

Rozan, Pakistan

BACKGROUND

Rozan is an NGO based in Islamabad, Pakistan, started in 1998. Its main aim is the protection of the emotional health of women and children. Within this context, Rozan provides advocacy, direct services, training and education. Most of their work has been aimed at women and children, but within their mission, 'to work for a society which is aware, confident, accepting of itself and others,' Maria Rashid speaks about viewing men as 'essential partners'.¹³

Pakistan has a strong patriarchal culture, where domestic violence, honour killings, rape and femicide are common. Adding to this situation, the police system within Pakistan is rife with corruption and generally acknowledged as under-trained and underpaid. Police in Pakistan often compound the experiences of survivors of gender-based violence – utilising violence themselves, denigrating those who report incidents, and discouraging reporting. Most police dealing with cases of gender-based violence are men, though female officers are also in need of sensitisation.

APPROACH

This concept of men as 'essential partners' is an important one to Rozan. Rashid speaks of an understanding of men within the VAW dynamic that is open, honest, pragmatic and empathetic. Rashid rejects the notion that VAW is a woman's problem – 'almost as if we (women) want to stake a claim to being victims.'¹⁴ This idea is seen as short-sighted, and does not encompass the totality of violence and power, and how all actors within the cycle – male, female, adult, child, and society at large, are victimised by the process. Rashid suggests that men committing violence are trapped within a web of societal norms, culture and tradition.

For Rashid the actual manifestations of this dynamic are that men are caught within a paradigm of how they *should* behave – powerful, and yet powerless if they do not conform to the traditional expectations a patriarchal society imposes upon them. The outcome of patriarchy, and the VAW cycle it creates, is obvious upon women – and yet, it can be insidious

Working towards a society which is aware, confident, accepting of itself and others, Rozan's approach targets men as 'essential partners'. To cast men as enemies is to ignore useful and powerful allies within the struggle for gender equality and against gender violence.

and detrimental to men as well. The mental, physical and emotional impact of patriarchy can hurt men – and it is in the best interest of those who work to end gender violence to acknowledge how men, too, are victimised within this system. Rashid is a strong exponent of this view, and she argues that to ignore it is to perpetuate the battle of the sexes.

To cast men as enemies is to ignore useful and powerful allies within the struggle for gender equality and against gender violence. This approach tries to ensure that men are not resistant to change and that they do not become defensive when confronted with their behaviour and that of their peers. This can be a difficult concept – and one that requires a reorientation of values and principles. But for Rozan, it is the cornerstone upon which their interventions have been modelled.

Rozan identified the police as important targets within the 'men as essential partners' paradigm, and developed a six-day training workshop. It is important to note that the police leadership was primarily concerned with violence and poor interpersonal skills and attitudes amongst police, while Rozan saw the intervention as allowing them to focus on reducing secondary victimisation as practised by police personnel. While both stakeholders had differing objectives, they agreed to work together to intervene with police.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Rozan focuses on training, education and direct services for women's psycho-social health. In collaboration with the Police College, the organisation initiated a 16-month programme to train policemen in human rights and gender-sensitive practices. Rozan trained 481 policemen and 15 policewomen over 21 workshops.

The Workshop comprised the following elements:

- Self Growth (4 days)
- Self Awareness
- Communication Skills
- Assertive Behaviour
- Anger Management
- Vision of an ideal society
- Prejudice
- Power
- Stress Management
- Gender and Violence Against Women and Children (2 days)
- Understanding the social construct of gender
- Implication of gender stereotyping men and women in society
- Sensitisation to issues of violence against women and children
- Sensitisation to the role of police in working with these issues

Rozan made a conscious decision to spend two thirds of their time with participants exploring issues of self-realisation and growth. Trust was built carefully, and slowly, and the process was a painstaking one of approaching topics which were traditionally off limits. During these sessions, police became open and honest about their feelings of powerlessness within society – their inability to change the system, or to make a difference.

Rozan's work with the police led them to begin to understand the dynamics of power – not just how it affected them, but how it impacted upon women in society. Facilitators also gave participants actual skills that were directly useful to their work – how to manage anger and a desire to inflict violence, how to manage stress and care for oneself, how to negotiate situations of power and control in an assertive, non-violent manner, and how to communicate from a position of strength. These skills were gained during role-plays. Within the understanding of power and powerlessness, police began to acknowledge how their behaviour enhanced the victimisation experienced by survivors of violence.

IMPACT

Rozan's work with police was evaluated six months after the workshops were conducted. This evaluation measured differences in the way in which police dealt with issues of violence, managed their own stress and anger, and were aware of the need to intervene, support and engage with survivors of VAW. Their sensitivity and awareness in terms of VAW issues showed a marked increase – from 8% to 47% based on sensitivity measurements.

ORGANISATIONAL REFLECTION

Rozan is entering the second phase of this project, and hopes to begin encouraging community-police relationships by hosting seminars and running workshops with police and community based organisations as co-participants. In terms of implementation methodologies Rozan's experience of its pilot workshops had shown that when the training was conducted as a special programme by an external body, participants tended to be suspicious about the motives behind the workshop and group. This resulted in more resistance to the workshop. The police were also more casual about it, since it was not a part of their regular training courses. It was therefore agreed that the training would be a part of the regular police training courses held at the Academy.

During the second phase, Rozan wanted to build police ownership of the process because it believed it would contribute to the course being taken more seriously by the police. To effect this ownership, several responsibilities relating to the workshops (such as provision of food and transport) were given to the Academy and feedback from the workshops was constantly shared with them.

And, finally, Rozan also felt that they needed to spend a longer period on the initial stages of discussing concepts and attitudes, before entering into the more sensitive area of violence against women. In this way, an atmosphere of reflection and mutual understanding would already have been built up to ease the way into more problematic areas of discussion.¹⁵



SUMMARY

Rozan has chosen to adopt a model of carefully paced interventions, phased in according to evaluation, peer-group response, and community need. This process is aimed at creating long-term, systemic change within the police system.

Rozan identified a single group within the criminal justice system to work with. Rozan focused only on one aspect, mainly due to capacity and financial resource issues. The Rozan approach is one of working with the group that has the most impact in terms of secondary victimisation, and which ideally will be most responsive to the workshop approach.

Rozan's model of a self-awareness focus within the workshop curriculum is useful. It enables participants who would otherwise be distant, defensive and closed to settle into the workshop paradigm and open up in a manner that is conducive to change.

Seeing men as 'essential partners' is a critical element of Rozan's work. Incorporating men as partners in the solution to VAW is seen as useful in addressing the root causes of violence.

Rozan's partnership with the police leadership, utilizing the institutions of the state, is an example of how organisations can work *with* government in order to effect change.