

Women and Cities International Networking Event at WUF 4 Nanjing China

Linking Gender, Local Governance and Violence Prevention

Sponsored by UN-Habitat, Women in Cities International, Huairou Commission, and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

November 2008

Notetaker for presentations: Sarah Silliman, Huairou Commission

Carolyn Whitzman, facilitator, introduced format of workshop. Three 10 minute presentations on useful tools/ success stories were followed by 45 minutes of facilitated small group discussion. Then the group as a whole met again to ask questions of speakers and discuss good practice.

40 people attended, from 15 countries (25 women, 15 men). Discussion took place in mostly in English, although Laura Petrella facilitated a French and Spanish group.

Anna Mtani, Safer Cities Tanzania

Developing Partnerships between local government and community organizations to promote women safety

Dar es Salaam experience

- Local authorities are mandated to maintain peace and order and security of people
- Community meeting to discuss crime issues
- Organized to conduct a safety audit (100 walking in the area)
- Findings: 'black spots' included unused buildings, spaces under bridges, etc.
- Proposed immediate action – women hired make improvements in public spaces
- Findings: lack of awareness on the role of women - exclusion from governance systems; poor urban design; lack of employment; weak institutional support when it comes to women fighting for their safety
- Recommendations: upgrading of settlements (street lighting); improve address and signage of streets; immediate action by women where possible; resource mobilization from partners

Kalpana Viswanath, Jagori

Women's Safety Audits in Delhi

Women's Resource Center (Jagori) initiated campaign to understand what safety means to women and girls, work together on issue, make it beyond a women's issue to a city-wide issue.

Strategies

- Focus groups discussions with different sections of the population (young and old women, youth boys, domestic workers, etc.)

Safety Audits

- Range of audits – middle class, lower class, resettlement areas, marketplaces, industrial areas, parks, etc.
- Met with people who used space, including domestic workers

How?

- Discussion

- Mapping
- Observation
- Recording
- Analysis
- Implementation

Observations

- Pavements unusable
- Street lighting uneven
- Poor signage
- Dark parks – those that were used were lit and had people
- Bus stops – women consider safe, one place where you can stand legitimately; however buses were very unsafe
- Public toilets (Ratio of public toilets 1 female: 15 male) – also unsafe after dark
- Vacant plots – unsafe to walk past

Solutions

- Partnership with South Delhi Auto Union to display 5000 stickers
- 1000 Bus conductors, local Delhi bus cooperation, 2hr role play session to show what happens when women sexually harassed in buses

Georgie Hill, City of Maribyrnong

Maribyrnong Respect and Equity Project: Preventing Violence Against Women

1/3 women in Australia will be a victim of violence, and violence is the biggest risk factor for premature death and disability for women aged 15-44

Role of local governments in preventing violence against women in public and private spheres
 The municipality is traditionally working class, but gentrifying
 Also has large proportion of new migrants and refugees – 43% speak language other than English

Aim – create resilient families, strong families and safer women
 Through – integrated public policy

Preventing Violence Against women Action Plan (2007) – created by municipality

- Role of local govt is primarily prevention of violence
- Also can foster partnerships, promote integration and planning of actions, advocate to government and service providers, maintain awareness...
- The Big Idea – Addressing violence cuts across core business of council (maternal and child health, youth services, aged and diversity, children's services, open space, human resources, community centers networks, economic development, community projects, media and communications)

Actions

- Create community grants for prevention of violence against women
- Audit of council-owned facilities (community centers, townhall, sporting clubs, etc.) and assessed the impact the built environment had women's safety
- Organizational policies – ensure they reflect gender equality issues in regards to VAW
- Male involvement in White Ribbon Day
- Media campaigns with a focus on cultural and linguistically diverse communities

Small Group Discussion (divided into small groups)

1. What tools have you used to improve women's and men's safety?
2. What has worked? How do you know?

3. What have been the main barriers to effective action?
4. What is the best idea the group has heard?

Group 1: Notes taken by Robyn Gregory, Women's Health in the West, Melbourne Australia
 Representatives from Guatemala, Germany, Bangladesh, Czech Republic, UK, Phillipines, Sweden

Key points

Importance of providing good information: city-wide (through local government) and in schools
 Important to coordinate with private sector
 Safety of women in custodial institutions: importance of restorative practices to deal with conflict
 Practices that work with men do not necessarily work with women
 Germany: training for women and young girls on where to go for help
 UK: comprehensive restructuring of children's services. ID at risk kids from early age.
 Phillipines: survey 6/10 women beaten. Issues with micro-credit, women losing this money to their partners. Little laws (eg., on human trafficking)
 Need to look at root of problem: men's and boys' behavior. Gender equality needs to be central to all decision-making processes
 Problems of alcohol abuse exasperating problems
 Racial violence against women: colonialization, range of difficulties on top of gender
 Must be different responses according to culture and circumstances in each country.

Group 2: Notes taken by Georgie Hill, City of Maribryngong, Melbourne Australia
 The group had participants from Canada, Uganda, Australia, and South Africa.

What has worked?

Encourage women to unite through federation groups and centre for community initiatives to improve socio-economic rights. Women involved in creating solutions
 Police need to encourage women to give information
 Educate women through the media: encourage respect
 Take action to ensure that men understand consequences of action
 Established a police women's desk to encourage women to report crime
 Encourage gender equality in parliament
 Uganda: DV victim support unit, police desk, counseling, support
 Need to improve DV laws
 China: women's federation and women leaders represent women on issues such as FV and social injustice
 Micro finance and training to build capacity
 Uganda: language in the media has changed
 Violence in the workplace: Declaration of Mayors in South Africa
 Violence of teachers against female students

Group 3: Notes taken by Kalpana Viswanath, Researcher, Delhi India
 The group had participants from India, China, Australia, South Africa, and Sweden.

In Bendigo, Australia, there is a high rate of public safety but it is private violence that women face.
 South Africa has very high rates of both public and private crime which is a major issues. There are strong links between poverty and crime
 In China there have been incidences of violence against men also in domestic situations. China has a rather equal society since both men and women are equally educated and go out to work
 In Sweden much of the public violence is male violence against other men. While violence in the private sphere is male violence against women. Both are aggravated by alcohol usage.

In South Africa, the historical issue of racism and sexism shapes much of contemporary society also. There has also been a breakdown in the family structures which has led to more insecurity. The government in South Africa has taken steps and the 16 days campaign on VAW is a big and visible campaign .

In China there is no law addressing domestic violence , but it is mentioned in the divorce law. India has a new DV legislation which is a civil law, in addition to the criminal procedure that already exists. This law was worked on by women's groups and feminist lawyers. It has interesting provisions on right to residence. Since women often do not complain about DV as they will be thrown out of the house, this law addresses their right to the marital home. Also the law does not only limit itself to spousal violence, but also violence against elders and children.

Group 4: Notes taken by Laura Petrella, UN-Habitat, Nairobi Kenya

This group's discussion was in French and Spanish, and included participants from Burkina Faso, Togo, Colombia, Chile, Canada and UN-HABITAT/Italy.

The participants identified the following actions as most effective in reducing violence against women:

National legislation:

- the approval of the Land on Women Access to Land, which stipulates property rights for women, as well as justice in access to land (Burkina) and law on status of women (Canada)
- the support to women education and access to the job market (Burkina, and also Canada)
- the national legislation in support to women victims of violence (Burkina) as well as early interventions (as presented by Victoria)

Local interventions

- Shelter for women victims of violence (Canada)
- Coordination of local Services in support of victims (Italy)
- Zero Tolerance initiatives (Canada)
- Territorial actions coordinating interventions to most vulnerable groups (Chile)
- Training of monitors, provision of information on access to justice etc. (Chile)
- Integrated interventions in neighbourhoods (Colombia) which focus on housing, and other dimensions

Results can be proved through statistics, and perceived improvement of the status of women, school going rates, as well as from 'history' of individual women.

In terms of hindrances and constraints, the traditional culture and overall inequality of women is greatest constraints, as well as limited participation of women in some cases. Lack of coordination and split mandates (police, local authorities) is also major problem.

The group identified the following good ideas:

- Start early and involve parents as well as children
- Coordination of services for victims, which may require little resources but can make great difference
- Adoption of laws and their implementation (this aspect being crucial)
- Integrated interventions, with women safety as part of community safety and community service delivery and improvements.

The participants also wanted to note that this was so far the best session they had attended at WUF4 because of it being highly interactive and informative at the same time.

Re-convening in Large Group: Questions and Comments

Question: What was the reason that the Australian local government (City of Maribyrnong) succeeded in developing momentum?

- Involvement in the GLOVE (gender, local governance and violence prevention) program
- Lobbied by Women's Health West to address the issue
- Also had strong management support
- 5 of 7 local councillors are women
- Links with other local governments across Victoria
- Support from VicHealth – (www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

Tessie Fernandez, Lihok Philippina – foundation for women by women

- Started with microcredit, but women were absent from the meetings
- 1993 starting working with local government, city mayor won because of urban poor vote
- Administrative order creating police women's desk across the country
- Started with small grant from Canada – but didn't know about the family violence
- Began Bantay Banay network, community/family watch – developed community multi-stakeholder network against violence
- Trained the community to know what to do, gave the police a notebook
- Grew the network in 70-80 cities across the city, wanted an ordinance for the country because there were many ordinances growing from the Cebu law, so the National level wanted to coordinate and passed a law against violence
- Received funds to train the local government units, police, teachers, etc. And now collaborates with many sectors, post-Martial law

Jamaica – safety audits (Carol Archer and two students)

- University of technology Jamaica – did a community development project in their course
- They went into the communities and interacted with the community members and did safety audits
- Peer wise ranking to identify 2 main concerns in the community (flooding and crime) New Haven, St. Andrew – flooding a result of hope river...recommended to move the houses, put them on stilts, or widen the pipes
- RE: crime they were told there was not crime, but they went to the police precinct and learned that there was no crime against property, mostly drug-related crime – people afraid to be speaking to police and others about the situation

Examples of how you can map unsafe spaces – using communities (India case) and students (Jamaica case)

Recommendation from Carol:

- Need to quantify the results so that we can show change in built environment, people's behaviour

How do you know what you're doing is working?

- A. Matani – the spaces where the women had cleaned, no crime was reported there, but it's possible that the crime had moved or shifted some place else
- What are the things we can measure and that are useful to measure? To find a significant rate reduction may take a long time – in some cases, you may see the rate go up as a result of increased reporting. Need to be able to be clear the things we do measure – types of police reporting, community structures created, etc. These can be good results, but victimization surveys may not reduce. Need to be clear on how to evaluate impact.
- Measure change from partnership creation – There is not necessarily one indicator. Partnerships are a good indicator, more people involved on violence prevention. Need to think about 'proxy indicators' – crime reduction takes decades. At the local government level, how many policies address violence against women. Quantitative versus qualitative data. Look at case studies, partnership network opportunities.
- To evaluate the impact, you also need to take into account what other initiatives have come into the community.

- China local government organization – workshop of particular significance to cause of women here – Beijing conference recommendation of representation of women in politics to 1/3 and participation of women = by 2020 – what about the recommendation at this conference?