

A toolkit to contribute to gender-just and violence-free societies

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) impacts one in three women worldwide.¹ This impact surfaced through the millions of tweets with personal stories shared around #MeToo. These statistics are saddening. During the COVID-19 pandemic young people feel more vulnerable to SGBV.² Violence against women has been exacerbated.³ Measures such as lockdowns, curfews and other restrictions intended to save lives, unintentionally exposed women to violence, as SGBV is most often perpetrated inside the home by an intimate partner.⁴

Rutgers' definition of the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA):

A gender-transformative approach actively strives to examine, question, and change rigid gender norms and imbalances of power into inclusive and positive ones.

Rutgers has used its experience in preventing and addressing SGBV to develop and work with a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA). This approach addresses the root causes of SGBV and other harmful practices because for many people, restrictive gender norms and imbalances in power prevent access to sexual and reproductive health care and information and thus harm the health and rights of young people, women and people with diverse gender identities, as well as men.

Without changing existing harmful gender norms and values that tolerate, justify and legitimize violent behaviour, it will be hard, if not impossible, to prevent and end SGBV. The goal of this type of approach is therefore to transform harmful gender norms and power dynamics into positive and inclusive ones, contributing to gender justice and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all and preventing and ending SGBV. And it works: evidence shows that programmes and training that include a gender and power perspective are substantially more effective.^{5,6} Explicitly addressing harmful norms and power inequalities has resulted in improved SRHR services,⁷ more impactful sexuality education⁸ and a decrease in intimate partner violence.⁹



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The following six principles underlie our Gender Transformative Approach:

1. Using human rights as a basis for all interventions
2. Analysing and critically addressing power dynamics
3. Analysing and critically addressing rigid and harmful gender norms
4. Supporting the empowerment of women and girls
5. Using a non-binary approach to gender and including sexual and gender diversities
6. Ensuring the meaningful engagement of men and boys

Based on these six core principles Rutgers developed a (free) toolkit on its Gender Transformative Approach to support staff of SRHR and/or women's rights and gender justice organizations who facilitate learning and knowledge exchange in this field. The toolkit is a resource and a guide to support the integration of gender-transformative working into programmes and organizations. We consider it very important that the



The toolkit structure

Module 1 forms the core of Rutgers' GTA. It explains what we understand by GTA, why it is important to apply GTA to SRHR interventions and starts to explore how to do this. The module contains six chapters aligned with the six core principles. In addition to the short theoretical introduction, each chapter is followed by several sessions.

Module 2 shows how to apply the knowledge obtained in Module 1 to comprehensive sexuality education programmes.

Module 3 shows how to apply the knowledge obtained in Module 1 to programmes that focus on accessible SRHR services for youth.

Module 4 invites participants to apply a gender-transformative perspective to their (existing) advocacy strategy in the area of SRHR by providing the knowledge and skills related to this and teaching about applying these.

Module 5 is about applying GTA at the institutional level. It contains case studies and examples of the institutional changes necessary to support GTA programming in the field of SRHR and the prevention of SGBV. The cases are analysed, highlighting successes, looking at the challenges, and indicating lessons learnt and possible steps forward to make the environment more conducive to internal value transformation on gender and strengthening the capacity to apply GTA in programming.

people using the toolkit for training are experienced facilitators, with a thorough knowledge of the themes, extensive practice in experiential learning, and are sensitive to the cultural and religious context of the training participants. The toolkit provides thematic training modules that can be used to take SRHR/SGBV professionals through the process of applying GTA, step by step.

We developed five modules. Each starts with a theoretical introduction to help you prepare for the training and understand the place of each session in the broader context of GTA. Module 1 is a prerequisite to understanding and using the other modules. It is not necessary to complete all of them as they can be used independently as required.



Download the toolkit here:  www.rutgers.international/GTA

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- See 1.
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- See 5.
- See 6.