



Sexual and Reproductive Rights Case Studies

Adapted from an activity in Ipas's *Woman-centered postabortion care: Additional module activities*.

OBJECTIVE

In this activity, participants think critically about sexual and reproductive rights and how they might apply – or how they may be being violated — in each settings

TIME

50 minutes total

- 10 minutes for introductions (optional)
- 30 minutes for activity
- 10 minutes for discussion

MATERIALS

For each participant:

- Copy of case studies
- Charter on Sexual and Reproductive Rights handout
- Paper and pens/pencils
- Optional: flipchart or dry erase board, markers, blank paper

For facilitator(s):

- Something large to write on that everyone can see (flipchart, whiteboard, chalkboard)
- Markers
- Case Study Key

PREPARATION

Minimal preparation required. Facilitators should familiarize themselves with case studies, Case Study Key and Charter on Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

INSTRUCTIONS

Introductions

If this is an opening activity, ask participants to say their names and a word or phrase they think of when they hear "sexual and reproductive rights." Write their responses on a board or flipchart, if possible, all in one color.

Activity

- Assign one-third of the participants to Case 1, one-third to Case 2 and one-third to Case 3.
- Ensure that each participant has a copy of the Sexual and Reproductive Rights Case Studies and a Charter on Sexual and Reproductive Rights handout.
- Ask each person to individually read the case study assigned to her/him and handout.
- Ask participants to get in pairs with another person assigned to the same case.
- Ask the pairs to talk about their case study, and write on a separate sheet of paper the numbers of one of the rights from the Charter that was violated and their rationale for why they believe that right was violated.
 - They don't have to write complete sentences, just a phrase or two.
 - Example: If Right #4: Right to privacy, is violated, participants should write "#4" with the rationale that "She is not able to lock her bedroom door."
- Discuss responses for all case studies as a large group when everyone has finished filling in their sheets.
- Ask one pair to state the rights that were violated and their rationale.
 - Ask other pairs who answered the same case study to provide missing responses or explain if they had different responses.

Discussion Questions

- Do you think all people have the right to immediate health care and counseling, including abortion care?
- Do all people have the right to information about their health and medical options and to make informed decisions regarding their medical and reproductive options?
- How might this Charter, and its application, be open to interpretation?
- Is the Charter sufficient for addressing sexual and reproductive rights? If not, what is missing, or how could it be strengthened?
- What are some other examples of cases in which the rights outlined in the Charter could apply?

- How can you use these rights locally, nationally and internationally to advocate for sexual and women's rights?
- Are there any other reactions to the activity and discussion?

Closing

Ask participants to offer more words and phrases that they think of when they hear "sexual and reproductive rights" and write them on the same flipchart/board/paper as the original list, but in a different color.

VARIATIONS

If you have a small number of participants (less than 12 people), the three groups can go through their assigned cases as a group rather than in pairs.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

Remind the participants that a single action can violate more than one right, so they may list the same rationale for more than one violation. For instance, rape can be a violation of both the right to be free from torture and ill-treatment and the right to security of person.

The cases in this activity are meant to be illustrative and cover a range of threats to sexual and reproductive rights, not to resemble the actual experience of any one individual. Try to prevent the conversation from focusing on how realistic the cases are.

If participants start talking about laws regulating these issues (for example, "but that's illegal!"), ask them to consider the cases as if they were taking place in a different country where the laws might be different.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS CASE STUDIES: KEY

Case 1: The farm

Possible rights violations and rationale

2. Right to liberty and security of the person

Rationale: The son of her employer rapes her; she is not able to lock her bedroom door or leave the farm.

3. Right to equality and to be free from all forms of discrimination

Rationale: She is made to work in the house because she is female.

4. Right to privacy

Rationale: She is not able to lock her bedroom door.

7. Right to choose whether or not to marry and to found and plan a family

Rationale: She may be pregnant as the result of rape.

8. Right to decide whether or when to have children

Rationale: She can't get emergency contraception or find an abortion provider.

9. Right to health care and health protection

Rationale: She cannot find a health-care provider within a reasonable distance.

10. Right to the benefits of scientific progress

Rationale: She is not able to get reproductive health technologies (emergency contraception).

12. Right to be free from torture and ill-treatment

Rationale: The son of her employers raped her.

Case 2: The waiting room

Possible rights violations and rationale

1. Right to life

Rationale: The man's long stay in the waiting room and delayed treatment, despite his emergency situation, endangered his life.

3. Right to equality and to be free from all forms of discrimination

Rationale: The man was discriminated against because of his gender identity: He was ridiculed, delayed treatment and sterilized without his consent. Also, he was not eligible for his partner's health insurance, possibly because of restrictions on eligibility based on marital status.

4. Right to privacy

Rationale: The man was ridiculed loudly by the clinic staff.

6. Right to information and education

Rationale: The man was not told why he was sterilized or what condition he may have had, if any.

7. Right to choose whether or not to marry and found and plan a family

Rationale: The man may not have been able to marry his partner because of gender-based restrictions on marriage. He underwent an abortion and sterilization without his consent.

8. Right to decide whether or when to have children

Rationale: He underwent an abortion and sterilization without his consent.

9. Right to health care and health protection

Rationale: The man did not have health insurance and had many challenges in scheduling appointments. He was neglected in the waiting room despite his emergency situation.

10. Right to the benefits of scientific progress

Rationale: The man may have been able to continue the pregnancy or carry future pregnancies, but he was not offered any alternatives to abortion and sterilization.

12. Right to be free from torture and ill-treatment

Rationale: Harassment from the clinic staff, neglect, forced abortion and sterilization are tantamount to institutional abuse.

Case 3: The group home

Possible rights violations and rationale

1. Right to life

Rationale: The residents' lives may be at risk if they contract a fatal virus from unprotected sex.

2. Right to liberty and security of the person

Rationale: The residents are forced to have contraceptive injections and are locked in their room for expressing their sexuality.

3. Right to equality and to be free from all forms of discrimination

Rationale: The forced contraceptives are a form of gender-based discrimination against the female residents. The males are denied any form of contraceptives.

4. Right to privacy

Rationale: The residents and their families are denied the right to make autonomous choices about contraception. The residents are denied the right to express their sexuality.

6. Right to information and education

Rationale: The residents and their families are denied information about the possible long-term effects of the contraceptive method the residents are given. The residents are denied information about condoms and infection prevention.

8. Right to decide whether or when to have children

Rationale: The forced contraceptives result in the denial of the residents' ability to decide whether or not to have children. Certain infections that the residents may be exposed to because they don't have condoms could result in an inability to have children.

9. Right to health care and health protection

Rationale: The residents are denied the highest quality of care because they are not given condoms or information on infection prevention.

12. Right to be free from torture and ill-treatment

Rationale: The residents were locked in their rooms for expressing their sexuality.