

Violence against Women and Girls in the Caribbean: An Intervention and Lessons Learned from Jamaica*

by

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Introduction

Violence against women and girls is a global problem that has existed throughout history and takes many forms in different regions and countries. The United Nations Population Fund reports that about 80% of women globally have experienced some form of violence at some point in their lives but the majority of cases occur in the developing countries where 60% of women have been abused, some of them to the extent of acquiring long-term disability or death (UNFPA, 2002). We have heard of the Indian Sautee, female genital mutilation in many African and Arabic countries, wife battering and other forms of spousal abuse, sexual violation of women regardless of age, forced or arranged marriages and female infanticide or abortion of female foetuses. These atrocities are just a few of all the examples of violence directed at women across the globe. Human trafficking, where women and girls are sold for sexual purposes across geographical boundaries, adds to the unending list and has become the focus of the international community.

Crime and violence is one of the major problems facing the Caribbean region today, affecting men, women and children. This adds to other development-related problems and natural disasters that affect livelihood in the region. Women, however, face a double jeopardy since they are not only targets of the general violence that affect everyone else, but also face gender-based violence which mainly targets women, in most cases in their own homes. It is not only a social issue but is also a health, economic, political, and human rights issue that needs to be addressed from these perspectives. This problem has attracted local and international communities that attempt to intervene in a variety of ways.

This paper describes the interagency campaign implemented in 1998 that specifically addressed violence against women and girls, documenting the lessons learnt and key findings of the intervention as well as some implications. The terms 'violence against women (and girls)' and 'gender-based violence' are used synonymously in this paper as in many writings on gender issues. We define gender-based violence as violence based on one's gender, which is characterised by imbalanced gender relations. Gender is a social construct ascribing feminine or masculine identity and roles to biologically determined female and male persons (Kesselman et al, 1999; Young in Mohammad and Shepherd, 1999). The power imbalance in gender relations is most evident where men and boys are attributed socially higher value than women and girls. Gender-based violence appears mostly as violence against women and girls perpetuated by men and boys, where the "aggressor is often motivated by gender considerations such as the need to reinforce male

power and privilege” (Rico, 1997: 8). The first section of the paper addresses the theoretical perspectives positing an explanation for the occurrence of gender-based violence. The next section describes the extent of the gender-based violence problem in the Jamaican context through an overview of some cases of violence against women and girls that received media attention. The main body of the paper focuses on the campaign, describing the methods used to gather information as well as the campaign process and challenges. It concludes with the lessons learned and key findings from which future interventions might benefit.

Theoretical Framework

Research has attempted to define and examine the root causes of various forms of violence from a variety of perspectives. Albert Bandura’s (1986) social learning theory (SLT) is one of the most appropriate for this study, in terms of explaining the existing violence against women in Jamaica and in predicting possible solutions to the problem. The theory pays special attention to social and environmental factors as key determinants of violence and explains human behavior in terms of a three-way, dynamic, reciprocal theory in which personal factors, environmental influences, and behaviour continually interact.

A basic premise of SLT is that people learn not only through their own experiences, but also by observing the actions of others and the results of those actions (NIH, 2003). The theory encompasses both imitation and identification to explain how people learn certain behaviours and practices through observation of others in their environment. According to Bandura people learn certain behaviours through modelling behaviour and solutions that they would learn slowly, or not at all, if they had to learn them on their own or had to pay too high a price to learn them in the actual environment (Baran & Davis, 1999; Melkote & Steeves, 2001; Severin & Tankard, 2001).

Though the theory focuses more on the role of the media, other communication channels are equally important for behaviour formation and change. In many communities in the developing world, social and community networks are equally important in transmitting values, beliefs and the social system norms. According to this theory, however, not everyone who is exposed to a particular behaviour whether through television or other sources adopts it. Rather, an important variable influencing whether learning takes place is self-efficacy, or people’s judgment of their ability to exert control over their level of functioning and events that affect their lives (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

Based on Bandura’s theory, the violence situation could be associated with the lack of self-efficacy often linked with a variety of factors, including gender inequality and the lack of skills often associated with environmental and societal factors like lack of societal support for change. To achieve self directed change, people need to be given not only the reason to alter risky habits, but also the behavioural means, resources, and social support to do so. It will require certain skills in self-motivation and self-guidance (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Programmes that are designed to eliminate any forms of violence against women and girls and other forms of gender-based violence should therefore be focused on developing such skills among key stakeholders as a means to an end.

Bandura's theory encompasses imitation and identification to explain how people learn certain behaviors and practices through observation of others in their environment, with the media being a part of that process and environment. The social learning theory emphasizes the media's role in the learning process and development of schemas, though how people react to media exposure to violence is not universal (Bandura & Walters, 1967). The theory addresses three main effects of observation of models: modeling effects; inhibitory and disinhibitory effects; and eliciting effects, where people behave in certain ways based on certain expectations and incentives that determine behavior (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy or the ability to exercise self-control is a key tenet in Bandura's theory. Signorielli (2005), whose violence and media research focuses on further development of Bandura's theory, points out that modeling may take place at an abstract, as well as behavior level with schemas and scripts that may evolve into more innovative behavior. This implies the differences in response to exposure to violence where self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining the abstract level in which modeling occurs.

Feminist Perspectives on Violence against Women

Feminists, scholars, researchers, and women's health and rights activists examine the issue of violence against women and its impact on women from different theoretical perspectives over several decades. Until recently, a common view among the general public on rape and other forms of violence against women is that they are committed by a few demented men of lower intelligence who have uncontrollable impulses, or are sick or in some pathological situation (Lindsey, 1997, Meyers, 1997). In reality, however, less than 5 percent of rapists are judged to be psychotic at the time of the rape (Lindsey, 1997).

The interactions between patriarchy or male dominance in societies and biological factors as key contributors to violence against women have been well documented in gender and feminist studies. Biological determinism theorists associate violence to testosterone and physical power thus explaining why males are more prone to instigating violence against women (Humm, 1989; Wood, 2001). The theory links human genes to people's appearance, behavior, and long-term fate, irrespective of environmental and social factors.

Feminist scholars have however gone beyond biological explanations to include social and cultural factors as key contributors of violence against women. Nancy Chodorow (2002) for example sees a complex link between violence/aggression and gender, arguing that violence is tied in some way to nationalism and its equivalents (tribal, ethnic, racial) witnessed throughout history. She argues that extreme cultural violence and aggression is associated with psychodynamic situations where certain behaviors such as rape, killing and torture are to some extent linked to paranoid-schizoid interchanges in the perpetrators mind, but also by the cultural ideologies, that justify such behavior.

Like many feminists, Chodorow sees patriarchy as involving alliances and hierarchies among men that enable and reinforce dominance over women. Lindsey (1997) supports this view arguing that rape is a behavior learned by men through interaction with others, which is consistent in critical ways with socialization into masculinity. Citing Russell and Vandevan (1976:261) Lindsey wrote, "...being aggressive is masculine; being

sexually aggressive is masculine; rape is sexually aggressive behavior; therefore rape is masculine behavior." Such behavior reestablishes traditional male dominance and symbolically puts women back in their place. The international community, for example, has included the issue of male empowerment and involvement in reproductive health on the international conference agenda since the 1994 Cairo conference.

In recent years there has been recognition that violence against women can only be eliminated through involvement of men. Bell Hooks (2004) observes that feminists' and other activists' work calling attention to male violence against women, has helped create a climate where the issues of physical abuse by loved ones can be freely addressed, especially sexual abuse within families. Among the activists is Jackson Katz, a male anti-violence educator, whose focus is on emphasizing the interaction between media and society in relation to violence against women. Katz associates violence against women to the way society raises its boys, in many ways glorifying sexually aggressive masculinity and normalizing the degradation and objectification of women. This, he argues, is exhibited by various forms of misogynic media productions, including music and videos in the entertainment industry and the growing presence of pornography, all of which demonstrate male dominance (Katz & Jhally 2000). Katz (2003) also argues that physical size and strength and the ability to use violence successfully remains one of the areas that masculine power is attainable, particularly among men who experience unsettling changes in their lives. He uses the concept "masculinities" to describe more adequately the complexities of male social position, identity, and experience.

Against these theoretical perspectives, it is important to look at the impact of media coverage on violence against women in the Jamaican media. This study examines the nature of media coverage of sexual violence against women and girls in Jamaica and the impact it has on women's life in general.

Study Context

Jamaica, an English-speaking Caribbean island, is one of the most beautiful places on the face of the earth, but is also notorious for violence. After 23 people died in less than a week in Western Kingston in July 2001, the international media described Kingston as the "murder capital of the world" (Williams, 2002). In September 2003, seven people were killed in the Mandeville area, central Jamaica, within 24 hours, which pushed the total to 634 murders between January and September 2003 (Gleaner, September 3, 2003).

Violence in this beautiful island takes many forms - political, gang, drug, domestic, interpersonal, sexual and youth. Though most of criminal activities are associated with drug use and abuse, there is a great amount of it, including rape, domestic violence, sexual assault, and incest, that are gender specific, manifested and directed toward women, particularly younger women and minors (Ffolkes, 1997; Lewis-Garraway, 2002; Walker & Gill, 2000). Data from the Kingston Crisis Center, for instance, indicate that in 1998 alone, 3,844 women sought help from the center due to some form of violence against them. This included 109 rapes, 58 incest and 1037 domestic violence cases.

Crime and violence-related stories saturate the local Jamaican media on a daily basis, causing fear, anxiety and public concern. Women's organizations island-wide continue to address the problem in many ways, some raising media awareness and sensitivity to gender issues. For example, Women's Media Watch has tirelessly continued to critique and sensitize the media on various gender issues focusing on gender-based violence. A commendable effort is from the Sistren Theatre Collective, who have recently published an edited volume which "chart the terms of resistance in women's daily lives" with "stories also revealing the extent of male violence in the household" (Sistren with Honor Ford-Smith, 2005). Such efforts have resulted in the wide coverage of gender issues in the Caribbean media, as seen today in Jamaica.

Gender based violence involving domestic violence, murder and rape, including incest and other sexual crimes, has particularly received much media attention, with reports on several serious cases where women have been severely brutalized in domestic violence incidents. An example of such violence was the case of Wilfred Rhoden, a Taxi driver, who went on a bizarre chopping rampage against his family with a machete, after his common law wife threatened to leave him. Rhoden severely injured his six and 11-year old daughters and chopped off the hands and other body parts of his wife and 16-year-old stepdaughter. He then attempted to hang himself but this mission was unaccomplished (Jamaica Gleaner, December 16, 2003). Several such cases are common island-wide, where women in failed relationships are mutilated with a machete, a traditional farming tool, converted into an injury and murder weapon. Sexual violence, however, seems to have taken a lead in recent years. According to police reports, there were 4,215 reported cases of sexual violence between 1998 and 2002, and 931 reported cases in 2003 alone (The Gleaner, July 25, 2004).

Based on recently reported cases, children are an easy prey for sexual predators. Rape of young school girls, often accompanied by murder, seems to have taken precedence in the recent years as indicated in several media reports. One of the most horrifying stories reported recently was the rape and murder of Shaneika Anderson, a six-year-old girl, whose body was found in the bushes in Rae Town, east Kingston on Sunday, May 1, 2005. The Gleaner (May 4, 2005) reported that Shaneika was with her mother at the Coronation market the day before, where she did vending, but she wandered away in the company of a little boy. The boy came back alone while Shaneika's body was found the following day. Exactly two months later, the media reported the double rape and murder of nine-year old Shanika Shakes and her friend eight-year old Shauna-Kay Ledgester. The two girls were killed as they walked to school together, only a short distance from home, and their bodies dumped in a sugarcane field. The Jamaican Gleaner (July 1st, 2005) reported that the culprit, who was later killed by the mob that was searching for the two missing girls, was a repeat sex offender having being convicted and released for similar crimes on several occasions.

Children walking to and from school or at home alone, stand a greater risk of this form of violence from strangers. This becomes a major challenge in a country with no school bus system to pick up and drop off children at school. Yet, use of public transportation is equally dangerous. After 12-year old Janealle Brair was abducted, raped and killed

on her way from school, Rev. Devon Dick, in his regular column in the *Gleaner* noted that there were actually many men who will rape and murder 12-year-old girls just like Janealle, including many caregivers who molest children in their own homes (*The Gleaner*, July 29, 2003). An example of this situation was reported in the *X-News* (May 14, 2003) and other electronic media, where a 41-year-old man allegedly raped a 9-year old girl. The man had found the girl standing outside her parents' house, called her and asked her to follow him. When the girl refused, he dragged her into a secluded area where he sexually abused her. The alleged perpetrator was released on bail awaiting investigations. This process could take several months or years, leaving him and other sex offenders to roam around freely in communities.

As if rape and other physical violence are not damaging enough for young girls, incest is another major problem that continues to terrorize many of them in their own homes. The situation worsens when violence comes from individuals they know and trust, as in this particular case. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2005) indicates that out of 517 rape cases reported in 2004, 33 of them were incest cases, whereas 409 were categorized as statutory rape. The nature of incest itself however inhibits reporting to the police or other form of authority, which probably explains the low incest figures compared to other sexual assault cases.

Sexual violence is a much broader problem that affects women within the private and public sphere compared to domestic violence that occurs mainly in private. Sexual assaults have been reported among women of all lifestyles, leaving many fearful of being victimized regardless of their age, family background, social or economic status or other demographics. The media coverage in Jamaica, however, seems to focus more on poor, young, black women and children, thus painting the picture that women of higher economic status and those from ethnicities are risk free.

Violence against women is a complex problem that cannot be attributed to a single cause. Some risk factors outlined by a variety of studies such as alcohol and drug abuse, poverty, and childhood witnessing of or experiencing violence, have been identified as contributors to the incidence and severity of violence (PAHO, 2003). The extent of gender-based violence is attributed in some studies to the brutality traced all the way back to slavery, when slaves resisted the intolerable conditions imposed upon them (UNDP, 1999). This violence, however, is unidirectional where males are only abused by fellow males and is sometimes particularly associated with homophobia, which has led to physical violence and death of many Jamaican men. This type of violence, however, receives little attention or activism locally, due to its links to homosexuality, which is illegal. Overall, it is a multi-causal problem influenced by social, economic, psychological, legal, cultural and biological factors (PAHO, 2003).

Impact of Gender-based Violence

Violence against women (VAW) includes many kinds of harmful physical, emotional and sexual behaviours against women and girls that are most often carried out by family members, but also at times by strangers. In 1993, the United Nations General

Assembly defined violence against women as, “any acts of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (PAHO, 2003: 4, United Nations, 2005). Research across the globe indicates that the great majority of perpetrators of violence are men, most often men they know, and that men who batter their partners exhibit profound controlling behaviour. Furthermore, this violence cuts across socioeconomic class and religious and ethnic lines (Heise, Ellsberg and Gottermoeller, 1999, PAHO, 2003).

The UN definition places VAW within the context of gender inequity as acts that women suffer because of their subordinate social status with regard to men (PAHO, 2003). Since the early 90s public health and social development professionals, feminists, scholars as well as women’s health advocates have all been concerned about the communication, equality and power in sexual relationships among men and women, particularly in relation to gender and sexual violence.

The international concern was reflected in goal 3 of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) that addresses gender equity and empowerment as a step toward global development with the recognition of violence against women not only as a health issue, but a development one, affecting the family’s social and economic well-being. Such violence against women impairs development and carries a heavy human and economic cost. For example, when a woman is hospitalised out of physical or psychological abuse there are several direct unavoidable implications to their families.

The acts of violence committed against women have several negative health implications, which include depression, anxiety, gynaecological problems, and pregnancy complications including foetal loss. The widespread occurrence of such consequences has led to the declaration of gender-based violence as a public health concern, which needs to be dealt with in that context (PAHO, 2003; PC, 2001). Similarly, sexual violence has a multitude of negative effects on women’s reproductive and sexual health, which most often affect their physical and mental well-being. It has been associated with reproductive health risks and problems, chronic ailments, psychological consequences, injury and death (Heise, Ellsberg and Gottermoeller, 1999). Furthermore, even the fear of sexual abuse may inhibit women from refusing unwanted sex or from raising the issue of contraception or condom use, leaving women and girls at risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Link to HIV/AIDS

Today, the HIV/AIDS phenomenon has led to the urgency of addressing issues of power and sexual relations between men and women. It is evident that when gender-based power inequalities hinder communication between sexual partners, as in the case of sexual violence situations, there is a greater chance of transmission of STIs including HIV/AIDS. In such cases the victims often fail to utilize available health services. In the Caribbean, HIV/AIDS is now labelled a woman’s disease. Data from the Ministry of Health as well as the National AIDS committee (NAC, 2004) indicate that the rate of new HIV infection in

women was increasing steadily in Jamaica more than in men. In fact, based on the current figures, the infection among women had gone up from 41.1 %in 2002 to 45.8% compared to 58.6% to 54.2% among men in the same year. Though no research has been conducted to scientifically link gender based violence to HIV infection in the Caribbean, the close connection between sexual violence and risk of infection due to unprotected sex and internal lacerations requires little scientific explanations.

Studies suggest the first sexual experience of girls is often forced and that women are two to four times more likely to contract HIV during unprotected vaginal intercourse than men, both because their sexual physiology places them at higher risk of injury (especially in the case of young women) and because they are more likely to be at the receiving end of violent or coerced sexual intercourse (UNAIDS, 2004) . When rape occurs, for example, both the offender and the victim are at risk of contracting the AIDS virus but the biological nature of women puts them in a riskier position.

A Human Rights Issue

Violence against women is also a fundamental violation of human rights. As the UN (2005) points out, the causes and consequences of violence against women are integrally linked to longstanding gender inequalities that restrict women's full enjoyment of their human rights. The 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference publicly ended the silence by focusing attention on how gender influences sexual relations and reproductive health decision-making. Participants of the Beijing Conference adopted a resolution condemning sexual coercion (PC, 2001). This resolution was initiated prior to the Cairo Conference that declared sexual and reproductive rights as human rights, urging nations internationally, to respect and protect them. After the Cairo Conference, for example, the UNFPA expanded the scope of work to include women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, education and women's empowerment, equity and equality.

With the international consensus on the elimination of all forms of violence against women, governments have acknowledged that it is their duty to work for its elimination in all spheres of life. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 pays special attention to gender-based violence defining what constituted discrimination against women. CEDAW has been ratified by the Caribbean governments including Jamaica. However, the UN argues, there has been little progress made, in spite of the wide recognition of the need for governments to take action. Such laxity is associated with the failure to consider the seriousness of the crime, compared to other crimes and problems facing the countries, as in the case of Jamaica, as well as inadequate resources devoted to combat it. Both of these factors apply in the Jamaican situation where the bulk of work is left to the local non-governmental and community-based organizations to address violence against women, with support from the international community.

Research Question

As noted above this paper describes the inter-agency campaign carried out through a collaboration of local women's organizations in Jamaica with support from the international communities operating in the region. The paper attempts to answer questions related to the process of bringing women's organizations together, pooling their resources for the same cause. The main questions however that we focus on is what was learned from that process and the overall project that others could learn from. We also hope that through the documentation of this project, the efforts of the women in Jamaica can be shared with others in the Caribbean and with the rest of the world.

Methods

This is a qualitative study that sought to gather information on the inter-agency campaign, an intervention to address violence against women and girls in Jamaica. Based on the nature of the study, the authors decided to use a combination of qualitative methodologies. As Caroline Allen (1997) argues, "qualitative research is more appropriate to questions of why and how and it emphasizes the inner world of the values which motivate human behavior" (p.270). Similarly, Conquergood (1991) argues, "ethnographic rigor, disciplinary authority and professional reputation are established by the length of time, depth of commitment and risks (bodily, physical, and emotional) taken in order to acquire cultural understanding" (p.180).

Information gathering was conducted in three phases using a variety of methods. Methods used included review of project documents, focus group discussions with project beneficiaries and in-depth interviews with key informants. The first part of the evaluation was spent reviewing the project documents which included project proposals, minutes from various planning meetings, correspondence in the form of letters and email, workshop reports, activity progress reports from various agencies, as well as financial reports submitted to funding agencies through the project coordinating unit. This phase of the research was also spent identifying key informants for in-depth interviews some of whom were identified in the documents.

In-depth interviews were conducted among 25 participants who provided detailed information on the project from conception to implementation with each interview lasting for a minimum of two hours. These participants were purposively selected based on their participation in the campaign. A snowball method was also used after the initial identification of key informants. The informants also included few purposively selected respondents who were actively involved in gender related issues through research or activism against violence against women.

The focus groups were conducted among the identified beneficiaries. Five focus groups were planned but only three were conducted among girls at the Women's Center in St Andrew, trainee officers of the police constabulary force and women and men of one urban inner city community. Focus groups were conducted concurrently with the in-depth interviews. These were selected to provide some professional insights into the current

situation on violence against women and girls in Jamaica and offer recommendations on the possible strategies for its elimination.

Description of the Inter-Agency Intervention

The Inter-Agency Campaign that addressed violence against women and girls in Jamaica was launched in November 1998 initially planned as a 2-year project to end in 2000. Implemented in response to the increasing violence being experienced by women and girls, the campaign brought together local organizations that were working against violence against women in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, with the international donor agencies in the region to collaboratively fight the growing problem in Jamaica. This Jamaican campaign was preceded by and therefore a follow-up to a regional and sub-regional campaign that ended a year prior to the Jamaican one.

Goals and Objectives

With the recognition of violence against women as a developmental problem and in view of the development goals of the international community, the campaign identified a developmental goal. This was to seek the promotion of women as valuable partners in life, in development of society, in the process of democratic governance and towards the advancement of a culture of non-violence and respect for universal human rights.

The overall campaign objective was to promote an environment in which women and girls can live a life free of violence and be recognized as valuable partners in life, the development of society, the process of democratic governance and in the advancement of a culture of non-violence and respect for universal human rights. This would be achieved through raising awareness and increasing sensitivity on violence against women and girls in Jamaica and its deleterious effects on society with regard to social as well as economic costs, in order to promote an environment where women and girls have alternatives - to live a life free of violence. As noted in the project documents, the specific campaign objectives included to:

- conduct gender sensitivity training workshops and seminars on gender-based violence
- increase the general public's awareness of, and sensitivity to the problem of violence against women
- increase the public's access to information (printed and via the electronic media) on violence against women
- mobilize public support for initiatives to combat the problem of violence against women
- mobilize the media community to highlight the issues of violence against women and to encourage sensitive coverage of the issue

The campaign theme "It's time to break free of violence" sought to empower women and girls against the various forms of violence against them as a step toward individual and societal gender empowerment.

Planning and Coordination

The campaign was envisioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Jamaica through the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ). UNDP however took the lead seeking collaboration of the international funding agencies in the Caribbean to create an opportunity for meaningful contribution in the fight against violence against women. This vision was turned into reality in the Campaign. The international agencies that partnered with UNDP in this effort included: United Nations Fund for Women and Development (UNIFEM), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), and the Government of Netherlands through the Royal Netherlands embassy in the Caribbean. These organizations provided financial support to the UNDP for distribution to the implementing agencies.

Coordinated by the Association of Women's Organizations in Jamaica (AWOJA), the campaign was implemented by seven local agencies - AWOJA, Sistren Theatre Collective, Woman Inc, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, The University of the West Indies' Centre for Gender and Development Studies, the Bureau of Women's Affairs, Fathers Inc. and Teens in Action. The group felt that they collectively were well aware of the needs and the gaps in the already existing programmes, as well as some of the examples of best practices in the Island. Using a participatory approach, the UNDP invited these agencies to participate and therefore partner in this intervention. The agencies were selected based on their visible role in the fight against gender-based violence in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

With several funding and implementation agencies working together for the same cause, it was imperative to have proper coordination. As the umbrella association for the non-governmental women's organizations, AWOJA had already been playing a coordinating role in activities such as the International Day against Violence against Women held November 25th in Jamaica. It was therefore the most appropriate organization to play the coordinating role in the Inter-Agency Campaign. As an umbrella organization, AWOJA is made up of members from other women's organizations, most of which participated in the campaign.

Fathers Inc., the only men's agency participating in the campaign, was supposed to focus on male empowerment in Jamaica. Although they ended up not participating, it is to be noted that this is a critical component in gender equity and empowerment as indicated in the 1994 Cairo plan of action that recognised men as partners in women's reproductive health. The agency had previously participated in violence prevention projects, prior to the participation in the campaign. The project, supported through the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), focused on violence prevention among young boys and girls. Similarly, Teens in Action (TIN) was selected because of their focus on youth. The participation of these agencies indicated the critical role involving various segments of the population, as crucial partners in the fight against violence against women and girls.

The Participatory Approach Process

Under the coordination of UNDP, funding and implementation agencies met to discuss project objectives and to prioritize key targets where an urgent intervention was necessary. It was felt that though several agencies were already involved in a variety of activities, what Jamaica really wanted was to prioritise tasks and work together for the achievement of the same goals. The participating groups felt that they collectively were well aware of the needs and the gaps in already existing programmes, as well as some of the examples of best practices in Island. However, they lacked financial support to carry out most of their planned activities.

Though the general public, it was hoped, would benefit from the campaign, the project had specific publics that were targeted as crucial stakeholders. The identified groups included:

Lawmakers and keepers — Police force, Judges and other members of the judiciary

Teenagers in selected high schools and in government homes of safety in urban, inner-city and rural communities

Women and men in selected inner city and rural communities

Media workers

Health workers

Household workers

Parliamentarians

Church communities specifically ministers of religion in major and Para-church communities

The campaign sought to sensitize these stakeholders, among other publics, on gender and violence-related issues and to equip them with useful tools in understanding, among other subjects, legislative and policy changes at national and international levels in the context of violence. Importantly, this campaign strove to create spaces and support for women's organizations to understand and discuss the fundamental principles of human rights, which grants each and every person the right to a life free of violence.

Strategies for the Campaign Objectives

The campaign implemented several strategies to address each of these segments of society, with the goal of sensitising and heightening awareness on violence against women and girls in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. The campaign strategies and activities were prioritized through a series of meetings among all agencies involved, and included a media campaign that would increase the public awareness and sensitize them on various issues related to violence against women and girls to hold the interest of the public for at least the duration of the yearlong campaign. There were also a series of workshops designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase awareness and usage of new tools by media workers to bring about a shift in the present general media reporting of items concerning women and girls, especially reporting gender-based violence.
- Increase sensitivity of the Jamaica Constabulary Force and trainees in order to ensure that acts of violence against women and girls are minimized through their intervention and response as well as to ensure enhanced delivery of services to women and girls who have violence and abuse meted out to them.
- Sharpen awareness and sensitivity of those who dispense justice at various levels, thereby enhancing the delivery of services to women and girls who have been victims of violence and abuse
- Sharpen awareness and sensitivity of men and women working in the health sector at various levels so enhancing delivery of services to women and girls who have been victims of violence and abuse
- Sharpen awareness of and sensitisation to issues related to violence against women and girls in selected Inner-City/Rural Communities
- Sharpen awareness of and sensitization to issues related to violence against women and girls in selected secondary and high schools both in the rural and corporate area. Targeting girls and boys (ages 11-18) to build their self-esteem and decision-making ability in relation to their choices in life.
- Sharpen awareness of and sensitization to issues related to violence against women and girls in selected homes of safety both in the rural and corporate area. Targeting girls (11-18) to build their self-esteem and decision-making abilities to their choices in life.

(Source, CIDA Evaluation Document)

The selected activities were based on the expertise of the participating women's organizations. For instance, Sistren Theatre Collective used drama to address violence against women in the inner city while Teens in Action focused on younger adults in the schools and in rural and metropolitan communities across Jamaica. Women's Media Watch, on the other hand, used workshops to reach the media personnel and other stakeholders, and Woman Inc. used similar strategies to reach the lawmakers. The variety of strategies and activities implemented to achieve the objectives were ideal for a multisectoral effort in addressing the magnitude of the violence problem in Jamaica.

The plan was to have a campaign with various activities, all coordinated by AWOJA. A framework was, however, developed that laid out the roles and responsibilities of each agency, each of them contributing in their areas of expertise. Once priorities and campaign objectives were set with a list of activities to carry them out, funding agencies selected their priority activities for financial support.

Campaign Evaluation

Evaluation of every intervention is a critical component in its success and that of future interventions. Formative, process and summative evaluations are all necessary parts of the process. Respondents, however, indicated that no formative evaluation was conducted. However, the project relied on a UNDP supported study on the status of women in Jamaica conducted under the coordination of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies (CGDS), of the University of the West Indies. The study provided basic information on violence against women addressing what was considered the root causes that needed attention.

The process evaluation did not receive much attention. Participating agencies raised concerns about the lack of guidance particularly from the coordinating agencies, UNDP and AWOJA. This lack of evaluation and therefore failure to support the agencies' efforts early in the process, led to challenges in financial reporting and timely carrying out of the planned activities. Without a proper feedback mechanism, the implementing agencies were not able to raise their concerns about the delayed disbursement of funds, which, respondents argued, delayed the project implementation.

The inter-agency intervention did have a final project evaluation listed as part of the project activities, with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies (CGDS) as the agency responsible for the activity at the end of the 2-year campaign. CGDS, however, indicated that this was never communicated to them. This was seen as another problem with the project coordination and a breakdown in the communication process. The change in coordinating agencies could have played a role in this gap. Nevertheless, an outcome evaluation was conducted three years after the campaign, with financial support from CIDA. The evaluation only addressed components that CIDA supported — the media campaign and workshops for media workers, health workers, lawmakers and among girls in government homes of security. This was a small evaluation conducted with leftover funds from the campaign activities not carried out in the original campaign, as initially planned.

Fathers Inc. was selected based on their role in reaching men at various levels. However, this agency ended up as one of the collaborating agencies, working closely with Sistren Theatre Collective in some of the workshops. Teens in Action also collaborated with Sistren Theatre Collective and with the Bureau of Women's Affairs in the second part of the campaign.

It was noted that several of the gender-based organizations had requested funding from various international agencies to carry out violence against women programmes in their work projects. With the birth of a joint project, they were invited to align their proposals to the new campaign objectives and re-submit them. The International agencies, through the coordination of UNDP, were able to pool resources issued to individual agencies, but within the context of the inter-agency collaborative effort. They would all be accountable to the coordinating agency, which would report to the UNDP, the manager and broker the available funds. The agencies also agreed to share their own human and material resources such as for catering and documentation.

Expected Outcomes

- An increase in the responsiveness of judges and the police in relation to the Domestic Violence Act, to be achieved through capacity building and sensitization.
- An enhancement in the delivery of services to women and girls who were victims of violence and abuse, by sharpening the awareness and sensitivity on the part of those who dispense justice and other services at various levels.
- An increase in the level of consciousness on the part of the Police force, of violence against women and girls as a human rights issue, and on their role in ensuring that acts of violence against women and girls are minimized through this intervention and response.
- An increase in the sensitization of the police force to laws that deal with violence against women and in ensuring that these laws are enforced where necessary.
- An increase in the awareness of the causes of sexual violence and domestic violence against women and girls, and of the link that exists between media images and violence against women and girls. The process can be greatly assisted by a change of approach to the reporting of news by media workers.
- An increase in knowledge (among teenagers in selected schools and government homes of safety, as well as men, women and children in selected rural and inner-city communities) of tools, strategies and alternatives at their disposal for dealing with violence against them, their family members and/or colleagues.
- To strengthen opportunities for networking amongst women in NGOs and increase potential for sustainability through the exchange of expertise and information.

Whereas the implementing agencies had the campaign activities assigned with expected outputs, the collaborating agencies were either subcontracted by the implementing agencies or the coordinating unit, or worked collaboratively with the implementing agencies on the same activities to achieve the campaign objectives. For example, Teens in Action supported the Sistren Theatre Collective whereby the latter focused more on the older population, while the former focused on the younger population. Bureau of Women's Affairs also contracted Teens in Action in some of the activities that were carried out in the rural communities particularly in the second phase of the project. Out of the several collaborating agencies mentioned above, however, only Teens in Action ended up participating in the campaign as initially planned.

The Campaign was implemented between November 1998 and November 2001. It was planned initially for only one year from November 25, 1998 to October 31, 1999. As the campaign's coordinating unit, AWOJA would ensure the smooth running of the campaign activities to avoid duplication of efforts. They were also responsible for disbursing the funds paid by various sponsors, to the implementing member organizations for the campaign activities.

Challenges to the Participatory Approach

A participatory approach applied in the campaign, involving several organizations with the same goal, is ideal in addressing a problem of this nature. The strategy is ideal, particularly where resources are limited. In the Caribbean, the scarcity of financial and human resources call for pulling together what is available in addressing some critical issues in the region. Most of the agencies had applied for smaller grants to carry out their activities, some without success, the funding agencies pulling together to support the bigger effort was greatly welcomed by the agencies. As respondents to this study indicated, the contributions of the funding agencies boosted their regular activities in the fight against violence through financial support, noting that they did not have to start new activities.

Proper coordination is also critical in the effectiveness of such an intervention. Though the project was implemented in 1998 as a one-year campaign, it was suspended in September 1999 due to coordination problems. The UNDP, which was in charge of financial coordination dealing directly with the funding agencies, conducted an internal audit that led to the change in coordination. Financial problems, lack of activity and financial reporting, and other implementation challenges, led to the change in the coordinating unit from AWOJA to the Bureau of Women's Affairs (BWA), which took over the campaign coordination until the end of the project.

Under the new coordination by the BWA, campaign activities resumed for an intended 3-month period from November 2000. All the remaining activities and resources were consolidated with the approval of the UNDP and other funding agencies. With the new extension, the campaign was scheduled to end in January 2001, however, BWA negotiated with UNDP to delay final activities to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (IDEVAW) on November 25th 2001, a day in which women's organizations are actively involved

Study participants, noted that critical challenges with the new coordination were related to the process. Implementing agencies for example were apprehensive about BWA's coordination since it was a government agency. The fact that all other organizations were non-governmental and therefore run by volunteers while BWA was run by government employees was a critical issue in the new coordination. Through the activities were smoothly run during the second phase, the implementing agencies felt they were policed to complete their assigned roles and activities, which were tied to the funding support. This approach, as indicated by respondents, not only de-motivated the volunteers who worked tirelessly in the planned activities, volunteering time and efforts for good cause. The majority of the participants felt that BWA's role success was at the expense of the relationships among volunteer members and agencies who now had to mechanically work toward achieving the objectives and interests of the government and funding agencies.

This mechanical approach was also criticised by the smaller and younger NGOs that lacked the capacity to document or conduct financial accounting. Rather than the funding and coordinating agencies supporting that need, the NGOs felt overwhelmed and pushed beyond their means. This was however not a uniform problem across all agencies.

The Women's Media Watch for example was cited among those that had good capacity and therefore kept up with the activities, whereas Father's inc experienced challenges with activity implementation and financial accounting due to lack of professionally trained human resources.

Key Findings and Lessons learned from the campaign

The inter-agency initiative was an intervention that attempted to address a critical problem in the Caribbean. However, as demonstrated in the media reports used in this paper, the magnitude of violence against women and girls in Jamaica has not receded since the campaign. Instead, the study participants raised concerns that the problem seems to have intensified with victims of violence, particularly victims of sexual violence are becoming younger. This is demonstrated with the media reports used in this paper, where girls as young as six years are sexually molested. Physical violence and other forms of violence against women are also widely observed, raising concerns from advocates locally and internationally.

The International agencies, for example, have continued to support interventions and research to help explain the root causes and possible solutions to the problem. An example of such studies was recently conducted by CGDS, funded by CIDA. Other agencies including UNIFEM, UNDP, other UN agencies and the World Association of Christian Association (WACC) have continued to support such interventions. WACC, for instance, supports gender empowerment programs and specifically the role of media in addressing gender-related issues as part of development.

Though the resources are scarce, the women's organizations have continued to intervene on the current trends, some of them with no financial support either from the government or international community. There are several lessons to be learned from the inter-agency campaign that participants from the women's organizations interviewed brought forward. These are lessons that other interventions might benefit from, should they use the same approach. An important lesson that all respondents pointed out was the importance of a collaborative effort of the various agencies at all levels in the fight against violence against women.

This effort needs a structure or framework that outlines each agency's role and responsibilities. Though a general overview was drafted prior to the campaign, a more specific outline, indicating each organizations role in relation to others, is necessary. It was noted, for example, that several agencies developed and distributed campaign material, but some were also developed prior to the campaign and did not have the same theme or message as the newer ones.

The campaign left out several agencies whose role was overtly absent. For example, as a communication campaign, communications organizations including the media or training institutions were not involved. Without media support, the campaign did not receive additional support outside of the funding agency's support. One of the complaints raised by the participants therefore was the lack of adequate funding for the media campaign.

Research is critical in the planning and implementation of any communication campaign in order to identify the key issues as well as key stakeholders and the role of each one of them. Not all NGOs have equal capacity to deal with all the identified issues. The study the CGDS coordinated provided the basic information on the Caribbean situation but was not used as part of the campaign. The study, for instance, was completed in 1999 and an executive summary submitted to the women's organizations, but it was not part of the inter-agency campaign. A collaborative effort between agencies would ensure a closer link between research and practice, a gap that exists in the current interventions that attempt to address critical issues like violence against women. The collaboration between academic and professional organizations was recommended as a contributor towards finding a solution toward this gap

Similarly, given the widespread nature of violence in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, participants noted the need to address the broader context. As noted by two participants whose focus was on violence prevention, violence against women has to be addressed in context, not as one small component of the problems facing the Caribbean. By involving the wider system, be it government or other agencies with the powers to address the problem, women's organizations would have a back-up for their smaller interventions which do not seem to make much impact when you examine the broader picture.

The participatory approach applied in the inter-agency campaign, though a good idea, would only work effectively if communities become involved at the grassroots level. An interesting observation was, however, made from the interviews that women also play a role in instigating violence. As noted by one participant, women have hidden guns under their skirts or hide the criminals under their beds. These are the same people that hurt them and others in their communities. It was also noted the women's organizations have the grassroots power to form and motivate a movement against gender-based violence. Various respondents, who had explored the role of social movements in addressing critical gender issues globally, supported this idea.

The short one-year campaign was too short for addressing the magnitude of the violence problem in Jamaica. Nonetheless, it was found to be a good start and to attract the attention of key stakeholders including lawmakers, schools, community and religious organizations and other social institutions that have the responsibility to address the problem. However, three years after the campaign ended, no other outside organizations have demonstrated support for the intervention. The government, media, the private sector and other agencies that did not contribute in the initial stages did not come forward after the end of the campaign. This lack of support could be attributed to the negative media image portrayed when the campaign experienced problems. The positive image was never painted when things got back to normal. One observation noted by all respondents was that the media coverage of violence against women had increased tremendously after the campaign launch. This increased is still evident to this day, but a few respondents questioned its impact on the crime situation.

A key lesson learned is the importance of involving men in any intervention that addresses gender-based violence. An attempt to do so was the involvement of the Fathers Inc., but respondents felt this was not adequate. Though several workshops targeted men as beneficiaries - lawmakers, religious ministers, youth and men in the communities, etc - the facilitators were mostly women. Respondents from the focus groups and interviews noted that having men participate equally would have made a difference in the workshops.

In regard to the campaign itself, professionalism is needed within the NGO community. This was pointed out as an important factor in the success of any intervention they undertake. Internal problems that arose from the project coordination, some relating to personal differences, led to stoppage of the intervention and at a critical time. An interesting point raised regarding problems experienced in the first part of the campaign was about women working together. One respondent for instance, noted that women in the Caribbean could not work together in a major project. However, several other respondents noted that this was not the issue but the fact that many NGOs in the region rely on volunteers who are pressured for time and resources. The pressure from the funding agencies to produce deliverables and demonstrate the implementation of planned activities contributed to the challenges that the NGOs faced. Many respondents questioned the role of the funding agencies and if the outcome would have been different had the process been initiated by the NGOs themselves.

Conclusion

Two recommendations are presented for the conclusion. Firstly, that documentation, especially of best practices, is obligatory in such campaigns, as well as the recording of areas of breakdown so that future advocates and behaviour change agents will know what strategies to replicate and which pitfalls to avoid. Second, proper planning and project implementation is necessary for any intervention particularly if more than one agency is involved. The inter-agency campaign addressing violence against women demonstrated the need for pooling resources to address critical issues that are faced in the Caribbean, and the importance of a participatory approach in addressing these issues. However, when more than one agency is involved, proper planning and project implementation is crucial. Using a theory-based behaviour change communication strategy is appropriate for planning and designing programmes that address violence against women and other social and behavioural problems that require community involvement at various levels. Integral to such a model is proper monitoring and evaluation of any intervention at various stages of implementation - before, during and after implementation.

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