

Why Does She Stay? Video and Discussion

Time: 1 hour

Activity Objective:

Recognize gender-related barriers to safe motherhood across the life cycle.

Materials: Video

Activity:

Facilitator Note: *To date, IGWG trainers have used a video to introduce ideas o participants consider what types of interventions were (or were not) helpful and what else could have helped. The facilitator is encouraged to use a locally relevant video or other training aid to sensitize participants about the reasons why women "stay."*

On the following pages, two alternative videos are provided, along with facilitation steps. Alternative 1 is the video "SASA! A Film about Women, Violence, and HIV/AIDS"; it can be downloaded from the Raising Voices website (www.raisingvoices.org/women/Sasa_film.php). Alternative 2 is the video "Matlakala's Story"; it can be ordered from the It can be ordered from the Soul City website at www.soulcity.org.za).

1. Introduce the video dealing with gender-based violence. Tell the participants to keep in mind the previous discussion about gender norms, types of violence, levels at which violence occurs, and impacts on health.
2. Show the video. Give the participants several minutes after the video ends for spontaneous discussion with others.

Then initiate a guided discussion and ask the following questions:

Facilitation Alternative 1:

The following are suggested discussion questions to follow a screening of "SASA! A Film about Women, Violence, and HIV/AIDS."

1. What did you think about the video?
2. Was there anything that surprised/shocked you?
3. What were the reasons for staying in an abusive relationship?
4. Did she have any options?
5. Think about the "Vote With Your Feet" exercise, in addition to discussions about gender norms and myths.
 - Are there differences in how we view GBV—our views on options to stay or go?
 - Did your views affect your thinking about/reaction to this video?
6. Consider what resources or responses were (or were not) available.
7. What else would be important to enable a more effective response?

Facilitation Alternative 2:

The following are suggested discussion questions to follow a screening of “Matlakala’s Story”:

1. What did you think about the video?
2. Can you identify the types of abuse depicted in this video?
3. What was the impact of the violence on the family (mother, children, father, parents-in-law)?
4. What was the impact of the violence on the community?
5. Within your faith communities, what would the woman’s options have been?

Facilitator Note: *Ask the participants to focus on the last question and be very realistic about what their faith communities could offer to such a woman.*

If the participants do not mention the following as reasons to stay, please share:

- Fear of not being able to support herself
- Fear of not being able to support her children
- Barriers to being able to gain access to a safer situation (distance, no money for transport, plus the potential lack of support from friends and family)
- Fear of having children taken away from her and put back with her abusive partner
- Fear of having no place to go (partner may have already isolated her from family and friends)
- Fear of not having a place to live, insurance for herself and children
- Fear of partner killing her, or the children
- Disbelief that she is being abused
- Still loves him and believes he can change; hopes things will improve
- Religious beliefs discourage divorce
- Fear that family and friends will not believe her
- May feel she can manage the situation

Tell the group that it usually takes a woman 6–8 attempts to leave before she does finally, permanently leave a relationship.

Observe that these reasons women do not leave can be considered in terms of the domains of the gender analysis framework and thus highlight the gendered nature of the barriers and power inequalities that limit a woman’s ability to leave.

State that it is important to understand both why women often cannot leave situations of abuse, as well as the increasing efforts (and successes) that are being made to overcome these gender barriers.

Ask for any final comments or reflections.

