

Services to Protect Women Survivors of Violence the Arab Region:

What is a survivor-centered approach? How is it operationalized?



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Overview

- Understanding the dynamics of GBV
- Factors influencing survivors' help-seeking behaviors
- What is a survivor-centered approach?
- What is the empowerment model?
- What is informed consent?
- What is mandatory reporting?
- Brief Quiz

Understanding Gender-based Violence

Gender-based violence is deeply rooted in **discriminatory beliefs and attitudes** that perpetuate

GENDER INEQUALITY

POWER

CONTROL

Harmful
Practices

Online
Violence

Psychological
Violence

Socio-economic
Violence

Sexual
Violence

Physical
Violence

The Power and Control Wheel

Domestic or intimate partner violence is characterized by the pattern of actions that an individual uses to intentionally control or dominate his intimate partner.

That is why the words “power and control” are in the center of the wheel.

A batterer systematically uses threats, intimidation, and coercion to instill fear in his partner. These behaviors are the spokes of the wheel.

Physical and sexual violence holds it all together—this violence is the rim of the wheel.



Factors influencing survivors' help-seeking behaviors

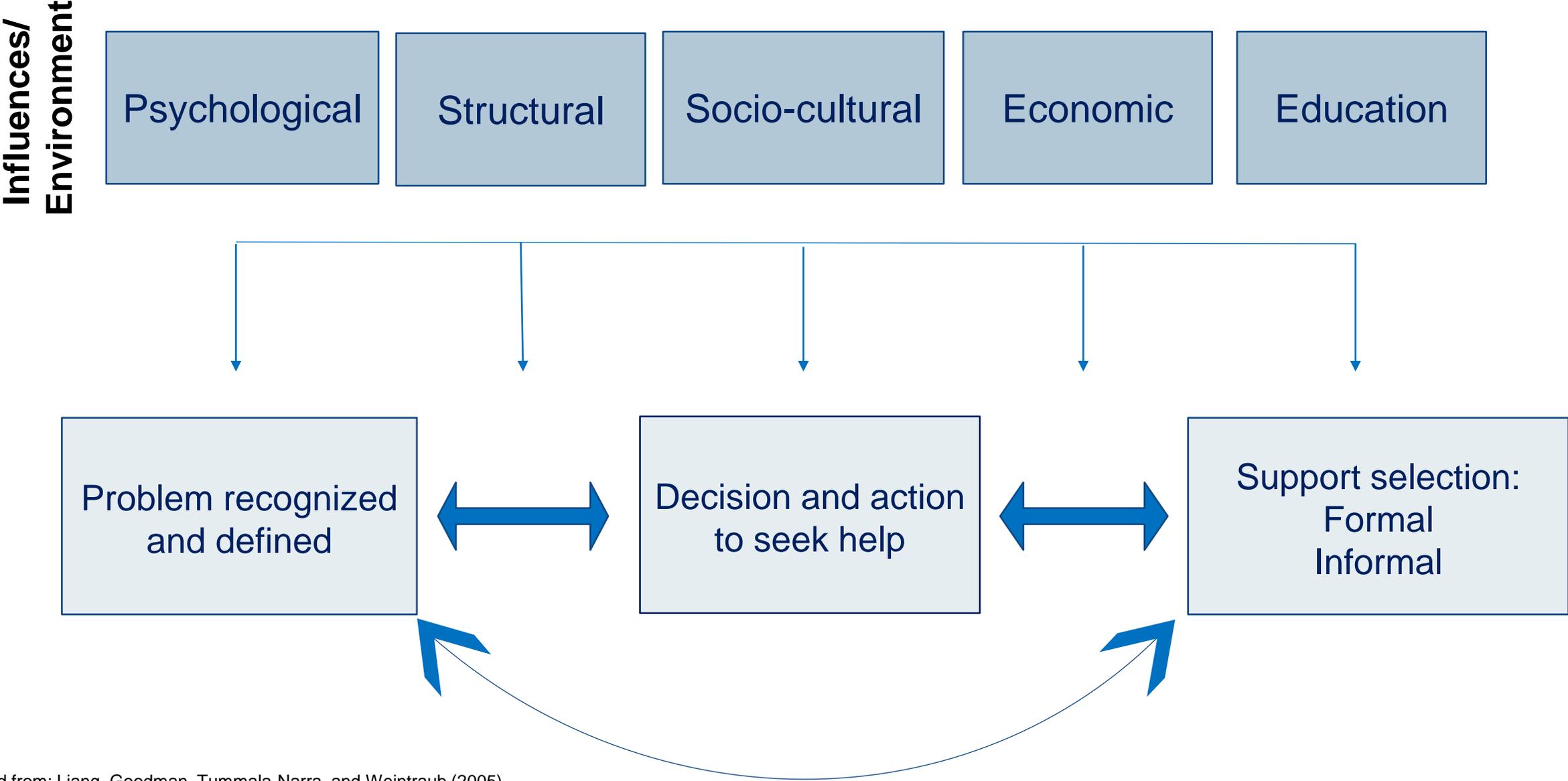
Individual Factors

- Childhood history of violence
- Fear of retaliation
- Concern for children
- Diminished health
- Affection for the abuser
- Lack of financial independence
- Access to employment/financial independence and/or increased education

Structural Factors

- A lack of formal services or awareness of such services
- Discriminatory socio-cultural norms and practices
- A lack of formal or informal support networks
- Social discrimination of women who leave their partners or break up the family
- A lack of access to resources, particularly shelters and crisis centers

The Help-seeking Process



Adapted from: Liang, Goodman, Tummala-Narra, and Weintraub (2005)

What is a survivor-centered approach?

Survivor-centered approaches place the **rights, needs and desires of women and girls** as the center of focus of service delivery.

This requires the consideration of the multiple needs of survivors, the various risks and vulnerabilities, the impact of decisions and actions taken, and ensures services are tailored to the unique requirements of each woman and girl.

Ultimately, services should prioritize and respond to the survivor's wishes.



The Survivor-centered Approach and International Human Rights Law

- **CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 19, General Recommendation No. 30, and General Recommendation No. 35** call upon States to adopt several provisions in the areas of prevention, protection, prosecution and redress that should be implemented with a survivor-centered approach aimed at avoiding revictimization.
- The **Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict** notes that a survivor-centered approach is a part of the Office's mandate.
- **United Nations Security Council Resolution 2467 on conflict-related sexual violence (WPS agenda)**, reiterates the need for a “survivor-centered approach” to service delivery and investigation into crimes that respects the “safety, confidentiality, and informed consent of survivors.”

A survivor-centered approach is applied through four principles:

Confidentiality

Confidentiality means not disclosing any information at any time to any party without the informed consent of the person concerned.

Confidentiality promotes safety, trust, dignity and empowerment.

Safety

Every person has the right to be protected from further violence. The concept of safety includes physical safety and security as well as psychological and emotional safety.

Safety is necessary because survivors may be at high risk of further violence.

Respect

Every survivor has the right to be treated with respect and dignity to make choices about what happens.

Self-determination means respecting the dignity, wishes and choices of survivors, and allowing them to be in control of the helping process by deciding who to tell and what action to take.

Non-discrimination

All people have an equal right to the best possible assistance without unfair discrimination on the basis of:

- Gender
- Disability
- Race, ethnicity or tribe
- Color
- Language
- Religious or political beliefs
- Status or social class

The survivor's experience is the starting point –

Survivors are not a homogenous group – they reflect a wide range of experiences and needs



Puts the rights of each survivor at the forefront of all actions and ensures that each survivor is treated with dignity and respect.

Prioritizes the perspectives, needs and interests of survivors, and places these at the center in developing and implementing interventions.

Promotes survivors' recovery, reduces the risk of further harm and reinforces their agency and self-determination.

Trauma-informed care

Trauma-informed care shifts the focus
from:

“What is wrong with you?”



“What happened to you?”

“Who are you?”

Six Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach:

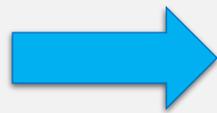
1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and Transparency
3. Peer Support
4. Collaboration and Mutuality
5. Empowerment, Voice and Choice
6. Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues

The Empowerment Model: A process and an outcome

Empowerment is:

“...an iterative process in which a person who lacks power sets a personally meaningful goal oriented toward increasing power, takes action toward that goal, and observes and reflects on the impact of this action, drawing on his or her evolving self-efficacy, knowledge, and competence related to the goal.”*

The empowerment model allows the survivor to make her own decisions, with appropriate support from service providers or advocates.



The goal is to ensure that the survivor continues to make her own choices and decisions about her life – where she is fully empowered.



This will result in a meaningful shift in the experience of power attained through interaction in the social world.

* Taken from Cattaneo & Goodman

What Is Informed Consent?

The voluntary agreement of an individual who has the legal capacity to give consent.

To ensure consent is 'informed,' service providers must provide the following information to the survivor:

- All the possible information and options available to the person so they can make choices.
- Inform the survivor that their information may be shared with others who can provide additional services.
- Explain to the survivor what will happen as you work with them.
- Explain the benefits and risks of services to the survivor.
- Explain to the survivor that they have the right to decline or refuse any part of services.
- Explain the limits to confidentiality.

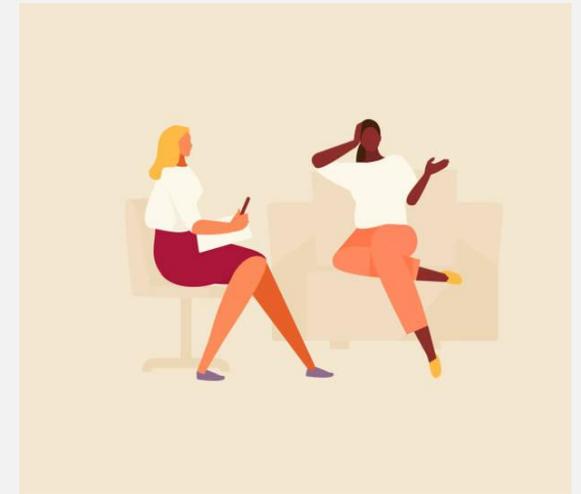


Giving advice or giving information?

Giving information means telling someone facts so they can make an informed decision about what to do.

Mandated Reporting

- Mandatory reporting refers to laws / policies that require certain agencies and/or people in helping professions (teachers, social workers, health staff) to report actual or suspected **child abuse, elder abuse or abuse of vulnerable persons** (e.g., physical, sexual, neglect, emotional and psychological abuse, unlawful sexual intercourse).
- In some contexts, mandatory reporting may also be required for cases of **certain types of violence against women** (e.g., intimate partner/domestic violence, rape).
- However, this policy **can often deter survivors** from coming forward and seeking life-saving services in the formal sector.





Remember ...

service providers are there to help survivors make
the right decisions for themselves

not to judge them or make decisions on their behalf.



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Quiz



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Thank you