

MODULE FOUR

**PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK FOR GENDER
TRAINING**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HANDOUT C.1: STATEMENTS ABOUT WOMEN AND MEN	202
HANDOUT D2: MASCULINE BOY	204
HANDOUT D3: COMPLETE THE STATEMENTS.....	205
HANDOUT E2.2: MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ..	206
HANDOUT F.3.1: LITTLE KRISHNA	208
HANDOUT F.3.2: LIFE OF A DAILY WAGE EARNING WOMAN	209
HANDOUT F.3.3: PUSHPA'S ENTRY INTO POLITICS	210
HANDOUT F.3.4: PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT	211
GLOSSARY OF GENDER TERMS	212

Handout C.1: Statements about women and men

1. **Women give birth to babies, men don't:** This is a biological function which only women can perform. Therefore, the difference can be attributed to sex.
2. **Care of babies is the responsibility of women because they can breast feed babies:** The fact that women breastfeed babies is biological. However, the nurturing and caring for children are tasks that can be performed by both women and men, as these are social functions. Thus this statement reflects gender.
3. **Men have moustaches:** This is a biological characteristic and therefore attributed to sex.
4. **Women cannot carry heavy loads:** This is a societal bias. In reality, women in rural as well as urban areas, are seen doing hard physical labour and even carrying heavy loads. However, it is possible that with the discrimination in terms of food and nutrition of girl children, they grow up to be weaker as compared to men. This statement is reflective of gender.
5. **Women are scared of working outside their home at night:** This is also reflective of gender differentiation between women and men. There is no biological reason for women being scared of working outside at night. However, given the unsafe environment for women in society, which stems from the low position she occupies, she may be vulnerable to physical attacks if she works outside her home at night.
6. **Men's voices break at puberty, women's don't:** This is a biological characteristic of men and can be explained by sex.
7. **Women are emotional and men are rational:** This has no relation with the biological characteristics of women and men. This is how society perceives women and men to be. It results in biases and is, therefore, reflective of gender.
8. **Most of the women have long hair and men have short hair:** Biologically, both men and women can have long hair. However, society creates differentiations in terms of how women and men should look, what they can wear and so forth. While women are

expected to have long hair, men are expected to have shorter hair. However, these differences are culture specific. In certain religions, like Sikhism, men are required to have long hair and wear a turban. Therefore it is a statement about gender.

9. Most scientists are men: Society also influences decisions of what women and men want to do. Certain career options and professions are thought to be 'masculine' and therefore appropriate for men. There are certain professions which are considered 'feminine' and therefore appropriate for women. However, it has been seen that this differentiation has a lot to do with maintaining and perpetuating the traditional roles of women and men and unequal opportunities for men and women. It is a statement about gender.

10. Cooking comes naturally to women: How well a woman or man cooks has nothing to do with their biological characteristics. By and large, women are expected to do the household work, including cooking. However, the same activity becomes a man's when it is done outside the house and has monetary value attached to it.

Handout D2: MASCULINE BOY

Before I could reach the accomplished state of being the 'Masculine Man', I had to suffer the repressive and agonizing stage of being the 'Masculine Boy'. If I could have had the slightest inkling of what being a 'man' really meant, I am quite sure I would not have spent a great deal of my childhood waiting for the 'Rewarding Day'.

I learnt fairly early in life that one of my first accomplishments was to be superior to that other little creature that inhabited the earth, 'girl'. My parents guided me through this difficult period well. They gave me some helpful pointers. If I cried they told me not to, as only little girls cried. I had to avoid the usual girly things: bright colors (especially pink), skipping ropes, dolls, ribbons, etc. If my parents wanted to intimidate me because my hair was getting too long or untidy, all they had to say was 'we will have to put a ribbon in your hair, won't we?' I would cringe at the mere thought. If I was too shy or quiet in company, I was being like a silly girl again (cringe). My name is Manish. If my father happened to be in a somewhat jovial, sadistic mood, he would call me Manisha and my brother would give him a hand. I hated that so much I would end up throwing great boulders at my brother.

Then I started school, where I soon realized how weak girls were. If any heavy objects had to be lifted, teacher always asked us 'boys'. Whenever a girl got the cane she always cried. We were strong: we at least tried to choke the tears back inside our ears (figuratively speaking of course). That reminds me of a most humiliating experience. I was about eight years old: the teacher called me out to give me the cane on both hands. Ha! He didn't make me cry. I turned away, my ears swollen with excess water. Then...crash! I felt the cane against the back of my legs. My ears drained and the tears rushed down my face. It wasn't too long before I became quite proficient at containing my feelings during moments of stress or pain. Being a boy, of course, meant playing all the rough games; football, rugby, boxing, wrestling etc. I avoided any display of my emotions. By the time I was 11, I had felt I had achieved much success at being the Masculine Boy. But, alas, there was a small price to pay...*repression of feelings*.

Source: adapted from Ian Douglas, excerpt from *Man Against Sexism*, cited in The Oxfam Training Manual, 1994

Handout D3: COMPLETE THE STATEMENTS

<i>About Men</i>	<i>About Women</i>
The best thing about being a man is...	The best thing about being a woman is...
A man would never let a woman see...	A woman would never let a man see...
Men would reject another man if...	Women would reject another woman if...
Men are praised by their parents if they...	Women are praised by their parents if they...
Boys can never...	Girls can...
The parents of a boy let him...	The parents of a girl let her...
Teachers expect boys to treat girls like...	Teachers expect girls to treat boys like...
Men get embarrassed when...	Women get embarrassed when...
Parents expect boys to...	Parents expect girls to...
Men/boys are allowed to...	Women/girls are allowed to...
A boy gets teased if he...	A girl gets teased if she...
Women really want men to...	Men really want women to...
Men don't like...	Women don't like...

Reference: Thompson D. *As Boys Become Men: Learning New Male Roles*, cited in The Oxfam Gender Training Manual, 1994

HANDOUT E2.2: Myths and facts about gender-based violence

Myth 1: Domestic quarrels, fights and beatings are characteristics of the lives of uneducated and poor people and members of the lower social classes.

Fact: Gender-based violence takes various forms and cuts across caste, class boundaries. Since most often women face violence because they are women, even their educational background or how much income they bring into the family does not deter the men from beating them or torturing them mentally. That is how they try to target their self-confidence and self-worth.

Myth 2: Women provoke violence against themselves by behaving inappropriately, and not adhering to rules and norms of their cultures.

Fact: Often, women are not only the victims of gender-based violence, they are also made to feel guilty or responsible for the acts of violence against them. A husband may feel he has the right to beat his wife if she cannot cook properly, or keep his clothes in order. Women who dress in clothes that don't conform to socially "approved" attire, are often held responsible for any violence they encounter. Women who challenge their traditional roles are often seen as a threat to masculinity. Therefore, they become easy targets of violence, which is inflicted upon them in order to "show them their place" or "teach them a lesson". All these are used as excuses to justify violence against women. Thus, a woman who follows her traditional duties and roles is as vulnerable to violence as is a woman who has challenged these and wants to have an identity of her own.

Myth 3: If women who are victims of domestic violence wanted to leave they could leave. If they stay, they must find some masochistic pleasure in the beatings.

Fact: Women, who are victims of violence, seldom have support mechanisms within or outside the family. They also feel insecure about facing the brunt of society's attitude towards women who cannot "please their husbands" or "satisfy" them. The considerations of their children, family honour, and little support in society, are all factors that weigh heavily against their decision to leave the house that perpetrates violence on them.

Myth 4: Only men suffering from a mental illness, resort to violence against women.

Fact: In society, the subordinate position of women becomes a basis for all sorts of discrimination against them. Therefore, men feel it is their right to

MODULE FOUR PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

keep women in 'control'. They get sanction from both culture and tradition to believe so. Thus mental illness has no connection with gender-based violence. In reality, men who are very "well-off" or in high positions in society are also known to resort to violence against their own wives and other female members of their families.

Handout F.3.1: Little Krishna

Krishna's happiness knew no bounds when her father agreed to send her to the village school, against the wishes of all others in the family. She began dreaming of how she would make new friends, friends who knew how to read and write! She would also be able to fulfil her desire of becoming the first woman teacher in her village!

Krishna began attending the school, where she was only the second girl to get enrolled. She heard stories and poems of brave men, men who had saved their country in times of war and other crises. Krishna no longer wanted to be a school teacher. After all, what value would it hold? Could poems be written on her teaching skills? No, of course not. Could she become a police officer? Yes, then she could catch 'bad' men, men who stole and killed. In one session where the school master asked the students what they would like to be when they grow up, little Krishna raised her hand. " I want to be a police officer". All the boys sitting in the classroom laughed, and to her disappointment her *master ji*, whom she respected so much, laughed too. "Women are weak, how can they become police officers?" remarked one boy. Another one shouted, 'you will become a police officer, after you get married? We have heard your father is already looking for a groom for you! " Why am I Krishna? Why wasn't I born Krishan? Had I been born Krishan, I would have had strong muscles and a lot of strength", she thought, and cursed her destiny.

On her way back home, Krishna saw her father plough the fields, and her mother wash utensils. "Yes men are strong and women are weak", she said to herself. Krishna never attended school after that day. She felt she had other responsibilities at home, looking after her siblings, her parents and her sick grandmother. All this, she believed, would help her become a "good housewife". The other girl had stopped attending the school as well, as she had been married off to a police constable.

Handout F.3.2: Life of a daily wage earning woman

My husband and I work in the fields as daily wage earners. He is paid Rs.30 per day whereas for the same amount of work and time spent on it, I get paid only Rs.20 per day. Quite often we are paid in kind also. My husband gets 6 kilos of grains whereas I get only 4 kilos. This is a standard pattern in our villages.

I usually get scoldings from the landlord for rushing off in the afternoons to feed my son, and doing 'half-hearted' work. He threatens to reduce my wages. He often quotes my example to refuse employment to other women of my village.

Once, when I was working in the fields, my neighbour told me that my son had met with an accident. I had to leave my work and run back home. Next day I was paid only Rs.10, as I had worked only for half a day. I had to borrow money to buy medicines for my son.

Since we get employment seasonally, my husband goes to the nearby cities to earn money. He comes back with cash. He buys things for himself and for us as well. I also do other jobs during this lean agricultural period and get paid in kind. Whatever I earn gets consumed within the family. I have no savings. Soon I will have to part with my jewellery, which I had kept away for my son's marriage. I will have to go back to my moneylender.

Handout F.3.3: Pushpa's entry into politics

Pushpa, a Scheduled Caste woman, stood for panchayat elections and was elected the Pradhan, defeating a candidate who had been sponsored by the former Pradhan of 30 years standing who belonged to the upper caste. The former Pradhan was elected as up-pradhan. Pushpa took up her responsibilities seriously. She sought to work for poor households of the village as a priority. However, the powerful groups in the community resisted the initiatives of Pushpa. They mobilised men and women in the community to protest against her growing aggression and confidence. "She will set a bad precedence for our daughters and daughters-in-law", they protested. They even managed to get Pushpa's husband on their side. He felt that his importance and decision making authority would be threatened by Pushpa. He supported the powerful groups in the village in bringing forth a no-confidence motion against her on the pretext that she was working against the interest of the community.

Pushpa fought for a long time, defending her case. But no one supported her. Not even the dalit women for whom she was working so hard to support. She had expected men to resist her efforts, but why the women? Being women, should they not have supported her? Didn't they want her to continue working to improve their lives and ensure equal participation in economic and political processes of the village? Or did they want to remain confined to their subordinate roles and status in society?

Handout F.3.4: Programmes for Women's Empowerment

Champa has seen her village through very difficult times. Ever since the cyclone hit their state, life has never been the same. Like many other men and women in her village, she had lost not only her family members (her husband and one daughter), but also other sources of livelihood- animals, money, jewellery, and of course her small house.

She was grateful when a non governmental organization (NGO) approached their village for relief and rehabilitation work. She mobilised some women in the village to enquire whether there were any special interventions planned for women. She was one of the older women of the village and was respected by most women and men. They learnt that women would be the primary stakeholders in almost all the rehabilitation programmes being planned by the NGO. Encouraged by the support from the NGO workers, the village women provided full cooperation in starting a programme which organised women into self-help groups (SHG). Two years passed by. It was the women who had led the way in resurrecting the village and bringing it back to normalcy. Champa had become the un-proclaimed leader of the village women. She did not hesitate to question the powerful groups and individuals in her village if they prevented their women from attending SHG meetings, or participating in important community events.

In a meeting organised to reflect on the experiences and learnings of women SHG members, Champa did not hesitate to share how certain powerful individuals from upper castes had tried their best to hamper the spirit of women and resist their participation in project activities. There was an interruption in the meeting when Bhima, an upper caste member, charged towards Champa, dragged her out of the meeting and beat her up. There was very little the women SHG members could do. The NGO worker tried to pacify Bhima, who left the location shouting threatening remarks at Champa and dared any other women who would try and bring disrepute to his family name and honour. The incident left all the women in the village shocked. The NGO workers called a meeting to discuss the issue.

Glossary of Gender Terms

- A. GENDER is a term that describes certain attitudes, roles and responsibilities assigned through a social process to males and females, and can often result in different opportunities and behavior for both men and women.

Gender is:

- determined by society
- varies within and between societies
- influenced by cultural, economic, political and environmental factors
- dynamic, not static

- B. GENDER EQUITY is defined as the condition of justice in relations among women and men, leading to a condition in which women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities and status.

- C. GENDER ANALYSIS is the study of how gender identities shape individual choices and opportunities in relation to material resources, social, political, and economic activity within a given community or group. Gender analysis is a process that also includes determining what strategies, institutional changes and related resources are required or available for resolving a given problem and decreasing the disadvantage.

- D. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD) is a term applied to the consideration of gender in the social structure and economic conditions of societies. GAD does not focus exclusively on women, but on the socio-economic-political relationships between males and females.

A GAD approach is concerned with creating equal opportunities for both sexes. It also targets members of society who are disadvantaged and empowers them to take their development into their own hands.

- D. GENDER SENSITIZATION - is the process whereby individuals improve their ability to consider the impact of plans, policies, behavior and attitudes on both females and males, and to be sympathetic to each group's social and physical needs.

- E. PRACTICAL AND STRATEGIC NEEDS - Men and women currently have "assigned" gender roles and identities, and may require support in fulfilling those roles. These are practical gender needs, and may include mechanization of farming for male landowners, or home water taps for female homemakers. If men or (more often) women carry inequitable gender roles, they may require support in transforming those roles.

MODULE FOUR PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

These are strategic gender needs, and may include literacy for women, or couple counseling on family planning.