“all survivors need good quality care and support to help them heal and recover”
Strengthening law enforcement response to sexual violence

This two-day training on law enforcement response to sexual violence is for police officers who take reports and investigate alleged incidents of sexual violence in the community. The aim of this training is to build knowledge and skills among police officers about good practice in law enforcement response to survivors of sexual violence.

Before participating in this training, it is necessary to complete:

- Three days of training on Sexual Violence, Social Norms and Self-Awareness found in Part One: Building Knowledge and Awareness of the Communities Care: Transforming Lives and Preventing Violence Programme (CC Programme) Toolkit.

- Four days of training on Putting Survivor-Centred Response into Practice, found in the second section of Part Three of the CC Toolkit, Strengthening Community Based Care.
PART 3
Strengthening Community-Based Care

OVERVIEW

MODULE 1 LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

To effectively prevent and respond to sexual violence against women and children, police require a sound understanding of their role in the criminal justice system, the frameworks that guide their work and the dynamics of reported cases of sexual violence. The role of police, as respected community members, goes beyond collecting evidence and pursuing justice on behalf of survivors. By demonstrating a visible commitment to responding to claims of sexual violence, police help shift norms regarding the way that sexual violence is perceived in their communities.

This module aims to provide police officers with a basic understanding of key relevant concepts, such as the rule of law, as well as the specific legal, policy and procedural frameworks that guide their role in responding to sexual violence.

TOPICS

- **TOPIC 1**: Individual reflection (1 hour)
- **TOPIC 2**: Components of the criminal justice system (1 hour)
- **TOPIC 3**: Framework for policing (1 hour, 30 minutes)
- **TOPIC 4**: Role of police in sexual violence prevention and response (1 hour)
- **TOPIC 5**: Components of effective law enforcement response (1 hour)

MODULE 2 RESPONDING TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE REPORTS

This module aims to increase participant knowledge about good practice in responding to reported incidents of sexual violence and to provide participants with an opportunity to apply basic knowledge and practice basic skills in taking reports and interviewing victims.

TOPICS

- **TOPIC 1**: Characteristics of reported cases (1 hour and 30 minutes)
- **TOPIC 2**: Responding to victims of sexual violence crimes (2 hours)
- **TOPIC 3**: Practice (1 hour and 30 minutes)
ADAPTING THE TRAINING

Before delivering the training it is necessary to review the entire content and adapt it as necessary to your context. You will need to adapt it in two ways:

1. By ensuring the activities are appropriate to your context, for example that they are culturally acceptable and relevant. If you identify an activity that might not be appropriate, you need to substitute it with one that will enable you to achieve the same objective.

2. There are places in the training that you need to insert locally specific information or material or presentations from your context. Guidance about where and how to do this is contained in the notes to facilitators at the beginning of each module.

TO DO

- Go through the modules and review all sessions, and make sure the activities are locally appropriate. Decide on alternative activities if needed.

- Read the facilitator notes for each module and make sure you have developed and inserted local information and material where indicated and planned for guest presentations before you do the training.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this module participants will be able to:

1. Critically reflect on myths about sexual violence in their community.
2. List the components of the criminal justice system.
3. Be knowledgeable about the legal and procedural framework relating to sexual violence.
4. Discuss the role of police in preventing and responding to sexual violence.
5. List the components of an effective law enforcement response to sexual violence.

Participant handouts

Handout 1: Pre-test
Handout 2: Myths and facts about sexual violence and children
Handout 3: Legal framework for responding to sexual violence – to be prepared by facilitator
Handout 4: Police policy and procedures for responding to sexual violence – to be prepared by facilitator
Handout 5: Role of police in preventing and responding to sexual violence
Handout 6: Good practice in police response to violence against women and girls
**Participant handouts**

**Handout 1:** Pre-test

**Handout 2:** Myths and facts about sexual violence and children

**Handout 3:** Legal framework for responding to sexual violence – to be prepared by facilitator

**Handout 4:** Police policy and procedures for responding to sexual violence – to be prepared by facilitator

**Handout 5:** Role of police in preventing and responding to sexual violence

**Handout 6:** Good practice in police response to violence against women and girls
### MODULE 1: Law enforcement and sexual violence

#### CAPACITY BUILDING

**Schedule | Day 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>SLIDES</th>
<th>HANDOUTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:45–9:45</td>
<td>• Welcome and introductions</td>
<td>1–4</td>
<td><strong>Handout 1:</strong> Pre-Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Logistics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Group norms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Content and objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pre-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45–10:45</td>
<td>• Individual reflection</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Handout 2:</strong> Myths and facts about sexual violence and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45–11:00</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:00</td>
<td>• Components of the criminal justice system</td>
<td>6–11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00–1:00</td>
<td>• Framework for policing</td>
<td>12–13</td>
<td><strong>Handout 3:</strong> Legal framework for responding to sexual violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00–2:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00–2:30</td>
<td>• Framework for policing</td>
<td>14</td>
<td><strong>Handout 4:</strong> Police policy and procedures for responding to sexual violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30–3:00</td>
<td>• Role of police</td>
<td>15–19</td>
<td><strong>Handout 5:</strong> Role of police in preventing and responding to sexual violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00–3:15</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15–3:45</td>
<td>• Role of police</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45–4:45</td>
<td>• Components of effective law enforcement</td>
<td>20–23</td>
<td><strong>Handout 6:</strong> Good practice in police response to violence against women and girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45–5:00</td>
<td>• Summary of day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE TO FACILITATORS

Establishing group norms:

If you are facilitating this training with a group that has worked together in previous training you will need to review the group norms established on the first day of the training.

If the group has not yet worked together, you may wish to use the activity below to help explore and establish group norms.

1  Divide participants into small groups of four to six.
   Ask each group to:
   • Reflect on how we have traditions that inform how we behave and interact on special occasions, such as weddings, funerals or religious and cultural festivals. Choose one of these occasions and make a list of behaviours that are acceptable/unacceptable for it.
   • Imagine someone is visiting from a completely different place who does not speak your language or know anything about your culture. You do not want that person to be embarrassed because he or she behaves inappropriately. Think about how you will show the visitor what is acceptable and what is not acceptable behaviour.

2  Ask group members to role-play the occasion they have chosen, without speaking. Ask one member of each group to visit a neighbouring group.

3  After a few minutes, bring the whole group together into a talking circle and ask participants the questions below:
   • How easy is it to identify/demonstrate these ‘rules’?
   • Why do these ‘rules’ for special occasions exist?
   • What benefits come from having these ‘rules’?
   • What happens if someone breaks these ‘rules’?
   • What might happen if we had no ‘rules’ to follow at these special times?

4  Explain that during the training participants will be discussing sensitive and challenging topics. It is important that everyone can feel safe to do this. This means that the group should have its own special rules for how participants behave when they are together.
To prepare to facilitate this module, you need to do the following:

Go through the session plan and review all topics, and make sure the activities are locally appropriate. Decide on alternative activities if needed.

In situations in which there are low literacy levels of police officers you will need to accommodate this by adjusting activities accordingly.

**Ice-Breakers and Energizers**
See the Sexual Violence module in Part One: Building Knowledge and Awareness for examples of ice-breakers and energizers you might wish to use throughout the training.

**Additional Reading/Resources for Facilitators**

**Topic 3:** You will need to arrange for two guest presenters. The first will be presenting on the legal framework for police response to sexual violence and therefore need to have relevant expertise. If possible, invite a representative from a women’s lawyer association or other legal professional with experience in violence against women and children.

The second guest presentation is on police policies and procedures and should be delivered by an appropriate senior officer or training personnel from within the police force. This lecture should be delivered by a police officer with expertise in the area of sexual assault or from a specialized unit of the police, if available, for example, women’s or children’s desk, etc.

This presentation should focus on correcting misperceptions about policies and procedures where they exist, for example, in some countries it is widely believed that victims must obtain a form from police before accessing post-rape medical care when in fact this is not the case.

You need to prepare a simple handout outlining the legal framework and also copies of relevant police policies, procedures and forms, where they exit.
## MODULE 1 SESSION PLAN

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS—1 HOUR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome, housekeeping</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td><strong>SHOW SLIDES 1-3</strong> Welcome all participants and provide information about the facilities, other logistical issues and training timetable and content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductions and ice-breaker</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>Facilitate an introductory activity so that everyone is familiar with each other and ready to get started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group norms</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Review the group norms already established with participants or conduct an activity to develop group norms for the day (see Notes to facilitator for an example).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td><strong>SHOW SLIDE 4</strong> Review the objectives for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td><strong>DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT 1</strong> and ask participants to complete the Pre-test.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOPIC 1: INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION—1 hour 30 minutes

1. **Being a police officer**
   - **Individual reflection** 30 minutes

   **SHOW SLIDE 5**
   1. Ask participants to reflect on the following questions and write their ideas down:
      - What is the role of a police officer in the community?
      - What are the qualities of a good police officer?
      - What are my strengths as a police officer
   2. Allow participants who wish to the opportunity to share their thoughts 15 minutes to do so.
2. Myths about sexual violence

Large group activity
30 minutes

1. Explain to participants there are many myths surrounding sexual violence and children and that it’s important that we are able to distinguish between myths and facts because myths contribute to perpetuating the problem and because good policing and law enforcement responses need to be grounded in facts and realities, not in beliefs and attitudes.

2. Read the following statements one by one and ask participants to note down whether they think the statement is true or false:
   - The perpetrator of sexual abuse against a child is usually a stranger.
   - Children lie about sexual abuse.
   - Sexual abuse is not harmful to children.
   - Perpetrators of child sexual abuse are usually insane or drunk.
   - Women ask to be raped by walking alone.
   - Rape is an act of lust.
   - When a child is sexually abused by a family member, it is usually a one-time experience.
   - Children can consent to sexual activity with adults.

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 2: Myths and facts about sexual violence and children

3. Allow participants a few minutes to review the handout individually, or do so as a large group. Ask if any of the answers surprise them.

4. Ask participants to mention myths about sexual violence in their community and discuss where these myths come from.

5. Ask participants how they think myths about sexual violence reinforce social norms that contribute to sexual violence.

TOPIC 2: COMPONENTS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM—1 hour

3. Components of the justice system

Presentation and large group discussion
1 hour

SHOW SLIDE 6

1. Ask participants to consider the following questions and discuss with the person next to them:
   - What is the ‘rule of law’?
   - What are the components of the criminal justice system?

2. Facilitate a brief large group discussion so that participants can share their ideas.
3. Components of the justice system (continued)

SHOW SLIDES 7–9

3. Provide an interactive presentation on the components of the justice system using the following information:

- The ‘rule of law’ is part of the system of governance in which the following four universal principles are upheld:
  - The government and its officials and agents, as well as individuals and private entities, are accountable under the law;
  - The laws are clear, publicized, stable and just; are applied evenly; and protect fundamental rights, including the security of persons and property;
  - The process by which the laws are enacted, administered and enforced is accessible, fair and efficient;
  - Justice is delivered in a timely fashion by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and neutrals who are of sufficient number, have adequate resources and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve.

- The components of the criminal justice system include the following elements:
  - the executive and legislative branches of government;
  - the police;
  - the prosecution;
  - the judiciary;
  - prisons and probation and parole officers;
  - civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), for example, in providing legal advice and representation and monitoring and accountability.

4. Explain that the criminal justice system involves many different actors, processes and institutions, and individually and collectively each component has an important role in preventing and responding to violence in our communities, especially sexual violence against women and children.

5. Explain that police are the gateway or entry point to the justice system in criminal matters and have a powerful role in doing the following:

- upholding the rule of law;
- promoting human and legal rights;
- facilitating access to justice for citizens.

Note: These concepts may be familiar to some participants but new to others. It is important to allow time for questions and participants’ reflection and discussion on the role of police in upholding the rule of law.
3. Components of the justice system (continued)

**SHOW SLIDES 10–11**

6. Ask participants what other justice systems operate in the community and facilitate a discussion about the customary legal system and/or religious justice system, asking the following questions:

- From where does the customary justice system get its authority?
- Does the customary system have jurisdiction over criminal matters? If no, does it adjudicate in criminal matters anyway? If yes, what is the relationship between the police and customary mechanisms?
- Why do people use the customary justice system?
- How does the customary justice system respond to cases of sexual violence?

*Note: It’s critical to discuss how customary law or religious legal systems operate in parallel with statutory law.*

If appropriate, participants may discuss the questions on customary law in pairs or small groups first, depending on time available and on group dynamics and knowledge levels.

**TOPIC 3: FRAMEWORK FOR POLICING–1 hour 30 minutes**

4. Framework for policing

*Small group activity and discussion* 1 hour

**SHOW SLIDE 12**

1. Put participants into small groups of four or five people and ask each group to identify what – in addition to national laws – guides their work in responding to sexual violence.

2. After 10 minutes, bring groups back together and facilitate large group feedback.

**SHOW SLIDE 13**

3. Explain that the mandate, roles and procedures for police in responding to sexual violence should be based on specific factors:

- international human rights;
- national laws;
- police policies and operational procedures;
- good practice in police response to sexual violence, including guiding principles for responding to survivors of sexual violence;
- other? e.g., states where the customary legal system is recognized as coexisting with national law or is in practice the national law.
4. Framework for policing (continued)

4. Tell participants that to effectively respond to sexual violence and contribute to its prevention, police need a thorough understanding of each of the above. Advise participants that we have touched on human rights and guiding principles for working with survivors in other modules and that this component of the training will focus on national laws, police policies and procedures, and good practice in police response.

- You will need to arrange for two guest presenters. See Note to Facilitators at the beginning of the module for more information.
- You need to prepare a simple handout outlining the legal framework and relevant police policies, procedures and forms, where they exist.

5. Overview of the legal framework and relevant police policy and procedures

Guest presentations
1 hour

SHOW SLIDE 14

1. Presentation 1 Legal framework: Have a guest presenter provide an overview of the relevant laws and statutes in relation to sexual violence in the country, including those pertaining to marriage, trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, rape, defilement, age of consent, etc.
   - Ensure the presentation outlines strengths, weaknesses and contradictions in the law (for example, gaps in relation to international standards and contradictions between age of consent and age of marriage, etc.).

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 3: Legal framework for responding to sexual violence

2. Presentation 2 Police policies and procedures: Have a guest presenter provide an overview of the relevant police policies and procedures for responding to incidents of sexual assault and abuse, including medico-legal procedures where they exist.

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 4: Police policy and procedures for responding to sexual violence

TOPIC 4 THE ROLE OF POLICE IN RESPONDING TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE–1 hour

6. Why police play an important role in sexual violence prevention and response

Large group brainstorm
1 hour

1. Brainstorm all the reasons why police play an important role in sexual violence prevention and response in the community and note responses on flipchart.

SHOW SLIDES 15–16

2. Ensure the following points are highlighted and clarified:
   - Police are primary agents of crime prevention, law enforcement and upholding the rule of law.
6. Why police play an important role in sexual violence prevention and response (continued)

- Sexual violence is a violation of human rights, and police are duty bearers of human rights.
- Police are an important entry point/gatekeeper to the justice system.
- Sexual violence requires a whole community response, and police are an important part of the community.
- Police have obligations and responsibilities in protecting women and children who have experienced/are experiencing violence.
- Police are community leaders, roles models and authority figures, and if they commit to preventing sexual violence, others will follow.

Refer participants to Handout 5: Police policy and procedures for responding to sexual violence

7. The role of police in sexual violence prevention and response

Large group activity
30 minutes

1. Place three flipcharts around the room, one headed ‘Prevention’, one headed ‘Making Communities Safer’ and one headed ‘Law Enforcement Response’. Tell participants to think about specific roles of police in each of these areas and to write each of their ideas down on an index card and then stick the index card under the appropriate heading.

Note: For groups with lower levels of literacy, you can conduct this exercise orally as a group activity.

2. When the exercise has been completed, have participants return to their seats and review their ideas. If not covered, make sure the following points are made about the role of the police in the following areas:

Show slides 17–19

Preventing sexual violence from happening
- crime prevention;
- community policing;
- contributing to community education and community mobilization efforts;
- modeling universal values and norms of equality, justice and non-violence;
- promoting women’s and children’s human and legal rights;
- promoting the idea of justice and addressing impunity.

Making communities safer when sexual violence is happening
- identifying high-risk areas and settings through analysing data and crime statistics;
- conducting safety audits with communities and developing strategies to increase safety;
- identifying, arresting, detaining and prosecuting perpetrators so they can’t reoffend.

Providing law enforcement and protection response to individual children and women who have experienced/are experiencing sexual violence
- taking and investigating reports;
- providing information and referral;
- supporting protection and safety of victims.
TOPIC 5: COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE—1 hour

8. Components of effective law enforcement response to sexual violence

Large group discussion
1 hour

SHOW SLIDE 20

1. Tell participants that good practice in law enforcement response to sexual and other violence against women and children involves implementing multiple strategies. Ask for suggestions.

SHOW SLIDES 21–23

2. When participants have finished responding, present an overview of the strategies:

- A **legal framework that criminalizes all forms of violence** against women and children (regardless of who the perpetrator is and his relationship to the victim).

- Ensuring that all laws, codes and procedures related to violence against women and children are **consistently enforced** and responded to by the criminal justice system.

- Ensuring that the exercise of police powers is undertaken according to the **rule of law** and codes of conduct and that the police may be held accountable for any infringement thereof.

- **Empowering the police** to respond promptly to incidents of violence against women and children.

- **Encouraging women to join police forces**, including at the operational level.

- **Implementing standard procedures for the effective investigation and documentation of cases**, including investigative techniques that do not degrade women and children subjected to violence.

- **Establishing specialized units**, acknowledging that while victims often prefer reporting to another woman, appropriately trained men can also increase the reporting of violence.

- **Strengthening integrated response** to meet the multiple needs of victims/survivors, including referral for medical assistance, psychosocial support, shelter and legal and economic assistance.

- **Improving community safety and security** through community-based policing, community engagement and outreach to strengthen community trust and collaboration with security actors, raise awareness of and promote zero tolerance for violence against women and girls.

- **Training and education for all police** on human rights and gender-based violence.

- **Establishing a policy against abuse of power by police**.

3. Ask participants which of these strategies are currently being implemented in their context.

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 6: Good practice in police response to violence against women and girls
SUMMARY AND CLOSING–30 minutes

Questions and summary
30 minutes

- Allow time for questions that have not yet been addressed.
- Provide a summary of the topics covered during the module.
Pre-test

Name: __________________________________________

Please remember that this is a Pre-test. It is happening before you have taken part in the training or had the opportunity to learn more about the topics. Do not be surprised or upset if you find that you cannot answer many of the questions. Just do your best.

1. **What are the parts of the criminal justice system?** (Circle three correct answers in the list below.)

   a) the executive and legislative branches of government  
   b) the armed forces  
   c) the police  
   d) The community  
   e) civil society and NGOs, e.g., legal advice and representation, monitoring and accountability

   (3 marks)

2. **As well as the criminal justice system, there may be other justice systems that operate in a community. These may work in parallel to the criminal justice system or be integrated with it.** List both of these.

   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________

   (2 marks)

3. **A lot of myths exist about the nature of sexual violence.** (Circle three statements below that are untrue.)

   a) Perpetrators of child sexual abuse are usually insane or drunk.
   b) A woman who wears short skirts is asking to be raped.
   c) Most sexual abuse is perpetrated by people that the victim knows.
   d) Sexual violence is about power not desire.
   e) Women and girls lie about sexual violence.

   (3 marks)

4. **List four actions the police can take to help prevent sexual violence and make their community safer.**

   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________

   (4 marks)

5. **The statements below describe possible law enforcement responses to sexual violence. Which combination of statements represents good practice?** (Circle one answer.)

   1) encouraging women to join the police force  
   2) improving community safety and security  
   3) training for all police personnel in human rights and gender-based violence  
   4) using standard procedures to investigate and document cases

   a) none of the statements  
   b) statements 1) and 3) only  
   c) statements 1), 2) and 4)  
   d) all of the statements  
   e) only statement 3

   (1 mark)
6. Police officers have a legal responsibility to protect the rights of women and girls. (Circle one answer.)

True  False

(1 mark)

7. Rates of reporting crimes involving sexual violence are often very low. List four common reasons why people do not report this type of crime.

________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

(4 marks)

8. Which of these should be part of the police response to a reported incident of sexual violence?

(Circle one answer.)

- a) initial response
- b) follow-up response
- c) supervisor response
- d) data collection and communication
- e) all of the above

(1 mark)

9. List three positive ways in which a police officer should behave when receiving a report of sexual violence.

________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

(3 marks)

10. An interview with a victim who has reported an incident of sexual violence should include four phases. Which of the phases described below is not one of these? (Circle one answer.)

- a) gathering information
- b) conclusion
- c) interrogation
- d) address safety and referral
- e) introduction

(1 mark)

11. When a police officer openly doubts the story told by a woman who is reporting sexual abuse, this can lead to secondary victimization. (Circle one answer.)

True  False

(1 mark)

12. In any investigation of a possible sexual assault, evidence and information should be collected from the victim, the suspect and the crime scene. (Circle one answer.)

True  False

(1 mark)

(Total 25 marks – multiply by 4 to give percentage score.)
Myths and facts about sexual violence and children

There are many myths and misconceptions about sexual violence that reflect harmful beliefs and values. Myths deny the effects of sexual violence, help to reinforce norms that silence and blame the victims and protect the perpetrators by suggesting that they are not responsible for their abusive actions. Preventing sexual violence involves confronting and challenging these myths. Below are some common myths about child sexual abuse and other sexual violence.¹

Myth: The perpetrator is usually a stranger.

Fact: In most cases of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse, the perpetrator is known to the victim. The myth that strangers are the danger leaves children without information to help them understand and interpret behaviour from trusted adults when they feel uncomfortable. It increases children’s vulnerability to sexual abuse by family members. Incest is a taboo in every society and is very difficult to talk about, which helps to keep it hidden.

Myth: Women and girls lie about sexual violence.

Fact: Children very rarely lie or make up sexual abuse. We don’t want to believe that adults do this to children and prefer to believe that children make it up. The fact that adults often don’t believe children is one of the most difficult problems children who are being abused face.

Myth: Having sex with a child is harmless.

Fact: Children who have experienced sexual abuse have significant problems, which may include aggressive behaviour, depression, social withdrawal and emotional problems. Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse can experience depression, low self-esteem, difficulty in forming relationships and sexual problems. Having sex with children is also a transgression against most moral and legal codes of conduct.

Myth: Perpetrators of child sexual abuse are usually insane or drunk.

Fact: Research suggests that perpetrators are generally normal males from all sorts of socio-economic backgrounds. Most appear to be no different from other men in the community. Only a small percentage of perpetrators of child sexual abuse have a recognizable mental illness.

Myth: Men molest girls when their wives are not satisfying them sexually.

Fact: Men who have unsatisfactory sexual relationships with their wives do not usually assault or abuse children.

Myth: Some girls are seductive or sexually provocative and cause men to be sexually aroused.

Fact: This myth takes responsibility for abuse away from the adult and places it onto the child. Children are relatively powerless and are not responsible for an adult’s sexuality. Adults always retain a choice in determining how they will respond to a child’s behaviour.

Myth: Young women ask to be raped by:

- going out alone
- wearing trousers
- wearing short skirts
- showing interest in a man – “leading him on”
- not showing enough interest in a man – “rejecting him”
- arguing with a boy/man – “being cheeky”
- being more successful than a boy/man – “needing to be put in her place”
- being angry with a man – “needing to be shown who is boss”

Fact: Rape is a violent and terrifying crime. Nobody asks to be raped or wants to be raped. The perpetrator is the one who is responsible, not the victim.

Myth: Rape is an act of uncontrolled lust or passion.

Fact: Sexual violence is an aggressive act. The underlying factors in many sexually violent acts are power and control, not a desire for sex. It is a violent, aggressive and hostile act used as a means to degrade, dominate, humiliate, terrorize and control. Sexual violence violates a victim’s sense of privacy, safety and well-being.

Myth: Children can give consent to sexual activity with an adult.

Fact: Sometimes perpetrators accuse a child of consenting to, or even initiating, the sexual contact. But children are not capable of providing informed consent to sexual interactions with adults. A child has little knowledge about the implications of being involved in sex with an adult; in contrast, the adult has sophisticated knowledge of the significance of the encounter. The child’s lack of knowledge and power means that the child cannot give informed consent in sexual interactions with adults. The legal and moral responsibility for any sexual behaviour between adults and children is the adult’s. If a child initiates sexual contact, it is the responsibility of the adult not to respond to the child.

Myth: When a child is sexually abused by a family member, it is usually a one-time experience.

Fact: Although children may be sexually abused by a family member a single time before they tell someone, the typical pattern occurs over a period of time and progresses from normal contact to sexual activity through the abuser using secrecy, power and control over their victims, as well as ‘rewards’ to condition a child to accept increased sexualized contact.
HANDOUT 3

Legal framework for responding to sexual violence

You will need to prepare a handout on the national legal framework for responding to sexual violence in your context.
Police policies and procedures for responding to sexual violence

You will need to prepare a handout on the relevant national policies and procedures for responding to sexual violence in your context.
Police officers may be the first responders to incidents of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and trafficking, among other forms of violence women experience.

Although security personnel may have limited reach outside of key towns and cities in many contexts, cases of violence against women and girls are reported to the police. While family members, civil society organizations and traditional and local leaders often provide initial support to survivors of violence, the police are a survivor’s first point of contact with the state in many cases, and it is critical that they have the institutional and human capacities to respond appropriately and sensitively to the needs of survivors. This will encourage survivors to report their experiences of violence and provide them with the relevant services and referrals to medical and psycho-social assistance, as well as shelter, legal, economic and other supports.

The police have a legal responsibility to protect the rights of women and girls.

A variety of international and regional laws and instruments enshrine the right of women and girls to live free from violence and the threat of violence, and establish specific responsibilities (due diligence) for the police to uphold these rights.

The police play a key leadership role in preventing violence against women and in shaping attitudes about it being wrong.

Personnel may employ a range of actions, such as working with community groups and leaders to identify specific threats to women’s security and plan prevention strategies; using specific deployment strategies to stop or deter incidents of violence; engaging in outreach activities; and communicating how they will work to address the issue, which can send a message to the population that the behaviour is not acceptable. Police commitment to addressing violence can create momentum for partnerships with government officials and service providers, which is critical for advancing comprehensive multisectoral responses with holistic support for survivors.

The police play an essential role in facilitating access to justice for survivors.

It is critical that they are trained and equipped to respond quickly and appropriately to investigate reported incidents of violence, to apprehend perpetrators and to record the evidence needed to prosecute them in a court of law. Police must also work effectively with other key service providers, especially the judiciary, as part of a referral network for survivors.

Public perceptions and trust in security personnel can be influenced by police responses to violence against women.

Security responses also influence the decisions of women, their families and communities to use the services of and collaborate with security personnel or turn to other actors for the provision of protection and justice (e.g., vigilantes, customary authorities). In situations in which police (or other uniformed personnel) are highly visible in communities, they may be able to act as positive agents of change by modelling behaviour that challenges existing norms around violence and promotes more gender-equitable attitudes and practices.

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GOOD PRACTICE IN POLICE RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

1. A legal framework that criminalizes all forms of violence against women and children (regardless of who the perpetrator is and his relationship to the victim)

2. Ensuring that all laws, codes and procedures related to violence against women and children are consistently enforced and responded to by the criminal justice system

3. Ensuring that the exercise of police powers is undertaken according to the rule of law and codes of conduct and that the police may be held accountable for any infringement thereof

4. Empowering the police to respond promptly to incidents of violence against women and children

5. Encouraging women to join police forces, including at the operational level

6. Implementing standard procedures for the effective investigation and documentation of cases, including investigative techniques that do not degrade women and children subjected to violence

7. Establishing specialized units, acknowledging that while victims often prefer reporting to another woman, appropriately trained men can also increase reporting of violence

8. Strengthening integrated response to meet the multiple needs of victims/survivors, including referral for medical assistance, psychosocial support, shelter and legal and economic assistance

9. Improving community safety and security through community-based policing, community engagement and outreach to strengthen community trust and collaboration with security actors, raise awareness of and promote zero tolerance for violence against women and girls

10. Training and education for all police on human rights and gender-based violence

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this module participants will:

1. Be able to discuss good practice in receiving reports and conducting interviews with victims of sexual violence, including listing phases of an interview.

2. Have practiced interviewing victims of sexual violence and be able to demonstrate basic interviewing skills.

Participant handouts

Handout 1: Characteristics of reported cases
Handout 2: Police response checklist
Handout 3: Receiving reports
Handout 4: Conducting victim interviews
Handout 5: Sexual assault investigation
Handout 6: Tips for interviewing children
Handout 7: Case studies
Handout 8: Skills checklist
Handout 9: Post-test
PART 3
Strengthening Community-Based Care

Participant handouts

**Handout 1**: Characteristics of reported cases

**Handout 2**: Police response checklist

**Handout 3**: Receiving reports

**Handout 4**: Conducting victim interviews

**Handout 5**: Sexual assault investigation

**Handout 6**: Tips for interviewing children

**Handout 7**: Case studies

**Handout 8**: Skills checklist

**Handout 9**: Post-test
### MODULE 2 SCHEDULE | DAY 2

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<th>SLIDES</th>
<th>HANDOUTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00–9:15</td>
<td>• Housekeeping</td>
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<td>• Review objectives for Module 2</td>
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<td>9:15–10:45</td>
<td>• Characteristics of reported cases</td>
<td>25–34</td>
<td>Handout 1: Characteristics of reported cases</td>
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<td>10:45–11:00</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
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<td>11:00–1:00</td>
<td>• Responding to victims of sexual violence crimes</td>
<td>35–36</td>
<td>Handout 2: Police response checklist</td>
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<td>Handout 3: Receiving reports</td>
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<td>Handout 6: Tips for interviewing children</td>
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<td>1:00–2:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>2:00–3:00</td>
<td>• Practice</td>
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<td>Handout 7: Case studies</td>
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<td>Handout 8: Skills checklist</td>
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<td>3:00–3:15</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
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<td>3:15–3:45</td>
<td>• Practice</td>
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<td>3:45–4:30</td>
<td>• Questions and summary</td>
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<td>Handout 9: Post-test</td>
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<td>• Post-test</td>
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NOTE TO FACILITATORS

To prepare to facilitate this module, you need to do the following:

Go through the session plan and review all topics, and make sure the activities are locally appropriate. Decide on alternative activities if needed.

**Topic 1:** Make sure you have a good understanding of reported cases of sexual violence in your context and to prepare information on national or local sexual violence crime statistics to facilitate the discussion on reported cases of sexual violence.

**Topic 3:** When participants are practicing interviewing skills, you can substitute for the case studies provided with examples from your context.
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION–15 minutes

Housekeeping

SHOW SLIDE 24

Review objectives for Module 2

TOPIC 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF REPORTED CASES–1 hour 30 minutes

1. Characteristics of reported sexual assault crimes

Presentation and group discussion 45 minutes

1. Explain to participants that there are common characteristics and dynamics of sexual violence crimes reported to police around the world.

SHOW SLIDES 25-28

2. Present an overview of the following information on reporting rates, offender profiles, timing of reporting, duration of violence, voluntary and involuntary reporting, and age of victims, making sure that you ask questions and invite participants to share their knowledge and experience as you go through each.

Reporting rates: Ask participants whether they think people commonly report sexual violence in their community or not.

- Tell participants that there are very low reporting rates for sexual violence in most communities, and in fact it is one of the most underreported crimes globally.
- Ask participants why they think people don’t report
- Overview the general reasons for non-reporting:
  - fear;
  - shame;
  - embarrassment; threats from perpetrators;
  - family disapproval of reporting;
  - perpetrator is family member;
  - attitudes of service providers, including police;
  - distance;
  - cost;
  - mistrust of authorities;
  - don’t know it’s a crime;
  - don’t know their legal rights.
- Ask if any of these reasons are familiar to participants and if there are other reasons for non-reporting in the community that are not mentioned? What are they?
- Are there specific reasons for non-reporting barriers for different groups? For example, adolescents, sex workers, children living on the street?
1. Characteristics of reported sexual assault crimes (continued)

SHOW SLIDE 29

3. Offender profiles: Tell participants that when sexual violence is reported, there are usually two types of cases:
   - offender known to victim – which, unlike other crimes, constitute the vast majority of cases;
   - offender unknown.

   • Ask participants what might be the difference in police response if the offender is known or unknown?

SHOW SLIDE 30

4. Timing of reporting: Tell participants that victims may report to police immediately after or a long time after an incident or a pattern of abuse and that the timing of the assault has implications for response.

   • Ask participants what might the difference be in response to an assault that happened today as opposed to an assault that happened six months ago.
   • Ask participants how might victims present differently if they have just been assaulted and what their different needs might be.

SHOW SLIDE 31

5. Duration of violence: Explain that in cases in which the offender is known to the victim, there may be multiple assaults or even ongoing abuse.

   • Ask how the safety needs of victims are different for known and unknown offenders.

SHOW SLIDE 32

6. Voluntary and involuntary reporting: Tell participants that victims can voluntarily come to the police station to report a crime, but in some cases, particularly those involving children, the assault or abuse may have been discovered by someone else and the child taken to police by a parent or carer.

   • Ask participants if anyone has been involved in a case in which a child has been brought to the police station or post to report an assault. How did the child seem?

SHOW SLIDE 33

7. Age of victims: Tell participants that in many countries more incidents of sexual assault against children than against adult women are reported to police. Ask participants why they think this is the case.
• Make sure you have a good understanding of reported cases of sexual violence in your context and prepare information on national or local sexual violence crime statistics

SHOW SLIDE 34
1. Put participants into small groups and ask each group to discuss the profile of sexual violence incidents reported to their station/post/command, concentrating on these questions:
   • What types of sexual offences are reported to police?
   • What percentage of cases reported to police are by known offenders?
   • What percentage of cases are recent assaults (within 72 hours)?
   • What percentage of cases are one incident of sexual violence versus ongoing abuse?
   • What percentage of cases reported are offences against adults, and what percentage are against children?

2. Bring the groups back together and allow 15 minutes of feedback as a large group.

3. Provide a brief overview of reported cases in your context and discuss as a large group. Does any of this information surprise participants? Why or why not?

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 1: Characteristics of reported cases

TOPIC 2: RESPONDING TO VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE CRIMES—2 hours

SHOW SLIDE 35
1. Tell participants that responding to reported incidents of sexual violence involves the following elements:
   ▸ initial response;
   ▸ follow-up response;
   ▸ supervisor response;
   ▸ data collection and communication;
   ▸ management response.

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 2: Police response checklist

2. Put participants into small groups, and have each group review parts 1 and 2 of the checklist (initial response and follow-up response) on the handout and tick those that are current practice in their station/post.

Note: If you have senior officers and managers in the training, they can be allocated supervisor response, data collection and management response sections to review.
3. Victim response (continued)

3. Debrief by having a large group discussion for 20 minutes, using the following questions:
   - Is there anything on the list that surprised them?
   - Which actions are already part of standard procedure?
   - What changes could easily be made to implement some of the actions?

4. Receiving reports and interviewing victims

   Large group discussion and review of documents
   1 hour

1. Ask if any participants have received reports of alleged sexual violence crimes and interviewed victims. Allow volunteers to share their experiences without using identifying details of cases. Ask:
   - How did the victim seem?
   - Was it easy or hard to conduct the interview? Why?
   - If it was hard, what would have helped make the process easier?

2. Make the point that reporting to police, especially a matter that can be embarrassing and stigmatized, can be a terrifying experience and that if not handled sensitively, reporting can lead to secondary victimization. Make the point that it may be even harder for someone to talk about what has happened if she has not voluntarily come to the police station.

3. If nobody in the room has interviewed victims of sexual assault or exploitation, ask participants to think of the most embarrassing situation they can imagine happening to themselves and to imagine that they had to tell a stranger about this situation. What would help make it easier to tell someone?

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 3: Receiving a report

HANDOUT 4: Conducting victim interviews

HANDOUT 5: Investigating sexual assault

4. Allow participants time to read through each handout a section at a time, then discuss as a large group.

   Note: Alternatively, review handouts as a large group, using examples, ensuring participants understand what each point means.

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 6: Tips for interviewing children
TOPIC 3: PRACTICE–1 hour 30 minutes

5. Case studies

Case study analysis and roles plays in triads
1 hour and 30 minutes

SHOW SLIDE 36

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 7: Case studies

1. Put participants in groups of three and distribute case studies. Ask each group to first read the case studies and then answer the following questions:
   • Identify what the crime(s) is (are), if any.
   • Are there any violations of human rights?
   • If there is a crime, what should a police officer do?
   • What are the appropriate steps the police officer who receives the report should take?
   • If there is no crime, what could a police officer do?

REFER PARTICIPANTS TO HANDOUT 8: Skills checklist

2. After 30 minutes, tell participants they will now take turns practicing an interview with a victim based on the case studies. Tell them they will undertake three role plays based on three of the cases studies. In each role play, a different person will play the officer receiving the report/interviewing the victim and the victim. The third person will observe and provide feedback to the interviewer at the end.

3. After each person in the groups of three has had an opportunity to practice, ask for volunteers to demonstrate in front of the large group.
   Note: You need to observe each person practicing and select a volunteer who demonstrates good knowledge and skills to role play in front of the large group.

SUMMARY AND CLOSING–45 minutes

Questions, summary and Post-test
45 minutes

• Allow time for questions that have not yet been addressed.
• Provide a summary of the topics covered during the day.
• Have participants complete the Post-test.

You can substitute for the case studies provided with examples from your context
Characteristics of reported cases

Reporting rates
- There are very low reporting rates for sexual violence, and in fact it is one of the most underreported crimes globally.
- General barriers to reporting include:
  - fear
  - shame
  - embarrassment
  - threats from perpetrators
  - family pressure not to report
  - perpetrator is a family member
  - attitudes of service providers, including police
  - distance
  - cost
  - mistrust of authorities
  - don’t know it’s a crime
  - don’t know their legal rights

Offender profile
- When sexual violence is reported, there are two types of cases:
  - offender known – which, unlike other crimes, constitute the vast majority of cases
  - offender unknown

Timing of assault
- Victims may report to police immediately after or a long time after an incident or a pattern of abuse, and the timing of the assault has implications for the response.

Duration of violence
- In cases in which the offender is known to the victim, there may be multiple assaults or even ongoing abuse.

Voluntary and involuntary reporting
- Victims can voluntarily come to the police station to report a crime, but in some cases, particularly those involving children, the assault or abuse may have been discovered by someone else and the child taken to police by a parent or carer.

Age of victims
- In many countries, more incidents of sexual assault against children than against adult women are reported to police.
Police response checklist

The following checklist describes the basic role of law enforcement in responding to sexual violence. It also shows areas in which law enforcement agencies coordinate and collaborate with other justice system agencies and community-based programmes.

Review the following list, checking off responses your agency performs with success.

Make note of gaps in your current response.

Law enforcement intervention includes the following elements:

1. Initial officer response to report
2. Follow-up investigator response
3. Supervisor response
4. Data collection and communication
5. Management response

1. Initial officer response to report

___ Assure the victim her safety is the priority.

___ Inquire into the victim’s need for emergency medical attention.

___ Provide the victim with information on her rights, referrals to justice system agencies and community-based organizations, and assist with her immediate needs.

___ Ask questions in a supportive and matter-of-fact tone of voice. Be calm, direct and patient. Make it clear you want to help.

___ Let the victim know what her involvement in the investigative and court process entails.

___ If appropriate, encourage the victim to undergo a forensic medical exam and seek medical treatment.

___ Explain to the victim the importance of evidence collection (where available) and medical treatment.
Interviewing the victim:
___ Conduct the victim interview in a private setting.
___ Conduct the interview after the victim has received medical treatment, in the case of a recent assault.
___ Obtain preliminary information from the victim about the crime and specifics leading up to the abuse, whether there is a relationship between the victim and suspect, prior history of abuse, use of weapons or use of alcohol/drugs.
___ Record the victim’s emotional and physical condition.
___ Note her demeanour, body language and other nonverbal communication.
___ Document the victim’s injuries and inquire about injuries that are not visible.

Identify and interview witnesses:
___ Identify witnesses and their relationship to the victim or the suspect.
___ Note the witnesses’ demeanour and collect written statements.

Interview the suspect:
___ Record the suspect’s emotional and physical condition and demeanour.
___ Note any evidence of substance abuse.

Make an arrest decision:
___ Arrest the suspect if probable cause exists.
___ Charge the suspect with all crimes arising from the incident.
___ Decide to arrest solely on law and not on other factors (e.g., speculation the victim will not go forward, the arrest may not lead to conviction, or the race, culture, sexual orientation, class or profession of either party).
___ If the suspect is not known, obtain descriptive information.
___ If the suspect is found, attempt to interview. If he cannot be found, apply for a warrant.
___ File a full report even in the case of no arrest, explaining the circumstances.

Facilitate the forensic evidence collection process:
___ Refer the victim to a designated medical facility for emergency care and/or forensic evidence collection, if appropriate.
___ Make sure the victim has the support of a victim advocate, if desired.
___ Confirm that the attending nurse or physician has a standardized evidence collection kit.
HANDOUT 2   POLICE RESPONSE CHECKLIST (continued)

___ Provide the attending nurse or physician with a brief account of the incident.
___ Ensure all necessary physical evidence collection procedures are completed.
___ Confer with assisting medical personnel to obtain further information.
___ Request the victim sign a release of medical information form.

Write an incident report:
___ Complete a written report, whether or not an arrest is made. If an arrest was not made, explain why.
___ Include diagrams of all injuries and reports of injuries that are not visible, as well as information noted above.
___ Report on previous incidents known to the officer or reported by the victim or other witnesses.
___ Provide the follow-up investigator with all related reports and documentation, access to stored crime scene evidence and lab findings from the forensic evidence.

2. Follow-up response

Address victim safety and support needs:
___ Stay in contact with the victim, obtaining information and updating case status.
___ On each contact, assess the likelihood of continued violence by the suspect to the victim and her family.
___ Assist the victim with safety planning. Revise police response as needed to offer optimal protection.
___ Work closely with a community-based advocate to support the victim through interviews and other investigation procedures.

Gather further information to support charges:
___ Consult with the responding officer (if different) and any officers who collected evidence.
___ Develop an investigative strategy.
___ Arrange for a subsequent interview with the victim if she was unable to proceed with a detailed interview following the incident or if additional or clarifying information is needed.
___ Encourage the victim to contact the investigator with any new information or evidence.
___ Obtain statements from any witnesses not interviewed, identify additional witnesses, and collect all pertinent information.
**HANDOUT 2 POLICE RESPONSE CHECKLIST (continued)**

___ Ensure all evidence has been identified, collected, properly stored and processed from the crime scene, the victim and the suspect.

___ Obtain further information on the suspect’s criminal/civil histories and other relevant background.

**Identify and apprehend the suspect, if not already arrested:**

___ If the suspect was not at the crime scene and his identity is unknown, determine the most likely suspects. Obtain the victim’s assistance in making a positive identification. Question the suspect once he is apprehended, using the appropriate investigative strategy.

___ If the suspect is known, attempt to find and interview him, if possible. Also consider other ways to initially contact/warn the suspect, if appropriate (e.g., send him a letter of warning in select stalking cases).

___ Arrest the suspect when probable cause is established.

**Deliver the case to the prosecution office:**

___ Discuss the case with the prosecution office and secure additional evidence as necessary.

___ Complete necessary reports and forms, and transfer information to the prosecutor’s office.

___ Testify as requested throughout court hearings.

**3. Supervisor response**

___ Oversee officer compliance with agency policies and procedures related to violence against women.

___ Oversee officer compliance with inter-agency agreements related to violence against women.

___ Create forms and incentives to facilitate compliance with agency policies.

___ Problem-solve with officers on complex cases.

___ Assess whether police response meets goals of victim safety and offender accountability.

___ Determine the need for additional officer training or supervision.

**4. Data collection and communications**

___ Track cases from first call forward, including case substantiation and follow-through.
5. Management response

Set tone through the development of protocols, practices, training and other mechanisms:

___ Establish protocols and practices grounded in an understanding of violence against women and embody values such as victim safety and confidentiality, respect for the autonomy of victims and offender accountability.

___ Develop police procedures for handling violence against women committed by law enforcement and other justice system personnel.

___ Promote proactive intervention in all violence against women cases.

___ Allocate funds, resources and personnel to violence against women cases.

___ Support ongoing violence against women training for all new and veteran staff.

___ Build a staff that reflects the demographics of the community it serves.

___ Develop strategies to remove barriers facing under-served populations that prevent them from using the criminal justice system (e.g., translation of materials into relevant languages and 24-hour access to translation and interpreter services).

___ Develop a system to monitor policy compliance.

___ Consider creating a dedicated unit to handle all cases involving violence against women.

___ Revise policies and practices, as necessary.

Provide leadership in community initiatives to combat violence against women:

___ Ensure coordinated response and collaboration with other justice agencies and other relevant service providers. Develop inter-agency agreements as appropriate.

___ Participate in community task forces or other structures that respond to violence against women.

___ Recognize and support community-based advocacy programmes as primary victim service providers.

___ Promote community education and zero tolerance for violence against women.
Receiving reports

Receiving a report

• Always respect the victim’s dignity. This is reflected in the way police talk and deal with victims.

• Try to have a female police officer to assist a woman victim. If there are no female officers, consider having a female support person present, such as a social worker.

• Statements should be taken in private.

• Remember that you are dealing with a person who has already been ill-treated and humiliated and who will therefore be much more vulnerable than other members of the community. Do not exacerbate the suffering by adding to it with your own conduct.

• Make the welfare and well-being of the victim a priority. The crime cannot be reversed, but adequate help and assistance to the victim will contribute towards limiting the negative consequences of that crime.

• Do not become impatient, scornful or rude – many women and children are so nervous upon arrival at a police station that they have difficulty telling a narrative with a beginning, middle and end.

• In such situations, police officers or those on reception duty find out what matter brought them there, check whether they have any injuries and require medical treatment, and ensure that they are in a fit state to give an account of what happened.

• Respect privacy and confidentiality – women are often reluctant to seek help from the police because they fear that their privacy and confidentiality will not be safeguarded. Many women who know their abusers fear that their abusers will find out about the reporting and kill them, or that their families and communities will humiliate them if they find out.

• Be aware that you are there to help, not to judge, and that the woman should be treated at all times without prejudice or discrimination.

• Ensure that all decisions are made with the consent of the victim and in the best interests of the victim.

• Refer the victim for medical care in case of recent assault.

• If the report is delayed, determine when the incident happened.

• Document the reason for the delay, but be aware that questions about the delay may cause the victim to feel blamed in some way.
Conducting victim interviews

General guidance for interviewing

- Conduct the interview in a private setting.
- Interviews of victims should only be conducted once the immediate safety of the person has been assured, any injuries have been treated, and the person is calm enough to be interviewed.
- The attitude and conduct of the interviewing officer are key to gaining the victim’s trust and cooperation. Thank the victim for coming in, offer her water or tea, or make other small gestures that will help her to feel comfortable.
- Approach the victim in a respectful manner.
- Remain objective and non-judgmental.
- Remember that the person has already been ill-treated and humiliated and will therefore be much more vulnerable than other members of the community. The police should not exacerbate the primary suffering by adding to it with their own conduct. This refers to the problem of ‘secondary victimization’ when a victim of crime experiences insensitive or traumatic treatment once she seeks help from police after the crime.
- Remember that the person is a victim, not a suspect, and is therefore not subjected to methods police might use in an interrogation.
- Make the welfare and well-being of the victim a high priority. The crime cannot be reversed, but adequate help and assistance to the victim will definitely contribute towards limiting the negative consequences of that crime.
- Take into consideration that children, especially young children, may in many instances not realize that they have been or are being abused or exploited.
- Remember that some victims of violence or abuse may be reluctant to talk about what happened. They may have been threatened with harm or death by the offender or may have a relationship with the offender.

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## Before the interview

- Plan which key questions to ask (e.g., who, what, where, when, how).
- Ask if the person wants someone else present, such as a social worker or friend.

### Phase 1: Introduction

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<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Introduce yourself to the person by name and explain you are there to help.</th>
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### Establish interview rules

Consider using the following to help put the person at ease:

- “I am here to help, not to judge or accuse.”
- “If I misunderstand something you say, please tell me. I want to know, and I want to get it right.”
- “If you don’t understand something I say, please tell me and I will try again.”
- “If you feel uncomfortable at any time, please tell me or show me the ‘stop sign’.” (Demonstrate the sign with one hand held up, palm facing the other person.)
- “Even if you think I already know something, tell me anyway.”
- “If you are not sure about an answer, please do not guess, tell me you are not sure before you say it.”
- “Please remember when you are describing something to me that I was not there when it happened. The more you can tell me about what happened, the more I will understand what happened.”
- “Please remember that I will not get angry or upset with you.”

### Phase 2: Gathering information

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Free narrative</th>
<th>Ask the person to tell you what she experienced, saw and heard in her own words. She should verbally reconstruct, in as much detail as possible, the circumstances of the incident.</th>
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<td>“I’d like you to tell me everything you remember about what happened, starting from the beginning.” Do not interrupt.</td>
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|                | If the woman stops, ask “What happened next?” or “You were saying that (restate the last thing she said)”.
|                | Use voice prompts to keep them talking, such as “uh huh” or “umm”. |
|                | Listen to the entire story without asking any questions or interrupting. If the woman pauses, the investigator encourages her to continue (e.g., “And then what happened?”).
|                | Listen, be patient and take detailed notes. |
An open-ended question is one that is worded in such a way as to enable the individual to provide more information about any event, that is expressed in a way that is not leading or suggestive, and that does not put her under any pressure.

Open-ended questions allow the person to control the flow of information and minimize the risk that the investigator may unknowingly impose his or her own personal view of what happened. Here, the investigator asks specific open questions (ones that cannot be answered by “yes” or “no”).

For example:

- “Tell me about …”
- “What happened next?”
- “And then what did you see?”
- “Tell me what else you remember.”
- “And then what happened?”
- “What else did you see?”

The investigator uses these questions to clarify points covered in the free narrative, while continuing to take detailed notes of what is being said. To avoid any confusion and get the best possible recall the investigator should only ask one question at a time.

The purpose of this stage is to clarify and extend previous answers in a non-suggestive manner. Here, the investigator asks direct, closed questions to elicit missing details or clarify key points.

Ensure that the key points of who, what, where, when, how and why are covered. The investigator continues to take notes.

Avoid multiple choice questions, but if you must, limit the question to two possible answers. At a later time, repeat the question but slightly rephrase it and rearrange the possible answers.

If there are inconsistencies in the person’s statement, they should be addressed at the end of the interview.

As well as ascertaining if the person will be safe when she leaves and planning what steps to take to make her safe if there is a risk of harm, police can use this phase of the interview to refer the woman or child to additional services/assistance, such as health care, counselling or other assistance.
**Phase 4: Conclusion**

*Conclusion*

At the conclusion of the interview, when the investigator believes he or she has obtained all possible information, he or she should ask questions such as “Is there anything else about this incident that you think I should know?” or “What else do you know that I didn’t ask about?”

Ask if the person being interviewed has any questions. If so, answer them to the best of your ability.

Advise them that they might be re-interviewed at a later date.

Explain what will happen next, but do not make any promises.

Thank the person for her assistance and cooperation.

Ask her if she would like support in explaining to her family what has happened.
Children are not small adults. They experience events, think, speak and behave in their own manner, in a way that reflects their age and evolving capacities. If we want children to be able to participate in a meaningful manner in justice processes and to be protected from further harm, we need to adapt our language and behaviour when communicating with them.

Given their age and the trauma they may have endured, children require great care and sensitivity on the part of police when being interviewed.

**When dealing with child victims**

- Make sure the child has the option of having a trusted adult or support person present. Younger children should always have someone with them to provide comfort and support; however, older children may choose to be interviewed alone.

- Be extremely patient.

- Establish a relationship of trust with the child.

- Offer breaks, especially if the child is distressed.

- Take into consideration that children, especially young or ignorant children, may in many instances not realize that they have been or are being abused or exploited.

- Accept that sexual and serious physical abuse of children occurring in the home is not a ‘private’ matter, but criminal conduct and a human rights abuse.

- Take into consideration the age, apparent maturity and intellectual development of the child. Check if the child really understands every word you use.

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5 Handbook on Effective Police Responses to Violence Against Women, op. cit.
### HANDOUT 5  TIPS FOR INTERVIEWING CHILDREN (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long sentences</td>
<td>Short sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complicated sentences</td>
<td>Simple sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative sentences (“Didn’t you tell somebody?”)</td>
<td>Positive/leading sentences (“Did you tell somebody?”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions with more than one meaning</td>
<td>Questions with only one meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double negatives (“Didn’t your mother tell you not to go out?”)</td>
<td>Single negatives (“Did your mother tell you not to go out?”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothetical situations (“If you are tired, tell me.”) | Direct approach (“Are you tired?”)

- Body language should also be taken into consideration by the investigator, including the following:
  - Make sure to avoid frowning, which shows negative judgement.
  - Adopt interested and good eye contact and bring yourself down to the eye level of the child.
  - Avoid tense body postures. Remember that the posture you adopt will automatically evoke a certain response from the child.

### Guidelines for questioning children

- Take some time to first build rapport with the child and make her feel comfortable before asking questions about the incident.
- Assure the child that she is not in trouble because she is talking to the police.
- Assure the child that police officers talk with lots of children about things like this.
- Assure the child that she is not alone.
- Be respectful, attentive, sympathetic, calm and patient.
- Show your encouragement through body language, facial expression and voice.
- Conduct the interview in a place where the child feels comfortable and safe.
- Sit at their level – make eye contact.
- Use the child’s name frequently and introduce yourself by name, not title or rank.
- Keep questions short and simple, with age-appropriate language.
- Never assume that the child understands the question and language that you use.
HANDOUT 5  TIPS FOR INTERVIEWING CHILDREN (continued)

- Remember that children may not be used to giving free-narrative accounts (telling their story all at once, without interruption) to adults and may be more used to answering specific questions.
- If a child can’t provide an account, remember that this may be because of fear or embarrassment.
- Remember that even children who are unafraid or not shy may only give a very brief free-narrative account.
- Remember that children, given the development of memory and language, will often give accounts with key information missing.
- Consider using props, like dolls or puppets, to allow the children to express what has happened.
- Don’t rush them.
- Avoid repeating a question. Instead, rephrase it.
- Good questions are simple, specific, clear and directly related to the purpose of the interview.
- Avoid asking “why?”, as this is often perceived as blaming and can lead to a defensive response.
- Check if the child understands the question. If unsure, ask her to paraphrase the question to you or ask her what she thinks the question means.
- Pay close attention to the facial expression and body language of the child for signs of confusion or fatigue.
- Ask “Tell me more about that”.
- Stay calm, with an even and soft tone of voice.
- Be relaxed and informal.
- Acknowledge a child’s right not to speak. Do not make her talk if she is not comfortable doing so.
- Offer the child an opportunity to say anything else that has not been asked yet.
- Don’t make promises you cannot keep.
- Close all interviews by asking if the child has any questions of you and then thanking the child for her help.
- Successful interviews of children, especially those who are frightened or traumatized by what they have suffered, require patience and care.
Sexual assault investigation

Police have a duty to investigate all serious crimes; this includes a responsibility to conduct a substantive investigation of all crimes involving sexual violence and to treat all those involved with dignity and respect.

An investigation is a methodical exercise in problem-solving that involves identifying the offence by examining facts or circumstances of an incident and identifying the enforcement option appropriate to the facts or circumstances.

**Purpose of investigation**

- to determine whether an offence was committed or to disprove an allegation
- to identify victims and witnesses
- to gather and preserve evidence of any kind that may be relevant
- to discover the cause, manner and location of an offence
- to prove the identity of the suspect or person(s) responsible
- where appropriate, to formulate the ground to bring a charge
- to prevent further victimization

**Effective investigation**

An effective investigation, generally, is one in which the investigator followed these guidelines:

- acted in a professional, impartial and objective manner
- was diligent in the collection of physical evidence and statements
- at all times treated all parties involved with respect and dignity
- if there was an offence, identified the person(s) responsible and collected sufficient evidence to prove the case in court
- took steps to address the safety needs of all involved

A good police investigator will follow these steps:

- thoroughly document all facets of the investigation
- have respect for evidence (what it is, its value and how to collect, preserve and document it)
- take an analytical and creative approach to problem-solving
- effectively use all investigative tools and resources available

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6 New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault, op. cit.; International Association of Chiefs of Police,| Sexual Assault Incident Reports: Investigative Guidelines.
When the offender is known

- Because consent and/or use of force may become a key issue in cases in which the offender is known to the victim, evidence of force becomes a primary concern of the investigation.
- Remember that force can include coercion as well as physical force.
- A victim who knows the offender may or may not be able to identify the offender by full name, address, etc. For example, the victim may only know the offender by his first name.
- Identify and document the following information:
  - The level and nature of the relationship between the victim and the offender, including the following information:
    - how they have known each other
    - type of contact they have had, depth of relationship, etc.
  - Detailed information concerning the assault
  - Any evidence of physical injuries visible on the victim’s body
  - Conduct a thorough investigation regardless of whether the suspect is known or unknown. This will ensure that all possible information and evidence are gathered in every case.

When the offender is unknown

- In these sexual assault cases, a primary issue of the investigation is identifying the offender.
- The investigation should focus on obtaining as much information as possible in an effort to pinpoint a suspect(s), including the following:
  - A detailed physical description of the offender, including clothing, tattoos, facial features, identifying marks, distinctive walk, odours, etc.
  - Obtain as much information as possible about the offender’s profile and compare it to other offenders who have previously been arrested for a similar crime to determine whether a pattern exists, including the following details:
    - method of approach
    - method of control
    - amount/type of force/restraint of victim
    - victim resistance
    - type and sequence of acts
    - offender verbal activity
Case studies

Case 1: Sarah
Sarah is 14 years old. She was married to a 40-year-old man last year. Her husband rapes her regularly with the help of his brothers. She had refused to have sex with her husband but he forced her. Her brothers-in-law used to lock her up in the house during the day so that she couldn’t go anywhere and so that she can have sex with her husband. One day one of Sarah’s brothers-in-law raped her also. She escaped from the house and went to a local children’s NGO; a representative took her to the police station.

Case 2: Aminata
Aminata is 10 years old. Her uncle raped her during one of her family visits to his house. She was sleeping with his daughters when he came in and lay on top of her and inserted his penis. One of the other children in the room woke up and called out and Aminata’s mother came in. The next day her mother took her to the police station.

Case 3: Gloria
Gloria is 16 years old. Lately, she has been having trouble in class, and her teacher has offered to give her extra help. One day she stays after school and the teacher grabs her breast and tells her she is turning into a beautiful young woman and that if she doesn’t have sex with him he will tell her parents she is having sex with different boys at school. Gloria is frightened but does what the teacher says because she is scared her parents will find out and take her out of school and punish her. Another student sees what happens and tells Gloria’s parents, who take her to the police station.

Case 4: Rose
Rose is a 19 year old girl whose parents died during the war. Rose has been forced into prostitution by a man who took her in to clean his house when she was 14. One day Rose is walking home from the market when a man grabs her and rapes her in a field. Rose goes to the police station to report the crime.

Questions:
1. Identify what the crime(s) is (are), if any.
2. Are there any violations of human rights?
3. If there is a crime, what are the appropriate steps the police officer who receives the report should take?
4. If there is no crime, what are the appropriate steps the police officer who receives the report should take?
## Skills checklist

### Introduction
- √ introduces self
- √ asks if victim wants someone else present
- √ uses statements to put victim at ease
- √ is supportive and non-judgmental

### Gathering information
- √ encourages victim to speak using verbal prompts
- √ encourages victim to speak using non-verbal body language
- √ uses good open questions
- √ uses good closed questions
- √ seeks clarification/checks understanding

### Safety and referral
- √ assesses victim safety
- √ gives clear and simple age-appropriate referral information to victim (and to her carer if relevant)

### Closure
- √ asks if the victim has any questions
- √ explains what will happen next
- √ thanks victim
### General
- [ ] checks for understanding/misunderstanding
- [ ] shows a respectful manner
- [ ] does not embarrass or humiliate the victim

### Strengths

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

### Areas to practice

- 
- 
- 
- 
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- 
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- 

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**Handout 8** SKILLS CHECKLIST (continued)
Handout 9

Post-test

Name: ________________________________

1. What are the parts of the criminal justice system? (Circle three correct answers in the list below.)
   a) the executive and legislative branches of government
   b) the armed forces
   c) the police
   d) The community
   e) civil society and NGOs, e.g., legal advice and representation, monitoring and accountability

   (3 marks)

2. As well as the criminal justice system, there may be other justice systems that operate in a community. These may work in parallel to the criminal justice system or be integrated with it. List both of these.
   ___________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________________________

   (2 marks)

3. A lot of myths exist about the nature of sexual violence. (Circle three statements below that are untrue.)
   a) Perpetrators of child sexual abuse are usually insane or drunk.
   b) A woman who wears short skirts is asking to be raped.
   c) Most sexual abuse is perpetrated by people that the victim knows.
   d) Sexual violence is about power not desire.
   e) Women and girls lie about sexual violence.

   (3 marks)

4. List four actions the police can take to help prevent sexual violence and make their community safer.
   ___________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________________________

   (4 marks)

5. The statements below describe possible law enforcement responses to sexual violence. Which combination of statements represents good practice? (Circle one answer.)
   1) encouraging women to join the police force
   2) improving community safety and security
   3) training for all police personnel in human rights and gender-based violence
   4) using standard procedures to investigate and document cases

   a) none of the statements
   b) statements 1) and 3) only
   c) statements 1), 2) and 4)
   d) all of the statements
   e) only statement 3

   (1 mark)
6. Police officers have a legal responsibility to protect the rights of women and girls. (Circle one answer.)
   True       False
   (1 mark)

7. Rates of reporting crimes involving sexual violence are often very low. List four common reasons why people
do not report this type of crime.

________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

(4 marks)

8. Which of these should be part of the police response to a reported incident of sexual violence?
(Circle one answer.)
   a) initial response  b) follow-up response  c) supervisor response  d) data collection and communication  e) all of the above
   (1 mark)

9. List three positive ways in which a police officer should behave when receiving a report of sexual violence.

________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

(3 marks)

10. An interview with a victim who has reported an incident of sexual violence should include four phases. Which of the phases described below is not one of these? (Circle one answer.)
    a) gathering information  b) conclusion  c) interrogation  d) address safety and referral  e) introduction
    (1 mark)

11. When a police officer openly doubts the story told by a woman who is reporting sexual abuse, this can lead to
    secondary victimization. (Circle one answer.)
   True       False
   (1 mark)

12. In any investigation of a possible sexual assault, evidence and information should be collected from the
    victim, the suspect and the crime scene. (Circle one answer.)
   True       False
   (1 mark)

(Total 25 marks – multiply by 4 to give percentage score.)