

IDENTIFYING VICTIM BLAMING AND HOW TO COUNTERACT IT

WHAT IS VICTIM BLAMING?

Victim blaming has deep roots in all cultures and societies. It is therefore imperative to shift the blame from the victim to the perpetrator in order to bring about just accountability and relive victims of their burden.

Victim blaming can come from different sources: individuals, public, judicial, religious authorities, social connections, organizations and society as a whole. This most often, prevents women from seeking the support they need.

Moreover, blaming victims of violence is clearly inflicting double punishment with detrimental effects on their mental health and their ability to recover.

HOW TO STOP VICTIM BLAMING

- Provide substantive and accessible information about support structures for victims given the fact that victims can't solve the problem only by themselves.
- Strongly affirm that the lifestyle choices - clothes, hobbies, etc. of the victim can't in any way explain or justify the violence she suffered.
- Respect the word of the victims who often feel that their credibility is questioned when they report their case. This deters victims from filing complaints and reporting the violence they suffer.
- Counteract victim-blaming statements and avoid any banalisation or even normalisation of victim-blaming, by spreading knowledge and awareness that the perpetrator is to blame and not the victim, and that violence is a crime.
- The victims of violence need to share their story. Support them to identify where real blame should be placed. This will give them the courage to seek support.
- Information sharing with victims on available services and support mechanisms.

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