

D4: CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

AIM

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- ▶ An understanding of “impunity” and “accountability” and why these terms are important in any discussion of challenging patriarchal masculinities.
- ▶ Practiced skills in holding men accountable in order to challenge the culture of patriarchal impunity.

STEP-BY-STEP

1. Explain the aims of the session. Explain that the workshop thus far has focused on what the party/organization can do to challenge patriarchal attitudes and behaviors. Remind everyone that this is also a personal responsibility, especially in terms of challenging the everyday practices of patriarchal masculinities. Explain that for the rest of the session we will look more closely at what men can do in their everyday interactions with both women and men to help create an internal culture that supports women’s political participation.
2. Brainstorm with the group some basic definitions of the words “impunity” and “accountability,” and discuss why these terms are relevant to this workshop on challenging and changing patriarchal masculinities (see Notes for the Facilitator.) Invite one or two participants to share stories from their own lives about men acting patriarchally with impunity, and one or two participants to share stories from their own lives about men holding other men accountable for their patriarchal behavior.
3. Explain that this activity will look more closely at cultures of patriarchal impunity within the party/organization, and what men can do to hold other men accountable, thereby challenging this culture of impunity.
4. Break participants into small groups of 6-8 people each. Ask each small group to come up with a role play, showing a man behaving patriarchally with impunity within the party/organization, and then showing an action being taken by a man/men, together with a woman / women , to hold this man accountable. If you used C3: Gender@ Work Scenarios earlier in the workshop/process, then one option is for the small groups to use one of these scenarios as the basis for their respective role plays.
5. In designing the role play, ask each group to discuss the following questions:
 - ▶ *What does the man/men do to notice the patriarchal attitudes and behaviors in the scenario?*
 - ▶ *What does the man/men do to partner with women in responding to the patriarchal attitudes and behaviors in the scenario?*
 - ▶ *What does the man/men do to help reflect back to other men the harmful impacts of patriarchal masculinities on women and men in the party/organization?*
 - ▶ *What does the man/men do to help other men see ways in which they can change their attitudes and behaviors in order to create an internal culture that supports women’s political participation?*

Time: 90 mins

Materials:

- ▶ Flipchart paper and pens

Training Tips:

- ✓ This session builds on the discussion of men being allies to women (Activity C4). It looks at the ways in which men can support and challenge other men to change the internal culture of the party so that it supports women’s political participation.

6. Allow the small groups 8-10 minutes to discuss and design their role plays. When they are ready, bring the groups back together, and ask each in turn to show their role play. After each role play, debrief it using the questions above, in order to highlight the four crucial steps of taking action on patriarchal masculinities:
 - ▶ **Noticing** the problem
 - ▶ **Partnering** with women to respond
 - ▶ **Reflecting** back the harms
 - ▶ **Identifying** ways to change
7. When all the role plays are done, summarize key learning points for men taking direct action on patriarchal masculinities in their everyday interactions with both women and men, using the four-step model presented in the Notes for the Facilitator. Brainstorm with participants what might prevent men stepping up to hold other men accountable. Ask:
8. *What fears/anxieties do you have about speaking up about patriarchal masculinities in the party/organization?*
9. *What fears/anxieties do you have about stepping up to hold other men accountable for their patriarchal behavior in the party/organization?*
10. *What skills do you need to step up more to challenge the culture of patriarchal impunity?*
11. *How can we support each other to overcome these fears/anxieties and build our skills?*
12. End the session by thanking participants for all their ideas and contributions and for their willingness to explore these difficult issues in depth .

D4: NOTES FOR THE FACILITATOR

Impunity and Accountability are two important terms:

Impunity means exemption from punishment. When we say that someone is “acting with impunity,” it means that they are acting in this way because they know that they will face no punishment, sanction or negative consequences for acting in this way. Many men continue to behave in patriarchal ways, and believe that they are entitled to do so, because they can. They suffer no negative consequences or sanction by behaving patriarchally towards women, other men as well as people from gender and sexual minorities. In fact, men tend to gain benefits and privileges from behaving patriarchally. In many societies, there is a culture of impunity around patriarchal masculinities.

Accountability means answerability; to be accountable means being answerable for one’s actions and their impacts on others. When we say that we want to hold someone accountable, it means we want them to be answerable for their actions and to face sanction or negative consequences if these actions have caused harm to others and/or are in some way in breach of laws or agreements about acceptable and expected behavior. To end the impunity of patriarchal masculinities, we need to hold men accountable for their patriarchal behaviors and their complicity with other men’s patriarchal behaviors.

A four-step model for taking action to hold men accountable for patriarchal masculinities is:

- ▶ **Notice the problem:** Ask women about their experiences, listen when women describe their experiences, notice what is going on in everyday interactions between men and women (both in terms of what is said, and people's body language)
- ▶ **Partner with women to respond:** There can be a danger that when men are asked to take action on patriarchal attitudes and behaviors, they see their role as being to protect women. But this protector role only reinforces the patriarchal assumption that women must depend on men. Rather than trying to protect women, men should seek to partner with them to respond to patriarchal masculinities.
- ▶ **Reflect back the harms:** Empathy can be a powerful force for change. So one important role that men can play in taking action on patriarchal attitudes and behaviors is to help other men really understand and feel the harms that such attitudes and behaviors do to women (and often to other men).
- ▶ **Identify ways to change:** A critical role for men to play is to help other men see the ways in which they can change their patriarchal attitudes and behaviors. Helping men see themselves as "part of the solution" rather than simply "part of the problem" is important. Be specific about things they can do to be part of the solution to promoting women's political participation.