own perception or points of view. There are different types of bias people experience that influence and affect the way we think, behave, and perceive others.



PART 2 - Naming biases (60 minutes)

"We are now going to engage in activities that help us name biases and try to understand how they may affect our behavior through possible examples. The biases we will explore are gender bias, ageism, name bias, beauty bias, affinity bias, authority bias, perception bias, affect heuristic bias."

1. The facilitator reads the definition of gender bias and asks the group to share possible examples. Discuss if the examples are relevant or not in our communities. In what ways do these biases play out. Try to identify one of the biases that you feel you have or have had at some point in your life. If the group has a hard time, the facilitator can read out some of the examples written below as a prompt. Then the facilitator asks the group to come up with some more examples.

gender bias: When people attribute women, men, and non-binary persons to have certain fixed traits and attitudes. These traits are also simultaneously seen as superior or inferior to one another.

Examples:

“There is no need for a woman to have her nagrikta papers (citizenship) made. She belongs to her husband and the family. They will take care of her.”

“Gauri Bista, as a widow, was seen as bad luck to her in-laws and the community. This is why they felt it was ok to shave her hair against her will and push her to want to kill herself.”

“Of course women should wear ghunghat and speak in soft tones. That is what makes them feminine.”

“Women are good Treasurers because they manage the finances in their homes.”

“A man cannot wear a dress.”

2. The facilitator then asks each small group to send someone to pick one of the cards with the definition of a bias. If there are any biases left, any group can choose to take extra ones to discuss and place in their examples. Similar to the way the group discussed gender bias, each small group discusses the bias they received and try to identify examples. The facilitator goes to each group to check in with them on their understanding of the bias.

As the groups are understanding the nature of the bias their group selected, it is important for the facilitator to clarify that the incidents they are thinking about may involve multiple biases, including ones they have. The facilitator refers back to the multiple layers of colors and textures that represented biases that keep us from realizing the actual nature of the water and shares a possible scenario presented below.

There is a room full of men at a meeting about deciding how to share one tractor in the village. One of the dalit women ward members who is 21 years old walks into the meeting. What happens? What do you think is going through the minds of the men in the room? How do you think they will act?

In the discussion that follows, the facilitator shows how this example has layers of biases that come from people’s intersectional identities– for example, gender bias, ageism, perception bias, and even affinity bias. After this example, the facilitator encourages each group to decide on an example they would like to role play.

<p>gender bias: When people attribute women, men, and non-binary persons to have certain fixed traits and attitudes. These traits are also simultaneously seen as superior or inferior to one another</p>	<p>ageism: when people attribute in a negative manner certain characteristics and attitudes to age</p>
<p>name bias: a tendency to judge and favor people with certain names, indicating gender, caste, class, ethnicity bias</p>	<p>beauty bias: a tendency to judge and favor people whom one considers beautiful</p>
<p>affinity bias: a preference for people similar to ourselves or people we know and like. These people usually are people like oneself in appearance, beliefs and/or background</p>	<p>perception bias : when our perception is skewed by stereotypes and assumptions we have about other groups</p>
<p>authority bias : when one blindly believes the methods, opinions, strategies, and advice of an authoritative person without applying thought</p>	<p>affect heuristic : when you rely on your emotions rather than concrete information to make a decision. This allows a person to reach a conclusion quickly and easily but can distort the person's thinking</p>

3. Once the group has a clear understanding of the bias, they do role plays that they can perform in front of the larger group. Each group chooses the main actors, their relationship, the key issue, and decides on a beginning, middle, and end. The group works out a 3-minute play.
4. In the remaining 30 minutes each group performs in front of the group and explains the bias they performed. The facilitator reads the definition at the end of each play and asks the group to think through what they think about the bias.
5. The facilitator wraps up the session by pointing out that in the process of identifying and naming the biases around us, including in ourselves, we are trying to find a way to make them more apparent. The facilitator returns to the metaphor of the rock in the river/lake. We are trying to figure out information about the whole rock and so are finding ways to explore what is underwater. **How deep are the biases being expressed in people's behavior? How can our understanding of the biases help the person who is vulnerable?** These are some questions we will leave the session with so that we can continue exploring this further.

References for the facilitator:

<p>gender bias: When people attribute women, men, and non-binary persons to have certain fixed traits and attitudes. These traits are also simultaneously seen as superior or inferior to one another.</p> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <p><i>“There is no need for a woman to have her nagrikta papers made. She belongs to her husband and the family. They will take care of her.”</i></p> <p><i>“Gauri Bista, as a widow, was seen as bad luck to her in-laws and the community. This is why they felt it was ok to shave her hair against her will and push her to want to kill herself.”</i></p> <p><i>“Of course women should wear ghunghat and speak in soft tones. That is what makes them feminine.</i></p> <p><i>“Women are good Treasurers because they manage the finances in their homes.”</i></p> <p><i>“A man cannot wear a dress.”</i></p>	<p>ageism: when people attribute in a negative manner certain characteristics and attitudes to age</p> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <p><i>“Elder women in our community are very traditional and don’t want younger women to speak their minds.”</i></p> <p><i>“Young people these days take too many risks and only care about themselves.”</i></p> <p><i>“That woman teacher is too young to teach math. I don’t think she will know much about math.”</i></p>
<p>name bias: a tendency to judge and favor people with certain names, indicating gender, caste, class, ethnicity bias.</p> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <p><i>“When I looked at the facilitator’s name - Indra - I assumed the facilitator was a man. I was surprised to see a woman walk in.”</i></p> <p><i>“On the desk of the Ward Chair, I put an application for Chandni Dom/Kami to receive access to the safe house because her in-laws had severely beaten her for the third time. Her name was covered by other papers. The Chair almost approved the application, but when he read the name, he quickly stopped looking at me and started talking about how he thought there was no more space in the safehouse.”</i></p>	<p>beauty bias: a tendency to judge and favor people whom one considers beautiful.</p> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <p><i>“I feel that teachers in school give my sister better grades in class because she is fairer and seen as more beautiful.”</i></p> <p><i>“People think that just because I wear lipstick, am fair, and take care of my looks I am successful at doing my work as a member of a GWO.”</i></p>
<p>affinity bias: a preference for people similar to ourselves or people we know and like. These people usually are people like oneself in appearance, beliefs and/or background.</p> <p><u>Example</u></p> <p><i>“I heard from someone in the village that there was loud screaming between a young woman and her in-laws in the evening. This had happened before and so without checking on the situation, I called the police. By the time I got there, I saw that the police was doing namaste to the in-laws who were from the so called ‘upper caste’ and was trying to hush up the situation.”</i></p>	<p>perception bias: when our perception is skewed by stereotypes and assumptions we have about other groups.</p> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <p><i>“Chandani Dom touched the water that my father drank. That is why he passed away yesterday.”</i></p> <p><i>“Someone who cannot hear is unable to help others.”</i></p>
<p>authority bias: when one blindly believes the methods, opinions, strategies, and advice of an authoritative person without applying thought.</p> <p><u>Example</u></p> <p><i>“The parents were told by the village chief that they should get their daughter married to the person who had raped her because that was the only way to save face for all involved.”</i></p>	<p>affect heuristic: when you rely on your emotions rather than concrete information to make a decision. This allows a person to reach a conclusion quickly and easily but can distort the person’s thinking.</p> <p><u>Example</u></p> <p><i>“I decided to immediately visit the in-laws to ask them to stop beating their daughter-in-law. On my way there, the daughter-in-law tried to commit suicide as she was so afraid.”</i></p>

4

WARM UP

A WOMAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER'S STORY

Pair and whole group activities



Time:

30 minutes



Goal:

bring attention to the personal stories of women human rights defenders and how it may affect the work they are doing



Materials:

Projector, speaker, empty plain colored wall or a projector screen

About the artworks:

'We for Us' presents a collection of artworks that embody the lived experiences of women seeking justice, to help us understand what meaningful justice for women can look like.

The experiences of Rekha Devi Yadav and Gauri Devi Bista, two women from opposite ends of Nepal, have been brought to life through varied and innovative artworks by four artists and a curator in this online exhibition entitled '[We For Us](#)'. In the warm up exercise "Stories in images" we observed artworks about Rekha Devi Yadav by Muna Bhadel, Uma Bista, Pranav Narayan Manandhar, and Subima Shrestha. Through dance, visual representation and other media, the artists' empathetic exercise of discovery opens a conversation around individual perspective, intersecting identities, and gender equality, between the artists and the subject, but also with the viewer.

Rekha and Gauri are powerful individuals in their own right, each with her own story. But their lives and missions are worth diving into as they also illustrate the wider struggles that women face across Nepal, and to some extent more widely. Each in her own way is a shining example of what can be achieved with the right support from organizations and their community, and above all with the right attitude and perseverance from within.

In this warm up, we will focus on Gauri Bista's story.

List of partners for 'We For Us':

This is an initiative under the joint Women's Access to Justice programme by UN Women, ICJ and OHCHR, and generously supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency SIDA. The Project was managed by a national NGO in Nepal - Srijanalaya.



Activity:

Below are three artworks (videos). The activity involves reading, watching, and discussing around each artwork. The facilitator can follow the instructions below to facilitate the session.

Instructions:	
1) Read the information for each artwork. 2) Play the artwork	3) Discuss in pairs using the question
Artwork 1 & 2 Time for activity is 15 min	Artwork 3 Time for activity is 15 min
Artwork link: https://youtu.be/Pf6u4tU6Oog (3:27 min) Artwork link: Muna Bhadel – And now I am ready, 2021. - YouTube (10:18 min - watch 5 minutes)	Artwork link: Uma Bista – Our Lives Our Journey, 2021 - YouTube (2:07 min) Documentary link (3:17 min)
Title: रत्न Self , 2021 Medium: Multimedia Artists: Conceptualized and Choreographed by <i>Subima Shrestha</i> Lyrics and Vocal by <i>Gauri Bista</i> Music and Sarod by <i>Suresh Raj Bajracharya</i> Directed and Edited by <i>Irina Giri</i> Camera Work by <i>Pranav Narayan Manandhar</i> Nyaa Kheen by <i>Bipu Shrestha</i> Dhime and Dama by <i>Laxmi prasad Dangol</i> Audio Recording by <i>Firoj Bajracharya</i>	Title: Our Lives Our Journey Gauri , 2021 Medium: Multimedia; video and photos in four parts Artist: <i>Uma Bista</i> Artwork description (see below):
Title: And now I am ready , 2021 Medium: Video and performance Artist: <i>Muna Bhadel</i> Artwork descriptions (see below)	
Questions (discuss in pairs) How are you feeling? What kinds of emotions do you think are being depicted in the song, dance, video? What do you think happened in Gauri Bista's life?	Questions (discuss in pairs) How does Gauri Bista help women around her as well as herself? What is Gauri Bista's attitude towards perpetrators?
To close the session, the facilitator asks each participant to remember that everyone in the room is here because they are members of a Grassroots Women's Organization and that their work and leadership is valued. Their own experiences, what they observe in their communities, and their knowledge of the community's dynamics are things that they bring to their role as members of GWOs.	

Artwork description 1:

Title: स्त | SELF, 2021

Media: Multimedia

Conceptualized and Choreographed by *Subima Shrestha*

Lyrics and Vocal by *Gauri Bista*

Music and Sarod by *Suresh Raj Bajracharya*

Directed and Edited by *Irina Giri*

Camera Work by *Pranav Narayan Manandhar*

Nyaa Kheen by *Bipu Shrestha*

Dhime and Dama by *Laxmi prasad Dangol*

Audio Recording by *Firoj Baracharya*

In her deuda song, Gauri Bista has expressed her grief of losing her husband and her internal struggles of not having the society's support. Subima Shrestha has interpreted classical dance mudras in her own ways to align with the sorrow expressed in the deuda sung by Gauri.

The Self is a novel and experimental collaboration between three different musical genres in Raga Sarang and meter of five (Chhanda paanch). Nepali folk song in the form of deuda, classical string instrument – sarod and Newa instrument – naaya-khin have been used here. According to sarod guru Suresh Raj Bajracharya, such a coming together of sarod and naaya-khin is the first of its kind.

The count of odd numbers is considered difficult in music. Its path isn't straightforward but continuous practice increases one's capacity to understand it. Gauri has also adopted a continuity and practice in her lifestyle. Regardless of how the society outside criticizes and restricts her, with faith in her ideals and work, she has maintained a continuity with faith in her ideals and work. This continuity and her search for identity has been shown metaphorically through the movements of Kathak in the opposite direction. The white colour in her hands signify her own freedom.

Artwork description 2:

OUR LIVES OUR JOURNEY | GAURI, 2021

Uma Bista

Media: Multimedia; video and photos in four parts

With Gauri ji, after our first conversation over the phone, I had a difficult time emotionally for a few days. Her statement, *ma hindirahe, hindirahe* - I walked and walked - kept running in my head. The courage with which she gathered herself and decided to keep walking struck me. She managed to create a sense of solidarity in her own community where she established herself in an organization, found a way to be happy, engaged in many forms of work while negotiating motherhood and her responsibility for her children. When she needed to be more stable for her children, the people around her helped her switch her job from fieldwork to office hours. Her mother has helped take care of the children. Over time, she has managed to create her own identity as Gauri Bista. She transformed from someone who people did not listen to, to someone who can create change. Even within her own family, she shares with such pride that she was able to convince her mother to not force her little sister into marriage. She did not want her mother to repeat the same mistake.

Artwork description 3:

AND NOW I AM READY, 2021

Muna Bhadel

Material: Video and performance

Gauri Bista is a single woman, her struggles after her husband's death are truly heartbreaking. But even in such a situation, she did not weaken her self-confidence, so she has been able to build her positive identity in the society. After talking to her, I became very emotional. After her husband passed away, her hair was traditionally cut off against her will in an unconscious state, and her personal struggle began here. I have shown these Gauri Bista's life struggle through performance art, in which I have used plastic and movement of my shadow as a metaphor. In every layer inside the tangled plastic, I have linked my body's struggles with suffocation, restlessness, helplessness and the struggle to get out of it to the struggles of Gauri Bista's life. In the video of Performance Art, I have shown that she has succeeded in her struggling life with faith, self-confidence, patience and fearlessness.

5 STORYTELLING

ZOOM-IN, ZOOM-OUT

Small group and whole group activities



Time:

45 minutes



Goal:

Create a detailed fictional story that places at the centre the woman seeking justice



Materials:

chart paper, markers (any color), strips of paper with the each of the scenarios written separately



Activity:

1. Each of the scenarios below are short prompts to create one's own fictional story. Read all seven scenarios as a whole group.
2. The facilitator creates groups of 4 or 5. One person from each group comes and selects one of the scenarios without looking and takes it back to the group. When telling their stories, participants use a technique of zooming in and zooming out on the situation. The facilitator asks the participants to zoom in on detailed aspects of the characters and how they are feeling about their situation as well as zoom out to look at the larger sequence of events and relationships between different individuals such as family members or possible service providers/justice providers who might be involved in the case. Chart paper and markers are made available if the group needs it. The facilitator asks the group to build a detailed story with the guidelines below.



Guidelines when creating each story:

- Think about the **woman seeking support or justice:**
What is her personality, age, religion, caste, ethnicity? What is her current state of mind? How much does she read and write? Who are her friends and family? Is she earning an income? What is her economic state?
- Who is the **GWO member/woman human rights defender?**
What is her personality, age, religion, caste, ethnicity? What is her current state of mind? How much does she read and write? Who are her friends and family? Is she earning an income? What is her economic state?

— **The story:**

How did the woman seeking support and the GWO member meet? What kind of help is the woman looking for? What are the details of the case that are shared with the GWO member and what unfolds after. Specify the time frame and decide on the outcome. The group should add details and characters as needed to the stories.

3. After two minutes, ask the group to gather as a whole group. The facilitator emphasizes that these are fictional stories and they will be the basis for the following activities in the reflective dialogues. Also, the facilitator points out that these stories will continue to evolve as we continue to work with them. This is a starting point.
4. Each group shares the story they have created. The group gets a chance to ask each other questions so that the story is as clear as possible.
5. After this initial sharing, each story is recorded through video/audio by the facilitator as this can be revisited later when analyzing.

Story prompts:

Scenario 1: A young woman is 14 years old and was staying home as she recently lost her sight. Her mother finds that she is two months pregnant. When the mother asks her daughter what happened, she finds out that she was raped by a neighbor.

Scenario 2: A man who is 65 years old marries a young woman of 21 years old. After one year of the marriage, the in-laws begin to beat the young woman every few days, for a month. She does not have citizenship papers.

Scenario 3: An 18-year-old young woman has been missing for three months. The mother and father are being hounded by lenders as they found out that she had taken out a loan in partnership with five other people with the hope that she could pay for the consultancy to arrange a job for her in Dubai.

Scenario 4: A 16 year old young woman is finishing her SEE and is pulled out of school all of a sudden as she is getting married off to a young boy in another village.

Scenario 5: When a 27-year-old Dalit single mother goes to the village temple to pray. The priest refuses to let her into the temple and verbally abuses her.

Scenario 6: A 30 year old woman is verbally abused and mistreated by her husband and his family. The woman is mentally stressed and is malnourished.

Scenario 7: An NGO had given three goats and cash to five women in the village to begin a small business. The husband of one of the young women took all the cash from her.

6

MAPPING BIASES TREE OF POSSIBILITIES

Small group and whole group activities



Time:

90 minutes



Goal:

Analyze a case of a woman seeking justice/support by focusing on possible biases among and between different individuals involved such as family members or possible service providers/justice providers who might be involved in the case. One of the main focuses is on the positionality of the GWO member/woman human rights defender.



Materials:

chart paper, **green**, **black**, and **red** markers



Activity:

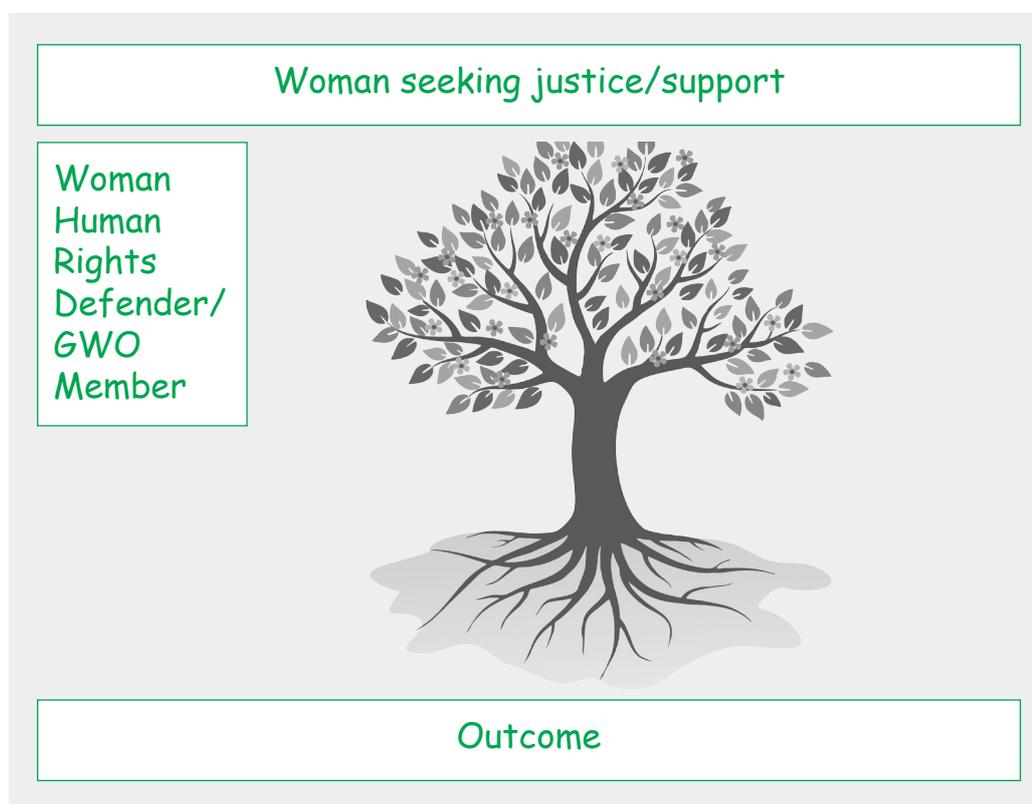
“This mapping exercise is about looking at the analysis of the justice seeking process like a tree. We want the outcome to ground the tree in such a way that the leaves of the tree can keep growing and the process of flowering can continue. The hope is for the wellbeing of the woman seeking justice, so she can continue to grow and spread her leaves out into the world. The different branches are the various actors and events that happen to allow for the woman seeking justice to grow. Sometimes these branches dry up and are not supportive. Based on this metaphor, we have designed an activity to analyze the stories participants created in the previous activity.”



1. Participants return to the same small groups in which they had created their own fictional stories. They now recall the story as they answer the first set of questions and write this part with the green marker.

Green = Woman seeking support, the GWO member/woman human rights defender and the outcome

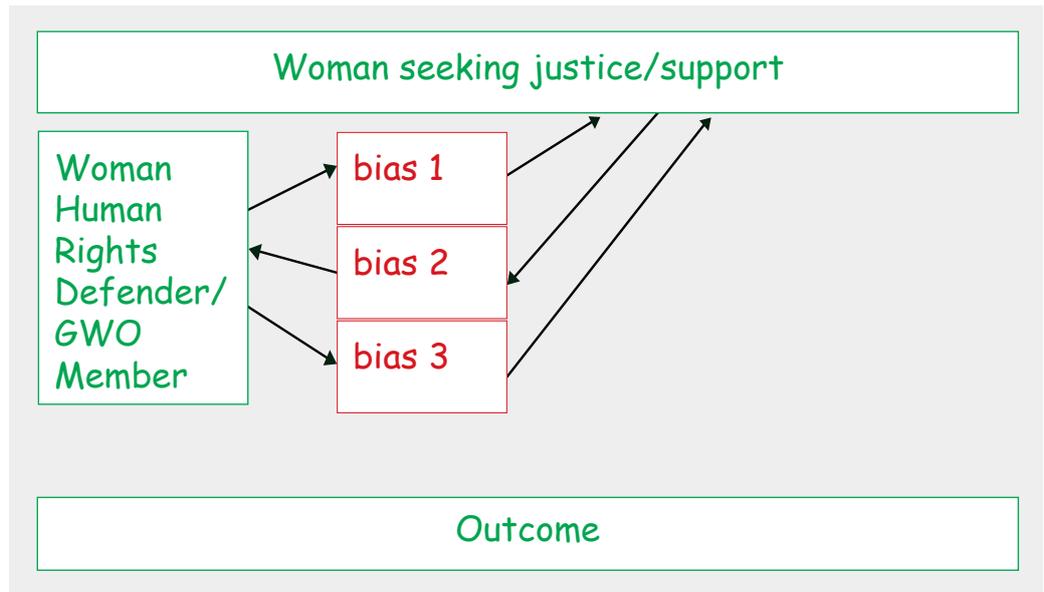
Who is the woman seeking justice and the GWO member/woman human rights defender? What is the outcome of the case? As the group recalls the story, one designated scribe writes “the woman seeking justice/support” at the top of the paper, “woman human rights defender/GWO member” on one side of the paper, and at the very bottom (like the root of a tree), the outcome in one sentence. The group can decide to use figures and symbols.



2. The next step in the analysis of the story involve looking at the biases that the woman seeking justice/support and the woman human rights defender may have towards each other. Participants use the **Red** marker to name some of the possible biases and discuss.

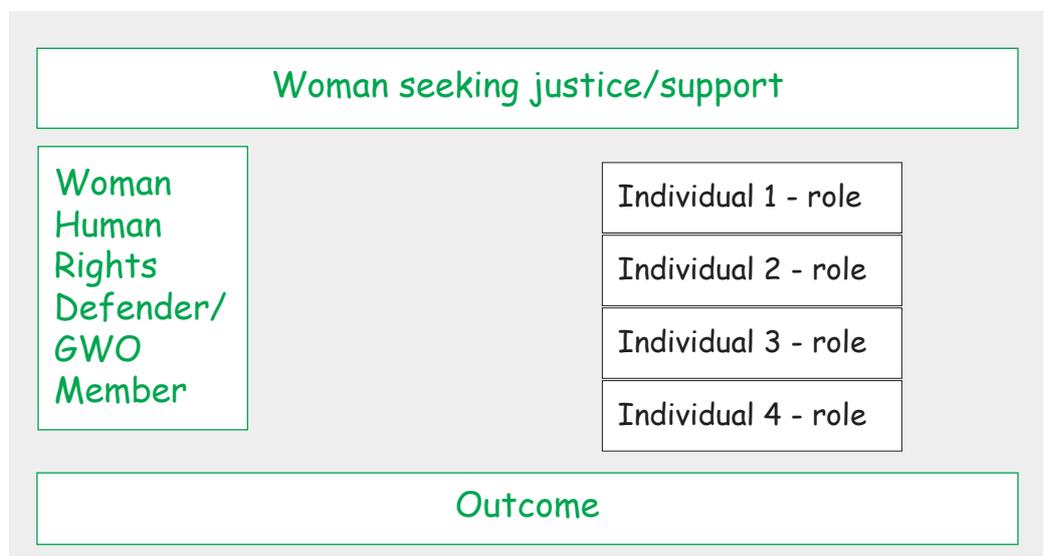
Red=biases, stereotypes, attitudes.

Note: participants can use the name of the biases from the previous activity or they can create new ones.

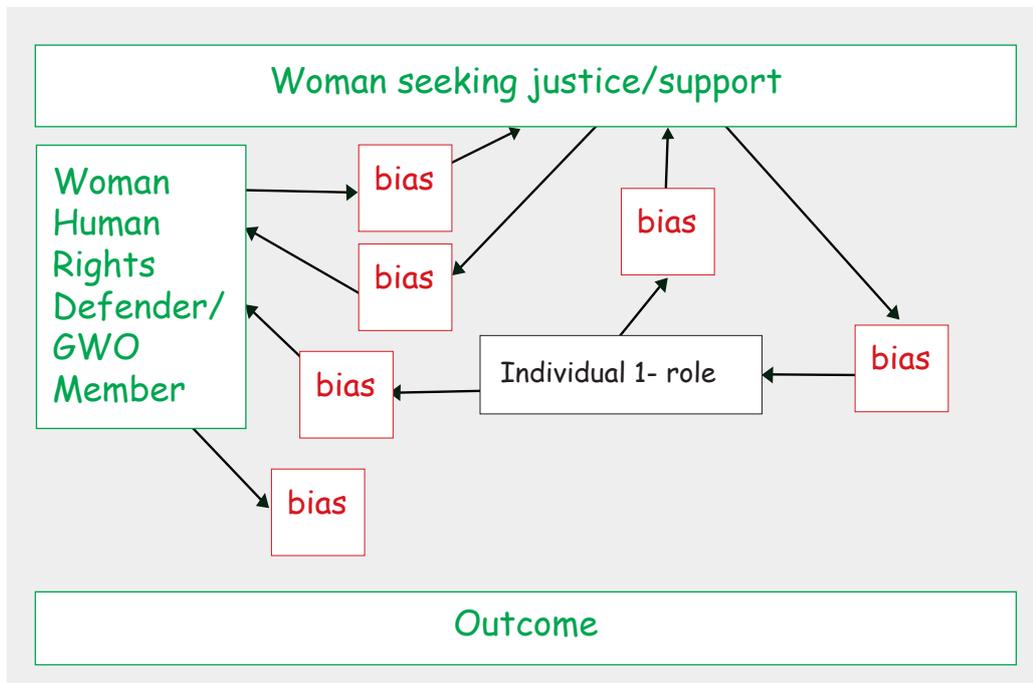


3. Participants then list all the main actors in their story that are involved in the case and are entangled in the story in relation to the woman seeking justice, the human rights defender/member of GWO, or both.

Black = Other actors - e.g. family, friends, relationships



- Participants repeat the process of naming biases that these actors may have towards the woman seeking justice, the human rights defender/member of GWO or both and vice versa.



- After 45 minutes, the group gathers as a whole group and shares each of their charts. The facilitator creates a few minutes after each presentation for others in the group to share comments or questions. The facilitator constantly tries to connect the ways in which people's behavior in the stories are connected to particular biases and how it may have affected the final outcome.
- At the end, the facilitator returns to the metaphor of the tree and leaves an open-ended question as to whether the outcome for each woman seeking justice allowed for her to continue to grow with more healthy leaves and flower. Did the ways in which people's biases unfolded support the well-being of the woman seeking justice?

7

WARM-UP

LISTENING TO WHAT IS NOT SAID

Small group activities



Time:

60 minutes



Goal:

As a way to minimize decision-making based on biases, each participant practices taking the perspective of different actors involved, including the woman seeking justice - the participants attempt to listen to what is not said



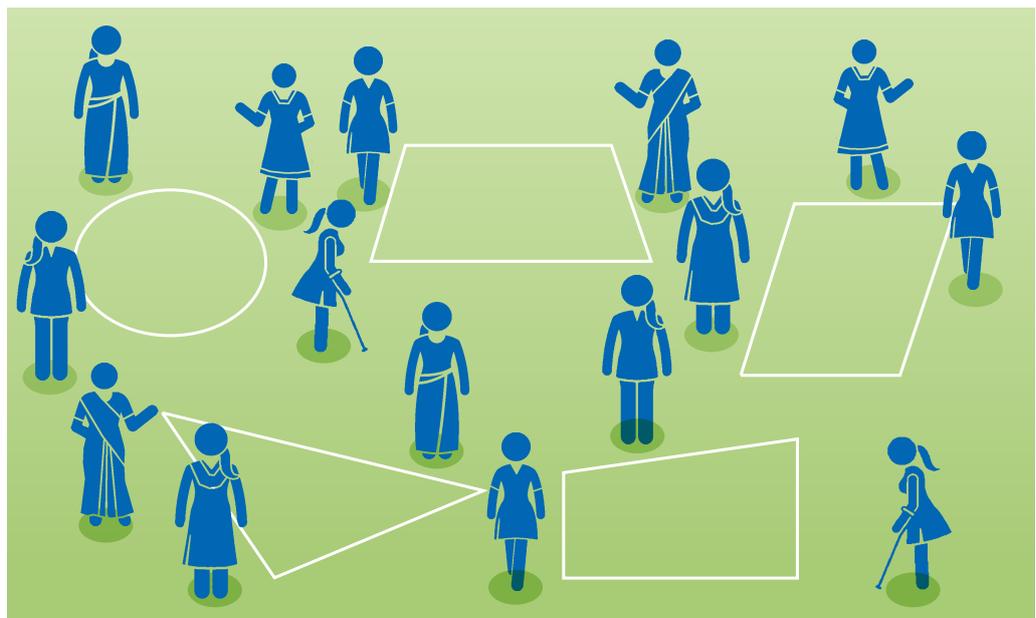
Materials:

masking tape/colored tape, metacards, chart paper worked on by teams in previous session

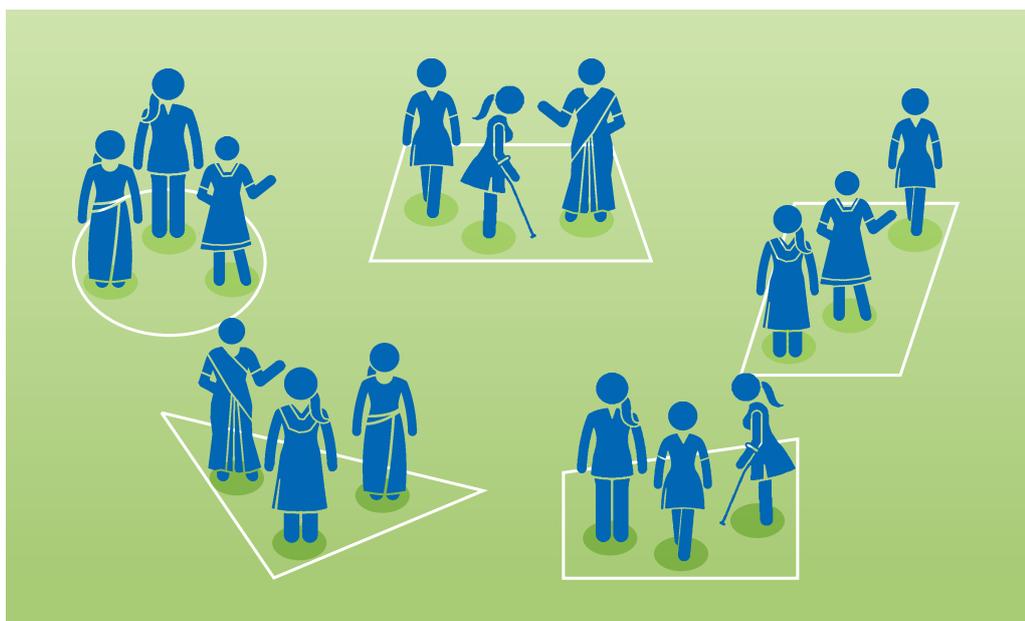


Activity:

1. Facilitator asks participants to go back in the groups they created their stories in the “Zoom-in, Zoom-out” stories. Each group creates a large shape on the floor with masking tape.



2. For a minute or so, the facilitator asks participants to walk freely around the room while avoiding entering any of the shapes. When the facilitator makes a double clap, participants enter the shapes in groups of 3.
3. Each group of three sits down inside their shape and on an empty metacard, each participant writes a sentence beginning with "I..." and states something the woman seeking justice/support may be thinking but is not saying out loud - something they feel they cannot say out loud.



4. After 15 minutes, the facilitator requests the participants to leave their cards inside the shape and to come out of the shape. They repeat steps 2 and 3 in a new shape with a new group of people.
5. After the second round, the facilitator asks each group to reveal the previous group's statements as well and to discuss similarities and differences. Discuss in the small group - are you surprised by any of the statements?
6. The facilitator ends by going back to the diagram of the rock in the river/lake. *How do we create a safer space around us where what is covered by the water can be understood more clearly? How do we bring to light the unspoken feelings and thoughts that we hold that will help us understand how to help ourselves and others better?* With these questions, the facilitator connects how important it is for us to place ourselves in the position of the person who is seeking justice and to really **take the time to listen** to their situation. It is within this time that we can start identifying our own, theirs, and others' biases that may be affecting people's behavior.

8

DISCUSSION EXERCISE THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING

Small group and whole group activities



Time:
60 minutes



Goal:
Participants increase their analysis skills by imagining different outcomes and alternative possibilities

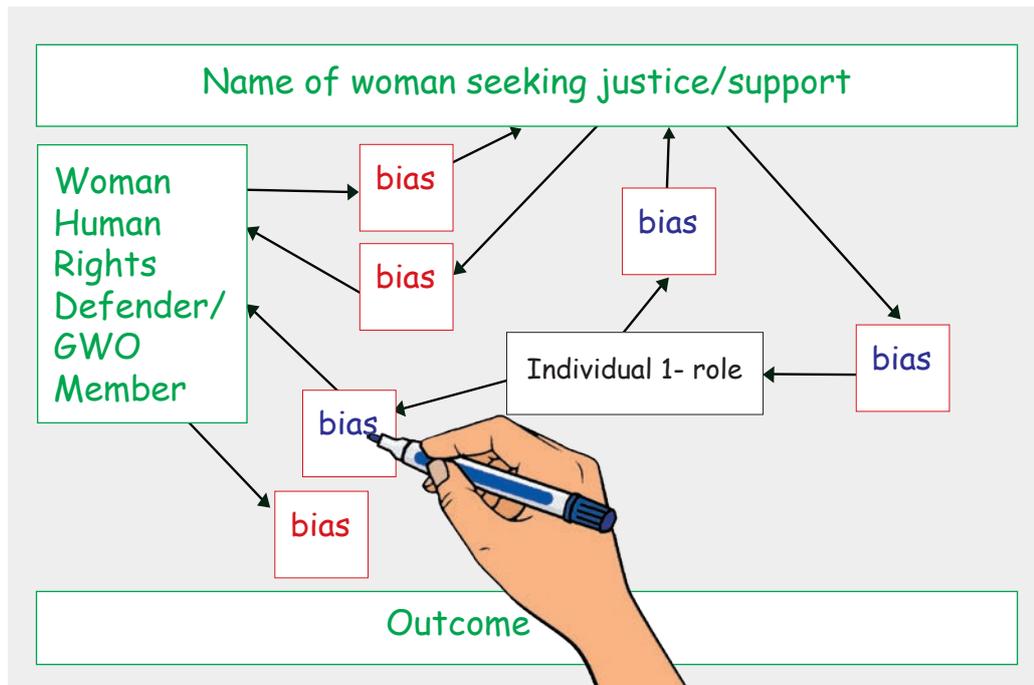


Materials:
blue markers, white metacards that can be taped on to the diagram, masking tape



Activity:

1. Facilitator asks each group to enter the space with the story they had created. The group revisits the diagram where they had mapped out the biases and outcomes of all actors involved. Also, they read the statements by the three characters on the metacards from the activity "Listening to what is not said." The group discusses what they think about the statements, whether they agree or if they would like to add any other statements.
2. Next, each group is given a set of metacards, some masking tape, and **blue** markers. The facilitator asks the group to begin with one thing they would like to change - it can be the outcome, a bias that one of the actors hold, or even introducing an additional actor. They can write this change on the metacard with the **blue** marker and tape it on top of what they want to change/add. The facilitator reminds the group that positive and negative outcome are seen in terms of whether it leads to the well-being of the woman seeking justice and are not dependent on the opinions of the other actors involved.



3. Based on this change, the participants now discuss whether they will need to change other things on the diagram and continue to use the metacard and **blue** marker.
4. After 30 minutes, each group presents what they decided to change and how that may or may not have changed the outcome.
5. The facilitator closes the session with a reflection on the need to be able to analyze any new situation, conflict in terms of the outcome, all the people involved and their biases to be as careful as possible when we negotiate for the well being of the woman seeking justice. How do we work towards the safety and wellbeing of the woman seeking justice?

MONITORING TOOLS





PRE AND POST-TEST



Time:

10 minutes



PART 1

Please write a few sentences for each question.

You are also welcome to make a drawing to illustrate what you mean.

1. In your opinion, what is bias?

2. How might have bias affected your work as a member of a Grassroots Women's Organization (GWO)?



PART 2

1. How much do you think biases like gender biases or beauty biases affect your decision-making?

Not at all _____ A lot
0 1 2 3 4 5

2. Who holds biases? You can circle more than one option.

Woman seeking justice

Woman human rights defender

Family members

Judicial committee member

Police

Friends

Government officers

Judge

3. Name a behavior and/or a bias that you would like to change in yourself.

