



The triangle of violence 2 h

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

WATCH AND DISCUSS

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Ideal for civil society, human rights defenders, faith leaders and decision makers. Useful for multi-stakeholder context analysis processes as it enables different actors to highlight different aspects of importance to them.

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding of FORB violations in their context, and how violations relate to different forms of violence.
- To help participants explore the ways in which religious, cultural, and social norms are used to justify both FORB violations and different kinds of violence in their context.

DESCRIPTION

A groupwork and plenary discussion exercise, exploring how physical violence, discriminatory structures in society and our ideas about 'the other' are interlinked. For use with the FORB Learning Platform's short film '[The Triangle of Violence – a tool for context analysis](#)'.



Instructions

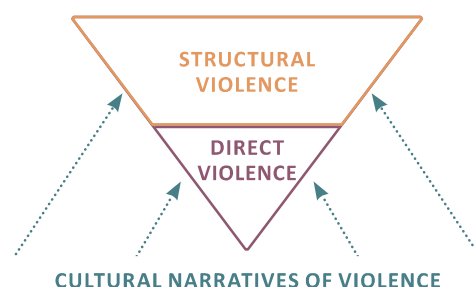
RESOURCES

- The FORB Learning Platform's short film '[The Triangle of Violence](#)'.
- A projector and screen or laptop or another device for showing the film(s).
- Pre-prepared flipchart sheets and markers for each group.
- Post-it notes in three different colours.

Find the film at www.forb-learning.org/films/practitioners-toolbox.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare flipchart sheets for each group with the diagram below.
- Prepare one or two illustrative examples of direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence from the participants' context to help them understand these concepts.
- Test the equipment you will use to screen the film in the training room ahead of time.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 14 MIN

Explain the following:

In most contexts FORB violations are linked to social conflicts. The triangle of violence is a very useful conflict analysis tool. In this exercise, we're going to look at three different kinds of violence: direct violence, structural violence and cultural narratives of violence and use them to do our own FORB context analysis.

The advantage of this approach is that it helps us reflect on the potential ways in which we contribute to or accept structural violence and cultural narratives of violence. This is empowering because it means there is something we can do about it!

First, we're going to watch a short 6-minute film together that explains these three different kinds of violence.

After showing the film, lead a brief plenary discussion to clarify key concepts by asking:

- Was there anything you didn't fully understand or want to know more about?
- Was there anything you find challenging, or hard to accept?

Use the illustrative examples that you prepared earlier to help answer any questions from participants.

TIP! It's important not to rush into the groupwork exercise without clarifying key concepts, otherwise participants might find the exercise overwhelming.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 45 MIN

• **GROUPWORK** (55 MIN)

Divide the participants into small groups and ask each group to appoint a spokesperson to present their findings to the plenary. Hand out the pre-prepared flipchart sheets, post-it notes in three different colours and marker pens to each group.

Tell the groups that their task is to brainstorm as many violations of FORB in their context as they can, starting with examples of direct violence. Tell participants to write examples of direct violence on a specific colour post-it notes and stick them to their diagram (Allow 15 min for this – less if direct violence is not common in your context).

Tell the groups to move on to brainstorming violations of FORB that are examples of structural violence. Ask them to write these on another specified colour of post-it note and stick them to their diagram (allow 20 min).

Finally, ask the groups to look over the FORB violations that they've identified on the direct and the structural levels of the triangle. Ask groups to discuss the following questions:

- What attitudes or justifications in people's minds make these violations seem okay to some people in our community/country?
- How are those attitudes and justifications being transmitted and perpetuated?

Remind participants that these are the cultural narratives of violence. Ask them to write these on the third colour of post-it note and to stick them along the arrows on the diagram (allow 20 min).

• **PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY DISCUSSION** (50 MIN)

Invite each group to present their findings (up to 5 min/group). Ask group presenters to skip examples and points already made by groups before them, to avoid unnecessary repetition. Give each group a round of applause and congratulate them on their hard work.

Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- Was it harder to think of examples of some kinds of violence than others?
- What don't we know? Structural and cultural violence are often invisible to us! Do we know what the law says about freedom of religion or belief, or about how other groups are affected by violations? How can we find out?

TIP! Remind participants of the gender dimension. Are there particular kinds of violation that affect women or men, or do violations have a different impact on women and men?

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? The '[Fistfight/Push and pull](#)' games on page 22 work particularly well with this exercise.

- Have we thought about how men and women might be affected differently by structural or direct violence, or cultural narratives of violence?
- How do the different types of violence relate to one another?
- Are there any ways in which we contribute to supporting violence, through our attitudes, way of talking, actions or lack of action?
- Given the roles we have in the community as individuals or organisations, what kinds of violence can we contribute to reducing?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank everyone for their thoughtful contributions and say you hope they found the exercise helped them to deepen their understanding of FORB violations in their context, or perhaps view them in a different light. Mention any coming sessions in the training that will focus on action planning to tackle some of the issues highlighted.

Source

Bassem Maher and SMC Faith in Development <https://www.smc.global/en/>

"The 'Triangle of violence' helped us to develop context analyses for seven countries together with partners in the Asia Religious and Ethnic Freedom Project. The results of the exercise enable partners to identify differing perspectives, with some identifying structural problems in legislation and others highlighting the cultural narratives underpinning violations of FORB. Those narratives are often missing from human rights reporting and the exercise helped us identify them – which is vital for developing effective strategies for change."

INDIRA ASLANOVA, SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND, KYRGYZSTAN