



Government
Equalities Office

Putting equality at the heart of government

Tackling Violence against Women and Girls

A Guide to Good Practice Communications



GO TO NEXT PAGE



A note about navigation

The guidance is an interactive PDF. The navigation works as follows:

- The blue navigation buttons take you to the next or previous page
- The pink navigation button will take you to the last page you looked at
- The house symbol on the right hand side next to the page numbers takes you back to the home page

The home page is a quick way to navigate the guidance so that you can go directly to the practical advice, information and tools. There are blue boxes on the left of the page which identify areas and issues where you might want some advice; the boxes on the right will take you to the topic and section that you need.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Section I: Introduction to the guidance

The primary target audience of this guidance is government communicators. However, the principles are useful for all those working in areas that have broad relevance to the violence against women agenda across government – including local and regional government – the third sector and elsewhere, particularly if they are likely to be asked to produce communications at short notice.

Aims of the guidance

This guidance is intended to support communicators in their work to deliver the national strategy and all communications in the area of violence against women. Campaign and other activity must take conscious steps not to contradict the aims and beliefs contained in the strategy.

The guidance is primarily designed for government communicators, whether working in directly related or seemingly unrelated areas, and including policy teams, press officers and speech writers. It will help you to:

- understand how to communicate about violence against women;
- use the right messages;
- choose and commission appropriate visuals and imagery;
- consider the importance of language and word choice in communications; and
- understand the audiences and the barriers to communication.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AIMS OF THE GUIDANCE

CONTEXT FOR THE GUIDANCE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



The guidance has four long-term goals.

- It will be widely adopted across government and used to inform campaign and other activity to ensure consistent government-wide messaging.
- There will begin to be greater consistency across the sector with government communications supporting those of the third sector and vice versa.
- Over time, the evaluation of communications activity will show changed attitudes towards violence against women overall and fewer attitudes that support it.
- There will begin to be a collective view across society on this issue – one that continues to isolate people who condone or perpetrate violence.

It is important to recognise that women are a diverse group with a range of different backgrounds and experience. This includes:

- women of all ages – including older women;
- disabled women;
- lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) women;
- women from ethnic minority groups – including invisible minorities and Gypsy and Traveller women;
- women from all religious and faith backgrounds;
- women with chaotic lives; and
- women with low literacy levels or for whom English is not their first language.

Communications activity needs to communicate with, or consider issues affecting, women from this range of backgrounds. This means that when you are planning and targeting communication and commissioning visuals and creative executions, the messages and the issues addressed must be effectively nuanced and targeted to take account of this.

Context for the guidance

The Government's major national consultation, *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls*, was launched in March 2009. This consultation was designed to inform the development of a national strategy to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Some men also experience violence. The Government is working hard to reduce violence of all kinds and to support victims, whatever their gender. However, the VAWG strategy is specifically about violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or that affects women disproportionately, and to address women's greater fear of violent crime.

The strategy is designed to bring about and support the development of a society where women are safe – and feel safe – in their homes and neighbourhoods. Key priorities are to:

- prevent violence from happening and/or enable early intervention to prevent further harm;
- provide emotional and practical support to victims;
- protect victims to help them stay safe; and
- challenge attitudes that support and condone VAWG.

Much of this can be achieved via existing agencies and mechanisms. However, it also requires challenging deeply held attitudes that can help to perpetuate violence towards women.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AIMS OF THE GUIDANCE

CONTEXT FOR THE GUIDANCE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Violence against women includes:

- sexual violence, abuse and exploitation
- sexual harassment and bullying
- stalking
- trafficking and forced prostitution
- **domestic violence**, including:
 - emotional, physical and psychological abuse
 - female genital mutilation
 - forced marriage
 - honour-based violence

VAWG is not a series of isolated incidents but a pattern of abusive behaviour. This behaviour does not occur in a vacuum but is supported and facilitated by social and cultural networks. To deliver the key priorities of the strategy, these deeply held attitudes must be challenged.

Communication has a key role in challenging entrenched views. This is a long-term activity, and should be seen as such and planned accordingly.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AIMS OF THE GUIDANCE

CONTEXT FOR THE GUIDANCE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

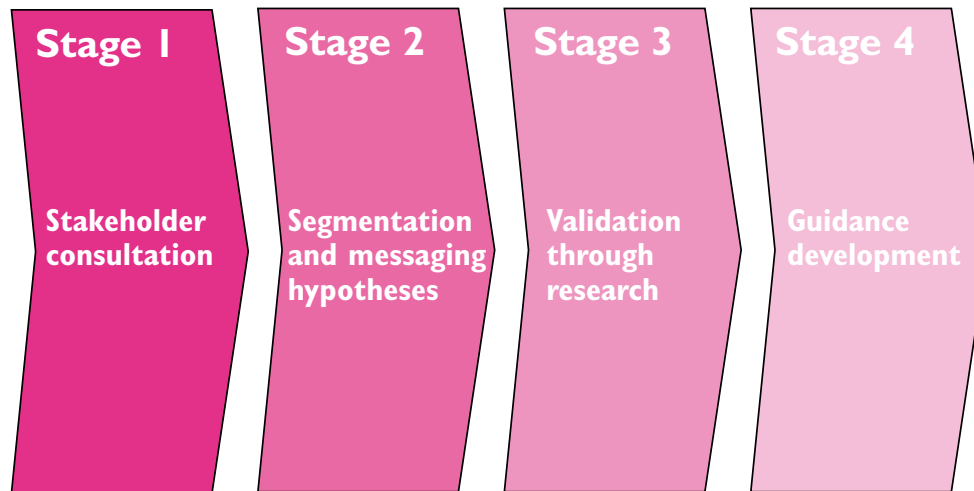
EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Development of the guidance

This is the first guidance of its kind on this topic and, to be sure that it is authoritative and of use to the audience, and that the segmentation, communications and messaging advice it contains is based on insight, it was developed via a four-stage process calling on stakeholder expertise and knowledge, and using research to explore how attitudes affect receptiveness to communications.



Changing attitudes is a long-term process – however successful this guidance, the national strategy or communications work generally, they will not produce results overnight. Instead, change will be incremental and difficult to see in the early stages.

If one of the core aims of activity is to challenge attitudes, then a different approach is required to target audiences. An attitudinal, rather than demographic, targeting is likely to work best for communications in this area.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AIMS OF THE GUIDANCE

CONTEXT FOR THE GUIDANCE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Therefore this guidance includes an attitudinal segmentation to help target specific audiences for communications activity and track how their attitudes change over time. This is necessary because:

- general attitudes to violence against women comprise a spectrum of views which are highly inter-connected;
- attitudes can be highly polarised;
- attitudes may vary according to social, cultural and demographic factors;
- people who condemn one form of VAWG may be ambivalent about or even condone another;
- victims are not a discrete group at the end of the anti-VAWG spectrum – their attitudes run across the whole spectrum and may be highly contradictory; and
- perpetrators of one form of violence against women may not condone other forms, or even admit that they, themselves, are perpetrators.

These contradictions mean that an attitudinal segmentation will be most likely to provide communicators with an in-depth understanding of the range of audiences they need to reach, inform and influence.

The attitudinal segmentation and how it can be used to plan and target communications activity is explained in more detail in [Section 2](#) of this guidance.



Planning communication



This guidance is designed to help you plan your communications activity. This page is a quick way to navigate the guidance so that you can go directly to the practical advice, information and tools. The blue boxes on the left identify areas and issues where you might want some advice. Click on the relevant box to the right to go to the topic and section that you need.

Setting and fulfilling primary and secondary objectives	SANCTION	AWARENESS	SUPPORT	CHALLENGING ATTITUDES	
Drafting key messages and thinking about behaviour change	ATTITUDES TO DOMESTIC ABUSE	ATTITUDES TO PROSTITUTION	ATTITUDES TO RAPE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE	CORE VAWG MESSAGES	POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS
	ATTITUDES TO TRAFFICKING	ATTITUDES TO FORCED MARRIAGE	ATTITUDES TO 'HONOUR' CRIME	POSITIONING MESSAGES TO DRIVE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	VISUALS
	COLLABORATIVE WORKING	CHANNELS	AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION	HARD TO REACH AUDIENCES – OVERVIEW	LANGUAGE
Evaluation		USING THE SEGMENTATION TO PLAN COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY	MEN CAN STOP RAPE – A GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE	GENERAL PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES	MEN'S ATTITUDES
				WOMEN'S ATTITUDES	LOWER SEG ATTITUDES
	YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES			RELIGIOUS/TRADITIONAL GROUPS' ATTITUDES	
MEASURING ATTITUDINAL CHANGE	USING THE SEGMENTATION TO GUIDE EVALUATION				



Section 2: Audience segmentation

This section looks at the value of attitudinal segmentation to target communications activity tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG).

The majority of current communications in the area of violence against women are broadly targeted and concentrate on reaching the following:

- perpetrators, with a focus on sanction;
- victims, with a focus on awareness of support available, sanction and avenues for redress; and
- the general public, with messages around awareness-raising, fund-raising or encouraging support and reporting.

Current targeting reflects an issue/strand-centric approach and the majority of communications focus on awareness-raising. There is little that is designed to challenge attitudes in order to bring about long-term change.

Organisations working in this sector suggest that much communication targeting victims also seems to judge or blame women for the violence they have experienced.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



It is difficult to produce communications explicitly designed to challenge attitudes, with the ultimate aim of changing behaviour, for various reasons.

- Communicators have an obligation to raise awareness in the areas mentioned above.
- There is limited funding for activity, so the focus often has to be on prioritising and meeting immediate needs rather than long-term ones.
- Research suggests that challenge campaigns are not well received, or often not well understood, which can result in perverse or converse outcomes to those intended.
- Evaluation and metrics that are used tend to focus on awareness, mainly because this is easier to measure and so provides an immediate evaluation of the success of communications activity.
- There is little benchmarking of attitudes so it is difficult to measure whether these have changed over time.

Communications activity will continue to work to raise awareness of the range of issues around violence against women.

Challenging attitudes requires a different approach to targeting audiences. Attitudinal, rather than demographic, targeting is likely to work best for communications in this area.

This is particularly important as the research shows that public attitudes to violence against women are diverse – from beliefs about blame and grey areas around consent to definitions of what actually constitutes violence.

An explicit complementary goal of all activity should be to challenge attitudes.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

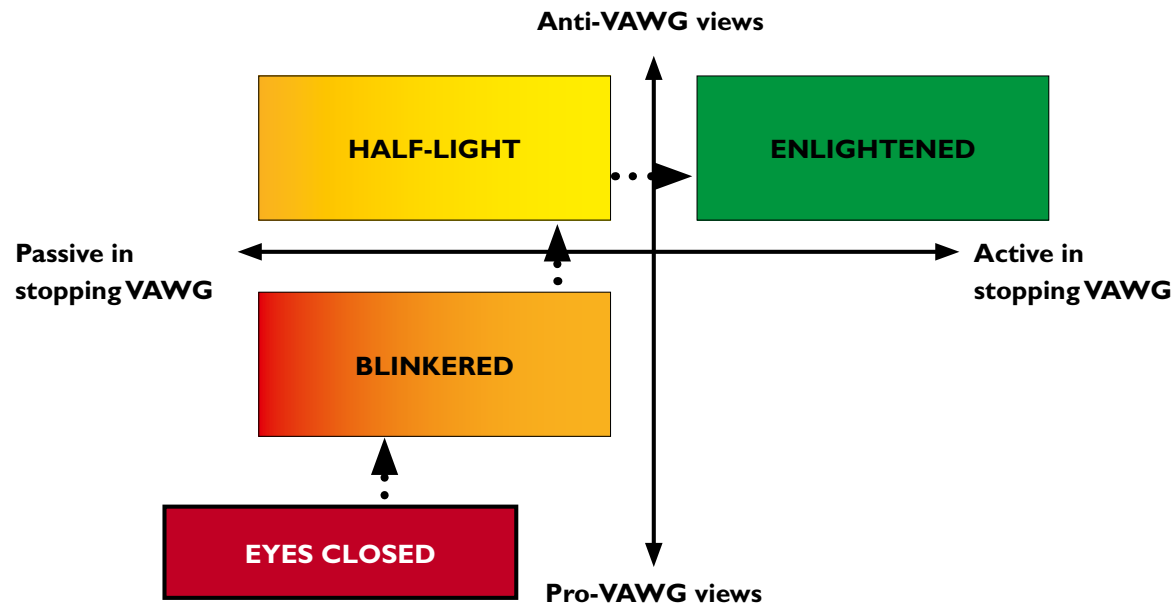


Segmenting audiences

It is likely that general communications activity in this area will continue to be broadly targeted, but this does not mean that an attitudinal method of targeting cannot be used to increase the reach and effectiveness of communications work. Targeting communications by attitude rather than demographically requires the use of a robust alternative method to segment audiences.

This guidance provides an attitudinal segmentation developed using audience insight, stakeholder knowledge and behaviour change theory, and validated by primary research.

The aim is to move people in each segment from their current position towards the **Enlightened** box over time, using targeted challenge messages to bring about the desired long-term, sustainable attitudinal change.



INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Using an attitudinal segmentation will allow more specific targeting to audiences, which means that communication can be more easily designed to **challenge attitudes** in order to bring about sustained change **over time**. This means that evaluation of activity targeted in this way must take into account and benchmark attitudes as well as awareness.

Attitudes to VAWG vary widely according to issues – an individual may be in any one of the attitudinal boxes, depending on the issue or type of violence under consideration. We suggest that, during the planning stages of your activity, you determine the spread of attitudes **to the specific issue** to understand the prevalent attitudes and estimate the size of the audience for that particular activity.

Think of your communications activity concerning VAWG in the same light as campaigns around smoking and using seatbelts. All short-term tactical activity should ideally be planned to support long-term attitudinal and behaviour change goals.

Initially the general public, victims and perpetrators can be grouped into four main segments based on their attitudes to violence against women and willingness to get involved in addressing the issue. These are categorised as: **Enlightened, Half-light, Blinkered** and **Eyes Closed**, although individuals may not be equally Blinkered or Enlightened on all VAWG issues.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



ENLIGHTENED	<p>Enlightened people are very positive about women and their rights within society. They disapprove of VAWG on all accounts and are often active in helping both victims and perpetrators.</p> <p>This group may contain members of the general public, activists and even victims who see their experience in the context of VAWG as a whole.</p>
HALF-LIGHT	<p>Half-light people are largely supportive of women and consider themselves to be anti-VAWG. However, they vary in their awareness and understanding of the issues involved. This attitudinal group ranges from those who want to help victims but don't know how, to those who feel it's not their business and have no interest in acting.</p> <p>Perpetrators and victims can be part of this group. Perpetrators may be becoming aware of the consequences of their actions and actively considering and seeking change. Victims may be aware but accepting of the crime committed against them or indirectly supportive of other forms of VAWG.</p>
BLINKERED	<p>Blinkered people feel that much VAWG falls into the private sphere and is not for challenge or comment by 'outsiders'. They don't want to see consequences and their arguments focus on grey areas and shared culpability. Others have made a conscious decision to endorse VAWG as it tallies with what they believe is a moral or cultural belief system. Many are not aware of the long-term consequences of VAWG but adopt a pragmatic, transactional approach in their arguments.</p> <p>Some Blinkered people may be open to change with the right message. This would need to contain a high level of proof or clear evidence of the wrongness of an act. Others have made a conscious decision to endorse VAWG as it tallies with what they believe is a moral or cultural belief system. These established attitudes need to be challenged by respected role models from within their traditional/social structures.</p>
EYES CLOSED	<p>Eyes Closed people are mainly perpetrators. Their attitudes about women are entrenched, as is their perceived right to perpetrate violence against them.</p> <p>Eyes Closed people have no desire to change and are active supporters of attitudes that allow all forms of VAWG.</p>

- INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE
- AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION
- SEGMENTING AUDIENCES
- HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES
- YOUNG PEOPLE
- OLDER PEOPLE
- ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS
- POSITIONING MESSAGES
- GENERAL PUBLIC
- MEN
- WOMEN
- RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS
- LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS
- CHALLENGING ATTITUDES
- GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION
- EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY
- TOOLS



This segmentation examines the journey from entrenched attitudes towards attitudes that support, and are a function of, long-term sustained change.

Change is not a linear process, and attitudes will change slowly over time. Any individual may be in any of the attitudinal boxes, depending on the issue. Even victims' attitudes can sit in any box; they may not be enlightened where all forms of violence against women are concerned, nor reject supporting attitudes – even where their own experience of violence is concerned.

For the sake of expediency, communication will tend to focus on groups within the **Blinkered, Half-light** and **Enlightened** segments. In terms of the general public, the segments can be further refined by differentiating the factors which motivate attitudes within each group. In this way, we can gain a greater understanding of what drives the behaviour of a number of attitudinal sub-segments. This will help us to target our communication more effectively and make it more successful.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



ENLIGHTENED

In spirit: Supportive of women's equality in society and vocally anti-VAWG. They are aware of the issues but unlikely to speak out or act unless serious harm is imminent. This group may contain members of the general public, activists and even victims who see their experience in context of VAWG as a whole.

In action: Aware of issues and willing to speak out to prevent and pre-empt harm and inequality.

HALF-LIGHT

Inert: Aware of issues but have no interest in doing anything about it due to other priorities. Tend to avoid information – for example, a woman who will put up with occasional violence from a partner as most of the time he is a good husband or father.

Excuser: Aware of VAWG but able to find a 'yes, but' justification in social or traditional norms. For example, would argue that rape is wrong but understandable if a woman was drunk or provocatively dressed.

Fearful: Aware of inequality but feel unable to act or speak out due to social or traditional sanction.

Naïve: They are unaware of real inequality and in need of education. Young girls in this segment voice a view of equality which supports the idea that women cannot be victimised unless at some level they invite it; this requires that women should therefore take at least partial blame for violence perpetrated against them.

BLINKERED

Misguided: Not anti-women but believe that much VAWG falls into the private sphere and is not for challenge or comment by 'outsiders'. Support VAWG due to social and cultural beliefs that underpin attitudes to women and men's rights as head of the household. Views of this type are particularly difficult to challenge within closed communities.

Committed: Have made decision to support unequal gender practices due to religious, moral or practical beliefs. Not open to challenge or change.

- INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE
- AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION
- SEGMENTING AUDIENCES
- HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES
- YOUNG PEOPLE
- OLDER PEOPLE
- ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS
- POSITIONING MESSAGES
- GENERAL PUBLIC
- MEN
- WOMEN
- RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS
- LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS
- CHALLENGING ATTITUDES
- GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION
- EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY
- TOOLS



The primary targets for communications activity are therefore the following groups. They are hard to influence but can be encouraged to change – either by being pushed or inspired, according to what motivates them – although they will need time to overcome attitudes.

ENLIGHTENED	In spirit: They are aware of the issues, but lack confidence or motivation. They are INSPIRABLE, but are unlikely to speak out unless serious harm is imminent.
HALF-LIGHT	<p>Inert: They are PUSHABLE but are very hard to reach and influence. They avoid information on the issue and would not speak out in conversation.</p> <p>Excuser: They are PUSHABLE but need to be won over with proof to challenge their desire to justify or condone VAWG. Peer pressure is likely to be effective here.</p> <p>Fearful: They are PUSHABLE but need a guarantee of personal (and social) safety. They are responsive to messages from respected role models but unlikely to move on their own.</p> <p>Naïve: They are unaware of the depth of the issues, but are INSPIRABLE by education, awareness and a clear call to action.</p>
BLINKERED	Misguided: They are PUSHABLE if the right messages are used and if the relevance, truth and importance of the issue are proved beyond doubt.

Those currently in the **Blinkered** segment are unlikely to move directly to **Enlightened**, but may need to reside in one or other of the **Half-light** segment groups for a time. This is not a problem for your communication as long as you allow for this when setting objectives, set realistic objectives and do not expect activity to deliver instant change.

Communication with the **Eyes Closed** segment, and to a lesser extent the **Blinkered** segment, is likely to be issue-specific and continue to focus on information about sanction, although some challenge is also needed. This focus will be supported by communication with all the other groups that will aim to move their attitudes along the continuum, so that those in the **Eyes Closed** group become more isolated and attitudes that support their actions become increasingly rare.

- INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE
- AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION**
- SEGMENTING AUDIENCES
- HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES
- YOUNG PEOPLE
- OLDER PEOPLE
- ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS
- POSITIONING MESSAGES
- GENERAL PUBLIC
- MEN
- WOMEN
- RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS
- LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS
- CHALLENGING ATTITUDES
- GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION
- EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY
- TOOLS



Targeting an attitudinal segment

INSPIRING the Blinkered (Misguided) audience

Hard-to-influence audiences have entrenched views and are likely to interpret challenges to their established attitudes and behaviour as attacks that will be disregarded or may even reinforce negative attitudes and behaviours.

However, they can be inspired and reached if communication is not perceived as preaching. A good angle is to appeal to a (positive) collective view that allows the audience to see themselves in a positive and admirable light. The **My Strength Campaign** in the US targets young men aged 14–16 and was developed and implemented by the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault in partnership with Washington DC's Men Can Stop Rape. This is an ongoing social marketing campaign involving media, local communities, schools and California's rape crisis centres, which has focused on preventing first-time perpetration of sexual violence by enlisting men and boys in prevention efforts and encouraging them to take responsibility and find solutions.

It has used a number of different creative executions and themes looking at:

- respect for women;
- issues of consent where drugs and alcohol are concerned;
- positive ideas and images of masculinity that allow men to maintain strength in relationships without using coercion, intimidation or violence; and
- the ability to make the right decisions and moral choices about relationships.

Research for this guidance confirmed earlier findings about rape and the way that many people in the **Blinkered** and **Half-light** audiences believe that women bear responsibility for sexual assault if they have been drinking. These views place the responsibility for women's safety on women themselves and seek to absolve men of blame in these situations.

The My Strength Campaign poster (right) challenges these ideas by:

- re-establishing the idea of consent as something that has to be given actively rather than assumed;
- highlighting the man's role in considering and respecting a woman's sexual boundaries; and
- positioning the majority of men as non-perpetrators of violence.

Copyright 2006 Men can stop rape, Inc. Photography: Lotte Hansen

Case study



INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Hard-to-influence audiences: an overview

Research and anecdotal evidence from stakeholders has shown that some groups have attitudes that are more entrenched, are more condoning of violence against women and are more likely to hold views that support or facilitate violence. These are outlined below.

Social, demographic and cultural factors significantly impact on attitudes to violence against women, but this does not mean that violence against women is confined to these groups or even that it is more prevalent among them.

Underlying attitudes

The insight below is taken from research conducted to inform this guidance, which aimed to:

- understand current prevalent attitudes to women among hard-to-influence audiences;
- confirm attitudes identified during conversations with stakeholders and through desk research;
- understand what these attitudes mean for government and other communications in the area of violence against women; and
- understand what issues and situations might act as levers to change attitudes.

A small-scale qualitative research project was commissioned. It does not size the audiences; however, it does provide a deeper insight into the attitudes of the identified audience segments (see **Segmenting audiences**). The research comprised group, mini-group and depth interviews with a broad audience who were recruited to represent the Blinkered and Half-light attitudinal segments. (See *Research Summary* for more information on the sample, methodology and findings.)

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

The research found that attitudes are strongly held, often unexpected and run deep. Views are based on what is felt to be a considered moral code or standpoint. Challenging these views as prejudice is particularly difficult. Attitudes are underpinned and supported by areas of self-interest such as the following.

- **Sexual activity** – this is considered a personal right, it is private and should not be open to public commentary and scrutiny. This has a clear impact on communications addressing **date/acquaintance rape, stalking, domestic violence and prostitution.**
- **Safety** – there is a reluctance to expose oneself to (physical or emotional) danger by speaking out against what is perceived as the common view of VAWG. For many this means that their connection with ethnic, cultural or regional identity is important as a buffer and safety net – especially where individuals are, themselves, at risk of prejudice or personal violence. This impacts on communications about **forced marriage or female genital mutilation, or any communications that appear to blame any particular group for violence.**

Understanding VAWG as a concept or considering issues of gender inequality is considered unnecessary or an indulgence – the audience has too many other (survival) issues of immediate personal relevance to consider.

Many women from tightly knit groups and communities may be discouraged from reporting violence because it gives the community a bad name. Stakeholders say this can be equally true of rural communities.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

- **Status quo** – many people have a clear interest in maintaining the status quo (particularly in relation to themselves) and are strongly resistant to any attempt to change or challenge their comfort zones. Life may not be perfect, but by and large it works and this makes them reluctant to ‘rock the boat’ and interfere in other people’s lives. Religious ethics may mean that intervention leading to change is considered wrong. For example, some individuals might not want to intervene in situations of domestic violence in case this brought about separation or divorce. This impacts on communications addressing **domestic violence, including rape within marriage, forced marriage and prostitution.**
- **Security** – some individuals worry that if they become more aware of the issues around violence against women, this will require them to challenge other people. They fear that this might put them in danger from perpetrators and facilitators of violence. This will impact on communications addressing **forced marriage, female genital mutilation, rape and domestic violence.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Key audiences

Young people

Young people tend to support views of gender equality and do not condone violence against women in principle. However, research studies show that, when the issue is probed further, uncertainty, support and justification emerge to explain away behaviour. These justifications tend to focus on the level of blame a woman is perceived to hold for violence perpetrated against her. For example, even where men are condemned for acts of violence, women are still blamed for triggering that violence by nagging, not showing respect or by leading men on.

“ **It’s not an excuse, don’t get me wrong... but sometimes these things happen and you have to see deep into the situation as to why it happened. It’s not the right thing to do... but sometimes the woman tries to control his mind.** ”

Some young men believe that ‘minor’ violence is an acceptable way to assert power and independence in a relationship and to generate respect.

“ **Yeah! I would give her a little slap. Because when the woman respects you is when she sees you are like a real man, that you are serious about it... if you act too soft she’s gonna do anything she wants. When she knows you are like hot-blooded, you know... she won’t mess with you. No, not a punch...** ”

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Older people

Older people often have more traditional views. They tend to hold clearly defined views about the role of women. As a result they may attribute blame for harm to women who transgress these social rules. They are more resigned to certain types of violence, such as rape within marriage, and more likely to see a link between drunkenness and blame where rape is concerned.

“ **Drinking is a man thing... there is nothing worse than seeing a woman falling down drunk – she’s totally vulnerable and she can’t protect herself.** ”

Ethnic minority groups

While views condoning VAWG are not confined to people from ethnic minorities, it is true to say that they are likely to hold very traditional views about the role of women; these views will, in turn, influence their attitudes to VAWG. They are also likely to be comfortable expressing these views. For example, views may support domestic violence by not defining it as such, or may implicitly support a man’s right to sex.

“ **When you are married and you first have children, you will argue because it brings your differences to the surface. And then you might have some slapping, but this is not domestic violence.** ”

Views on so-called ‘honour’ crime and that women’s behaviour reflects on the family honour are held by some minority groups, but are not confined to them.

“ **My wife couldn’t be raped. I would expect her to kill herself rather than let herself be raped.** ”

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Positioning messages to challenge attitudes

Bearing in mind the attitudinal segmentation, messages, while supporting the core VAWG messages, must be positioned so that the target audience will be receptive to them and will not reject them out of hand as inappropriate, intrusive, strident or anti-men.

Consider the following in planning communications.

- Sophisticated or ironic imagery/messages are not appropriate. Target audiences may lack the sophistication necessary to unpack these and the underlying message may be ignored or misunderstood.
- Add in human detail wherever possible to humanise women generally and victims of VAWG in particular. This helps significantly to create **empathy**, which will distance men in general from perpetrators. While the vast majority of perpetrators are men, it is important to stress that not all men are perpetrators, in order to recognise that the majority of men neither support nor condone violence.
- Try to close the gap between victims of violence against women and the female audience's own experience by underlining similarities between the two. This creates **empathy**, which will bring about a willingness to support and possibly to intervene.
- Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims' behaviour or attitudes.
- Avoid double meanings or anything that requires lateral thinking to make the point. For example, avoid the implication that a women's alcohol consumption inevitably leads to sexual assault.

A bespoke approach is necessary to **maximise communications effectiveness**. Consider the following suggestions for reaching different target audiences.

These are explored in more detail in [Section 6](#).

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

General public

- **Mainstream media** (for coverage), supplemented by **trade** or **other media** where appropriate
- **Education routes**, especially for younger people, but may also influence parents
- **Outdoor** – near sports centres or other community venues
- **Indoor** – washrooms in clubs or pubs
- **Public transport**, including buses/bus stops
- **Social marketing-type activity** – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes (particularly for younger people)
- **Radio, television.**

The words that you choose are important. For those who are most entrenched in their views, borrowing from their current lexicon simply endorses their world view; **the words may be read but the overarching meaning is not heard.**

The images that you choose are also important. Overly sexual imagery will inhibit the effectiveness of the messaging. For those who are more religious or traditional in their views, sexual imagery is inappropriate and means that the communication it accompanies will be disregarded.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Men

- **Mainstream media**, supplemented by ethnic minority media (including press and radio) where appropriate
- **Education routes** – especially for younger males
- **Outdoor** – near sports centres or other community venues
- **Indoor** – washrooms in clubs or pubs
- **Public transport**, including buses/bus stops
- **Social marketing-type activity** – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes (particularly for younger males).

Women

- **Mainstream media**, supplemented by ethnic minority media (including press and radio) where appropriate
- **Education routes** – especially for younger women
- **Community routes** – via GP/health visitor; community venues
- **Outdoor** – near service providers or other community venues
- **Indoor** – washrooms in clubs or pubs
- **Buses/bus stops** and other public transport
- **Social marketing-type activity** – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes (particularly for younger women)
- **Radio**
- **Changing rooms.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Religious/ethnic/social traditional groups

- **Mainstream media**, supplemented by ethnic minority specialist media (including press and radio) where needed
- **Education routes**, also via GP/health visitor
- **Outreach** – via community intermediaries (may need to sell in views on VAWG in the first instance); religious leaders may have a role depending on issue
- **Community venues**
- **Local press** and **PR activity, discreet leaflets** in community shops (food and clothing), **credit card-sized leaflets** with telephone numbers handed out in the street, in buses, in schools
- **Events, festivals or gatherings** – should be approached with caution, but may be a forum to address some issues.

Follow established good practice in communicating with ethnic minority or other hard-to-reach groups – see *COI Common Good Research and Guidance for Local Authorities on Translation of Publications* for advice.

Where appropriate, communications activity needs to include translation into community languages to enable members of ‘closed communities’ to take these messages on board.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Lower socio-economic groups

- **Mainstream media** (for coverage)
- **Education routes**
- **Community routes** via GP/health visitor, community venues, sports centres
- **Local press** and **PR activity**
- **Outdoor** – near service providers
- **Indoor** – washrooms in clubs or pubs
- **Buses/bus stops**
- **Social marketing-type activity** – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes.

“ Some members of this audience may have issues with literacy, so make allowances for this in your channel choices. ”

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

SEGMENTING AUDIENCES

HARD TO INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

YOUNG PEOPLE

OLDER PEOPLE

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

POSITIONING MESSAGES

GENERAL PUBLIC

MEN

WOMEN

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Section 3: Challenging attitudes

This section looks at how the research carried out in developing this guidance can inform specific communications activity aimed at changing attitudes to violence against women and girls (VAWG). It outlines how existing communications activity can complement this approach, the core messages that need to be communicated in delivering the national strategy on violence against women, and what particular messages and communications channels are appropriate for hard-to-influence audiences.

See [Research Summary](#) for information on sample, methodology and findings.

Attitudes to women

Evidence from research shows that attitudes to VAWG and to women generally are entrenched, diverse, polarised and affected by proximity to the issues. Prostitution is a particularly contentious issue, especially where legalisation/criminalisation is concerned. Many people are reluctant to consider the possibilities of sexual exploitation or to consider any form of prostitution as a form of violence against the women involved.

Few individuals are willing to intervene, even when they know that violence is being perpetrated. This can be due to fear, unwillingness to get involved, a feeling that the violence may be in some way deserved or a belief that what is happening is none of their business. This is borne out by a 2009 Home Office opinion poll into VAWG that found people are more likely to help female family members who are experiencing domestic violence than they would female neighbours in similar circumstances.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



A considerable cultural shift is required to change attitudes to VAWG. Attitudes are entrenched and there is a clear gap between the general public's perceptions of VAWG and the reality of that violence. For example, the belief that most rapes are perpetrated by a stereotypical lone stranger, rather than, as is more likely, a known perpetrator, supports views that attribute at least partial blame for rape to women and that will cite what a woman is wearing as a contributory factor.

Section 2 of this guidance segments target audiences according to existing attitudes and potential for change.

Below are outlines, drawn from primary research, of attitudes to women and violence against women found among the Blinkered + Half light segments of the general public, men, women, religious, ethnic or social traditional groups, and people from lower socio-economic groups (SEGs).

Section 4 and the tools in **Section 6** suggest appropriate communications channels for addressing these audiences and attitudes.

General attitudes

Women are valued according to a hierarchy of roles; Daughter, Wife and Worker roles offer women a way of being approved of, seen and understood by others. Women without a role of this kind are seen as dangerous, out of control and a threat to social structures. It is often difficult for the audience to feel empathy for such women, even where these women are at risk of, or are experiencing, harm.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



The research suggests a perceived hierarchy of violence against women, including the following.

- Prostitution is considered to be a choice in all cases rather than a situation that can be sexually exploitative or physically dangerous.
- Rape and sexual violence are viewed in relation to the question of how the woman managed to get herself into the situation, and the focus is on the belief that she must have sent the wrong signals or done the wrong thing to be suddenly unprotected. The nature of rape is not understood; there is often a strong assumption, especially among younger women, that it would be easy to escape if a woman really wished to do so.
- Domestic abuse is generally condemned, but the audience has a considerable investment in seeing domestic violence as a one-off, brought on by intolerable stress or pressure (usually from the victim). They want to know what the woman has done to bring violence on herself.

The research found that sex is seen by many people as a male right and that persuasion techniques are regularly used to ensure that sex happens. Females can feel very unable to resist this type of persuasion and are ill-equipped to recognise when persuasion is likely to become coercion – many feel that they have little right to refuse sex in these circumstances.

VAWG is condemned in the abstract, but individuals are easily able to point out mitigating circumstances or excusable exceptions once they start to consider specific situations/issues. They are reluctant to judge or condemn men unfairly – there is a very strong belief that *the system* favours women over men and vocal resentment of this – and they need high standards of proof to support female victims.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



This means that under certain circumstances VAWG can be understood, excused or condoned. For example, even where rape is the most probable explanation, there is a deep-rooted belief that a woman will have given out sexual signals that gave the man the reasonable expectation that she would have sex with him, and therefore she is unlikely to deserve sympathy, help or belief.

Men's attitudes

Many younger males have firm ideas about what constitutes *maleness*; for example, violence shows an alpha mindset that women may think they do not want, but which they will respect.

Definitions of violence are complex among this group; they do not spontaneously define actions as violence unless they involve high levels of physical force and will result in severe harm. However, it is likely that some individuals in these target audience segments can recall incidences where they perpetrated psychological violence or used manipulation rather than physical force to get what they wanted. Recalling such cases, some can recognise where they took advantage of women and may be receptive to re-examining their own behaviour and how it relates to VAWG overall.

For example, rape is an area where some men may be willing to re-examine past behaviour and admit to what they might characterise as over-persuasion techniques to get sex from a partner. If reminded that this type of persuasion is very close to coercion and approaching the definition of rape, it is possible that some men might be more willing to think about their activity and to reconsider past experiences – although not necessarily to the extent that this immediately influences future behaviour or their opinions of others' behaviour.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Women's attitudes

In general, women in these target audience segments exhibit much higher levels of aggression and judgement against female victims than men do and display much harsher criticism of other women's and victims' behaviours. They are likely to move to exclude an undeserving victim from their protection unless they can see her human side or connect with her story.

Fellow feeling with other women is not a driver to support or understand experiences relating to VAWG. Women in the target audience segments are strongly connected to their communities and families and resist any perceived attempts to judge or label them in a negative manner. This means that outsider females – especially those who are shown as sexually provocative – are received with some suspicion and judged to be responsible for violence perpetrated against them.

The research also suggests that younger women believe that they are pro-woman at a simplistic 'girl-power' level. Their confidence in their own ability to be equal to men and belief in their own physical strength can limit their sympathy for victims, who they believe should be able to resist/defend themselves against violence.

Religious, ethnic and social traditional groups' attitudes

These groups have an investment in rejecting messages that challenge the status quo without harm being strongly indicated. In particular they will reject messages where the victim cannot be proved to have acted beyond reproach, such as when a woman is perceived as drunk or sexually aggressive/sexually provocative, and has only suffered minimal physical hurt – psychological harm is rarely considered.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



This group considers the preservation of social and family structures as paramount, and will therefore reject messages that might prompt a move towards divorce without intermediate steps being strongly suggested/prompted – basically, they are reluctant to intervene in domestic abuse in case it leads to family break-up. As a result, they are very unlikely to countenance strongly proactive steps against such violence and will be more comfortable with passive action, such as offering information or passing on telephone numbers.

These groups also expect women to have high levels of agency and expect them to take steps to resolve their own issues – no matter how severe. Even in extreme cases of trafficking and rape, this audience will evidence disbelief that a woman has not left or taken steps to protect herself.

Lower socio-economic groups' attitudes

Within these groups, women have very clearly defined roles that establish a hierarchy and confer the right to safety, consideration and protection – so long as those roles are not transgressed. Both men and women subscribe to a belief in these roles and support those who conform while judging those who do not.

These people are unlikely to act or change their views on VAWG unless:

- harm is clearly indicated and is high level and imminent; and
- their own personal security, both physical and social, can be guaranteed.

This audience is very protective of their own personal rights and their privacy. As a result, they will reject out of hand any messages/ideas that intrude into their private sphere of life or that are seen to challenge their own rights.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Communications activity

Core messages

These simple, clear and unequivocal messages are designed to frame and support your communications activity; they illustrate ultimate goals in communication in this area. You are unlikely to use all of these messages for every piece of activity – or even refer to them explicitly – but you will need to make sure that the messaging you employ for any campaign, leaflet, speech or other type of communication does not appear to undermine or contradict them.

- 1. Violence against women and girls is wrong.**
- 2. All forms of violence against women and girls are unacceptable.**
- 3. There are many types of violence against women and girls and all are an abuse of power.**
- 4. There is no excuse – there are no mitigating circumstances or areas.**
- 5. Culture/religion is not an excuse/reason for violence against women and girls.**
- 6. It is everyone’s responsibility to work together to end violence against women and girls.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN’S ATTITUDES

WOMEN’S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Section 4 of this guidance provides more advice on using the core messages and how to support them with your communications activity.

Developing communications activity

Currently most communications activity around violence against women, across all sectors, falls into one of four categories:

- awareness
- support
- sanction
- challenging attitudes – this is the least common type of activity.

Which of these is the primary aim of a communications activity will depend on a number of factors, including the specific issue being addressed, the target audience, the timetable and available funding. Each will prompt a different response from your target audience.

Awareness

This covers messages giving news and new or extra information, and tends to work by:

- engaging individuals in a world they don't know;
- challenging views;
- making individuals aware of a possible alternative collective view to which they can subscribe; and
- starting thought and conversation among community, family or peer groups, even if the initial response may be hostile.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Support

Communication in this area is generally directed at victims or concerned supporters. The audience is likely to be receptive at times of need, but may miss the messages and information otherwise. This type of activity can:

- offer help or advice; and
- signpost to support or further information.

However, it can also reinforce the idea that women have no agency and that only external 'rescue' can address the problem of violence against women. Take particular care with messaging and creative work so it does not support this view.

Sanction

This type of communication is usually aimed at perpetrators because it gives information about the eventual outcome of their actions. However, on its own, it may not always be an effective driver for sustained attitudinal change because sanctions:

- are rarely immediate;
- are rarely considered in advance of violence – they may be harsh but are more distant than other outcomes;
- depend on proof and getting caught;
- depend on another's actions (reporting, detection etc); and
- may not be believed in – for example, some perpetrators still think that the police will turn a blind eye to domestic violence. There is evidence that some perpetrators are confident they will not be convicted.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Challenging attitudes

This is a very difficult area in which to produce successful communication. Target audiences are likely to feel that challenge messages are critical of them and their personal code of behaviour. Issues to be aware of are:

- their reaction to perceived hostility;
- the assumption that all men are being targeted in a negative manner;
- antagonism to a perceived (negative) feminist agenda;
- resentment of 'nanny state' interference; and
- different attitudes to different types of violence, e.g. rape/sexual violence compared with forced prostitution/sexual exploitation.

Because of the long-term nature of bringing about sustained attitudinal and behavioural change, challenging attitudes should always be a complementary goal of communications activity, even where other priorities mean it is not the primary focus. Using or reflecting the core messages given above and ensuring that all visuals and language are appropriate will help to achieve this.

More advice on imagery and language is provided in **Section 4**, and tools in **Section 6** give detailed examples of effective language choices.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Not all campaigns or communications will have the same start point. This will affect expectations, funding, the communications planning process and whether or not you are able to use evaluation to inform the development or re-development of the activity.

Each communications activity will be:

- a new direct activity with new or dedicated funding, designed to tackle a specific area of violence against women;
- a new indirect activity to address an issue that is not directly connected to violence against women, e.g. drink, safer travel; or
- a refresh of past activity, using existing creative work with new funding, or re-launched due to ministerial priorities etc.

Even where your campaign/activity is a refresh of past activity, you can use the segmentation, messaging and channel recommendations contained in this guidance to support your planning and implementation. You might use existing creative, for example, but change or redraft the copy.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS





Source: © Alamy Images. Picture posed by models

For example, this image could be used to illustrate several VAWG areas:

- trafficking for prostitution
- stalking and harassment
- sexual assault/sexual violence
- domestic violence.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Positioning messages to drive behavioural change

As well as supporting the core messages in all communications activity, it is important to understand how the basic attitudes of the target audiences will affect their understanding and reception of these core messages. Hard-to-influence groups have entrenched and highly traditional views that are difficult to shift. You may have to skirt around unacceptable messaging which sits within their comfort zone to reach them when they are receptive and messages that they will not dismiss out of hand. For example, this audience is willing to protect women, and particularly girls, whom they see as vulnerable or innocent. The challenge will be to capitalise on even this limited willingness while not re-enforcing the view that women who are not vulnerable may be considered less deserving of protection.

The tools in **Section 6** suggest ways of doing this.

The research for this guidance showed the following comfort zones for messaging in this area, which were still firmly based on existing views and prejudices. Consider how these messaging areas can be positioned so that they do not contradict the core violence against women messages in your communications, especially if you are basing creative work or messaging on insight from research.

Always ensure that strand- or activity-specific messaging does not contradict core violence against women messages.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Audience comfort zone How they think	Repositioned for effective VAWG comms Using their existing views to support comms
Vulnerability of women as a reason to protect them	Abuse of power; right to say no, human rights
Women's need for protection/rescue	Support, help, greater good, broken trust
Innocence of victim as a reason to stop/challenge VAWG	Naïvety, unjustifiable, abuse of power, broken trust
Youth of victim as a reason to stop/challenge VAWG	Abuse of power, broken trust
Disbelief evidenced by need for high levels of proof that harm is imminent	Fellow feeling, supporting statistics, establishing empathy

The general public – men in particular – seek out these comfort zones for a range of reasons:

- support and reinforcement of the status quo;
- lack of empathy or desire to understand others' needs;
- what is felt to be a well-thought-out moral code or belief system;
- a chaotic lifestyle that doesn't support challenge or the development of empathy; and
- rejection of 'political correctness', 'strident feminist agenda', 'nanny state' interference.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



In addition, consider the following in communications activity to tackle violence against women.

- Be aware of the need for informed and deliberate use of terminology.
- Avoid stereotypes – write for your audiences, but give consideration to choice of language and visuals to avoid reinforcing negative views and damaging stereotypes. The aim is to try to move them from their comfort zones over time.
- Do not stress the vulnerability or innocence of individuals experiencing VAWG. Stressing the youth or vulnerability of victims runs the risk of implying that the wrongness of the act lies in the innocence of the victim, not the act itself.
- Avoid over-emphasis on culture, especially where forced marriage or so-called 'honour'-based violence is concerned. This can detract from the seriousness of the acts by implying that a single culture, rather than underlying cross-cutting social attitudes which can be evidenced across the range of demographics, is to blame.

Section 6 of this guidance gives detailed examples and advice.

Overall, messages should:

- **be simple and clear;**
- **avoid irony and double meaning – the target audience for communications about violence against women is not sophisticated;**
- **be repetitive – you don't have to run new activity every year, especially if stakeholders are doing something similar;**
- **establish empathy with women/victims;**
- **appeal to the audience's instincts and better nature – you know it's not right; against her will; abuse of power; and**
- **appeal to a collective consciousness that doesn't appear to blame all men for the actions of a few.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Channels for delivery of communications activity

As outlined above, the majority of communications activity will fall into one of four areas: awareness, support, sanction or challenging attitudes.

Taking these into account, and the range of attitudes demonstrated by your target audience, consider a variety of channels to deliver communications activity during your planning process.

Type of activity	Outcome	Channels
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging public with the issues Alerting to a collective view Inviting interest/conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstream media for coverage Supplemented with ethnic minority/specialist media where needed Radio for ethnic minorities, also for some hard-to-influence groups in manual trades – Heart, Magic, Radio 2 etc Via GP/health visitor for hard-to-reach audiences Education routes
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signposting Help and advice Acknowledgement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstream media for coverage Via service providers such as Rape Crisis Via GPs/health visitors for hard-to-influence/hard-to-reach audiences Outdoor – near service providers, buses/bus stops Local media
Sanction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of sanction Promoting awareness of collective view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstream media for coverage Education routes Outdoor – buses/bus stops, washrooms etc Community venues, e.g. sport centres Intermediaries – may have a sell-in job to ensure that their views are aligned with those we wish to promote and embed
Challenging attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning attitudes Awareness of alternative view on the issues Prompt discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstream media for coverage Education routes Outreach for hard-to-influence/hard-to-reach audiences Specialist channels Social marketing-type activity – media, supplemented by education, locally targeted Local press and PR activity

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Remember that a complementary goal of all communications activity will be to support challenge to existing attitudes, so consider the channels suggested above for **Challenging attitudes** activity to support your goals in **Awareness, Support** and **Sanction**.

Section 4 of the guidance offers more detailed information on targeting audiences through different channels, and how they are likely to receive this type of communication.

The tools in **Section 6** include communications grids that give more detail on the target audiences, their overall attitudes and recommended channels for reaching them.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

GENERAL ATTITUDES

MEN'S ATTITUDES

WOMEN'S ATTITUDES

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

CORE MESSAGES

DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

POSITIONING MESSAGES

CHANNELS FOR DELIVERY

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Section 4: Good practice communication

The information in this section is designed to support and enable your communications activity. It looks at core messages to include, appropriate use of language and visual imagery, and opportunities for joined-up communications.

The advice given is drawn from conversations with stakeholders and insight from primary research, and is intended to be unequivocal. Although it is not always possible to be as definitive as this, these are the principles you should aim to follow wherever possible.

The principles are useful for anyone working across government, the third sector and in other areas that have broad relevance to the violence against women agenda, particularly if people are likely to be asked to produce communications at short notice and need clear guidelines.

This is a sensitive area and there is a risk of inadvertently making 'mistakes' that could dilute the message, alienate sections of the audience or reduce the effectiveness of communications.

Communication has a key role in challenging entrenched views. This is a long-term activity, and should be seen as such and planned accordingly.

Be careful not to reinforce stereotypical views, including through use of language or imagery, when attempting to target messages and information at audiences effectively. Whatever the primary aim of your communications activity, a clear and acknowledged complementary aim should be to **challenge views and attitudes that support, facilitate or condone violence against women.**

Tools in [Section 6](#) suggest specific drivers for change and terminology to use.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Core violence against women messages

The messages below are intended to frame and inform all your communications activity. They are simple, clear and unequivocal and illustrate ultimate goals for communication around violence against women and girls (VAWG).

1. **Violence against women and girls is wrong.**
2. **All forms of violence against women and girls are unacceptable.**
3. **There are many types of violence against women and girls and all are an abuse of power.**
4. **There is no excuse – there are no mitigating circumstances or areas.**
5. **Culture/religion is not an excuse/reason for violence against women and girls.**
6. **It is everyone’s responsibility to work together to end violence against women and girls.**

Obviously you will not use all of these for every piece of activity – or even refer to them explicitly – but you will need to **ensure that the messaging you employ for your campaign, leaflet, speech or any other type of communication does not appear to undermine or contradict these core messages.** Any strand- or activity-specific messages should support or complement them.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



This will be easier to do if you are working on what is considered to be a core VAWG area such as rape and sexual violence, female genital mutilation or domestic violence. It may be more challenging if you are working in areas that have implications for violence against women but are not explicitly considered to be VAWG issues, such as:

- alcohol
- drugs
- travel
- sexual health, including sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancy.

You may need to remind agencies and suppliers of these core messages, and ensure that the need to support these messages in all communications is not forgotten in the search for memorable straplines.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Positive communications

Certain groups are reputed to have attitudes to women and violence against women that are more prepared to condone, excuse or make an effort to understand violence. Their views highlight 'grey areas', such as provocation, which many people believe can explain, if not excuse, violence.

It is important to communicate positively with these target audiences if you want them to change or even to consider the messages aimed at them. The research carried out for this guidance has supplied some effective ways to communicate with hard-to-influence audiences.

See **Section 6** for tools to target specific groups, including communications grids, examples of wording to use and appropriate levers for change.

Communicating safety issues

There will always be a need for communications activity to advise on safety issues such as using licensed taxis, safe routes home and drink spiking. Issues will also be discussed that, in the process of raising awareness of sanction or support, unintentionally excite fear or concern about violence and women's risk of violence.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



This makes it even more important to consider your choice of language and tone used to ensure that advice cannot be interpreted as a licence to confer blame on women if they are attacked or if other violence is perpetrated on them. Sometimes messaging can reinforce attitudes you are trying to change, for example women out late should take the consequences. There is particular danger here in communications about travel, alcohol and drug consumption. Take care not to employ language or quote statistics that, while intended to reassure, may actually have the effect of increasing fear and so circumscribing women's activities and perpetuating feelings of danger.

One stakeholder told us that magazines for young women regularly ask them for advice on how their readers can keep themselves safe. While safety messages do have value, they need to be used with care. Otherwise they can indirectly reinforce the view that women have responsibility for violence committed against them and put the onus on women and girls to protect themselves rather than addressing perpetrators' behaviour.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Language

Stakeholders have stressed the need for a common language that expresses unity of thought and attitudes, and underlines the fact that there is a cross-governmental (and cross-sector) view of violence against women and related issues.

There is general agreement about the importance of using appropriate language in communications in this area. The difficulty has always been reaching an agreement as to what is appropriate. It is particularly challenging because there are varying ideas as to what is appropriate, and language that is acceptable in some contexts is unacceptable in others and may give offence, even if it is absolutely the correct language to use in that context. For example, offence may be taken to the use of the term prostitute with preference for the phrase sex worker. We suggest that the term prostitute is more appropriate because some people, particularly users of prostitutes, use the phrase sex worker to promote the idea of prostitution solely as an economic contract between two consenting adults. This denies the possibility of harm or exploitation for women in prostitution.

It is up to communicators to set the priorities where language and usage are concerned. This is particularly important given the range of views and attitudes exhibited by the general public to the areas and issues that comprise violence against women. Do not underestimate the importance of language and the choices you make to communicate messages about violence against women.

The text of this guidance refers to *prostitutes* throughout, although you should note that some stakeholders prefer the phrase *women in prostitution*.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Gender-neutral language

Where violence against women is concerned, gender-neutral language is not always appropriate. The focus is on violence that is committed disproportionately against women, and most often because they are women.

- In 2007/08, women were the victim of 77% of incidents of domestic violence.
- In 2007/08, in 74% of cases of domestic violence, the perpetrator was male.

It can dilute strong messages to stress the cross-gender nature of some types of violence – such as the fact that women may also be perpetrators – in communications activity aimed at tackling violence against women. It also allows people who wish to see violence against women as a ‘six of one, half a dozen of the other’ issue to continue to do so.

There will obviously be policy and communications activity designed to address all types of violence, but when the focus of activity is addressing violence against women, you need to be clear that this is the case and be equally clear about the rationale.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Visuals

Overall, visuals for any communications activity should:

- be inclusive, but not tokenistic;
- avoid stereotypes and negative associations;
- be culturally appropriate and sensitive where relevant; and
- consciously challenge negative/prevalent views and stereotypes.

An example of good practice in following these general rules is the **Images of Disability** initiative designed to help government communicators ensure that disabled people know about government information and services and that communication is accessible and appropriate.

Choosing or commissioning visuals and imagery

Research carried out and reviewed by the American Psychiatric Association demonstrates a clear link between the sexualisation of girls and the following:

- sexual harassment
- beliefs that women invite or deserve rape and sexual assault
- low confidence in young women.

Anecdotal evidence in this research suggests that viewing sexualised images supports the belief that women are primarily sexual objects. It is likely that these beliefs may be temporarily highly active, for example immediately after someone has been looking at sexualised images, even those contained in mainstream media such as TV, music stations and men's magazines. **Be careful not to use images of this type in communications.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS



When considering the types of images to use in communications activity, avoid the following:

- images that present women as sexually available;
- images that imply a causal link between drunkenness or other vulnerable states and sexual availability or blame;
- images that objectify women or focus on sexual characteristics; and
- images that only focus on physical violence and its effects.



Source: © Alamy Images. Picture posed by models

Try to avoid images such as this one.

Pictures of this kind are often used in the press to illustrate the dangers of binge drinking. But using pictures of this type can mean that the real issue gets lost in opinions about changes in society, the 'ladette' culture and the view that being drunk in this way invites sexual assault, when the intention was to draw the audience's attention to safe levels of alcohol consumption.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Wherever possible, try to choose imagery that:

- establishes empathy or a connection between the target audience and the victim/issue;
- is hard-hitting but not sensationalised; and
- encourages new ways of considering the issues.

The *Know Your Limits* campaign, while fairly graphic about the effects of binge drinking, is a really good example of effective creative imagery used to catch the audience's attention without being overly sensational, and also without implying a lack of morality or that drunkenness inevitably leads to sexual assault.



Source: © Crown. Models used.

You can view the full ad here: [**Know Your Limits**](#).

See **Section 6** for tools which consider some example visuals and how the audience might view them.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Collaborative working

This is a great way to gain buy-in from a range of stakeholders and also to share information and benefit from others' experience of tackling violence against women. Your choice of partner will vary depending on the particular activity, budget or target audience.

The best way to reach a target audience may be through local providers or community-based organisations.

Before you start communications work, check whether any stakeholders – within government or externally – are already carrying out or contemplating activity on a specific violence against women or related issue. You will also need to ensure that you plan for the impact of a successful campaign – for example by monitoring referrals driven by that campaign.

If possible, involve stakeholders at the policy development stage or early in the communications planning process.

This will have a number of benefits. It will:

- create and maintain a dialogue;
- offer opportunities to share expertise and research;
- avoid duplication of work;
- reduce potential for conflicting activities/messaging;
- reduce the risk of saturation/information overload; and
- provide opportunities to share copy/creative work, creating a coherent feel for the activity and demonstrating common attitudes across government, stakeholder organisations and sectors.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Forming partnerships

In all types of partnership, whether with mainstream organisations, stakeholders, partners or community groups of various types, you will need to work hard to establish relationships, overcome any reservations or mistrust and address potentially negative attitudes – to Government or the issue. While their expertise and knowledge of their community or sector is invaluable, expert stakeholders or community intermediaries and influencers can sometimes be resistant to certain messages and ideas, believing that they best know the issues and how they relate to their own stakeholders, clients or target audiences.

Be clear about your reasons for partnership and have an action plan to achieve your objectives. The following checklist may help.

1. Why do we want to work with these partners?

Think about what working with them will achieve that you cannot do on your own or that will create goodwill, etc.

2. Who is our target audience?

3. Are these the best partners for us to work with to reach our target?

Some stakeholders, experts or intermediaries may be self-appointed and not as closely connected with the audience as they claim to be.

4. What does the audience need to know?

5. Why do they need to know it?

Think about whether you are providing information that the audience would be seeking out anyway or whether it's information that you believe they should have.

6. What's in it for the partner/stakeholder?

Think through why they might want to be involved but also why they might not – e.g. increased demand may be an issue.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Working with schools/educational establishments

School is where core values are reinforced and where the majority of socialisation takes place. This is a good place to tackle inappropriate views and behaviour relating to VAWG.

Consider working with schools and other educational establishments in the following ways:

- to develop your communications activity in the first instance;
- to trial some activity or conduct small-scale pilots; and
- to look for evidence of effective attitudinal and behavioural challenge that can be adapted or rolled out in other communications areas.

Working with local government

Local government organisations and partnerships often carry out communications tackling violence against women and related areas, at short notice or making use of short-term funding streams.

Working together can help to:

- access research and information to inform activity;
- increase return on investment by targeting activity more effectively;
- reduce costs by sharing creative; and
- avoid information overload by co-ordinating activity.

One service provider worked with a local authority to attach messages based on zero tolerance messaging to VAWG to its employees' wage slips.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Working with community leaders and intermediaries

Working with community leaders and intermediaries is standard good practice in communicating with the majority of marginalised groups – not just ethnic minority communities but any group that is more difficult to communicate with or influence. There is scope for trusted figures to mediate messages to the general public and other audiences.

The appropriate intermediary will depend heavily on:

- who your target audience is;
- the specific VAWG issue you are addressing; and
- the type of activity you wish to carry out.

Members of some groups and communities are likely to be reluctant to admit to issues in the area of violence against women. They may feel stigmatised if they believe that they are being singled out.

Outreach work

Any kind of outreach work involves taking a message directly to a group or community at a grassroots level. This is particularly important in communicating with communities that are not served by either mainstream or specialist media, but outreach is also important in targeting any audiences where there may be resistance to messages about violence against women or to the attitudinal and behaviour changes you are trying to achieve.

For more information on outreach work and how to carry it out effectively, see *Communicating with Communities using Outreach: a Good Practice Guide*.

Section 2 and **Section 6** of this guidance look at specific communications routes for target audiences based on attitudinal segmentation, including education, leisure and community venues.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

CORE MESSAGES

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

LANGUAGE

VISUALS

COLLABORATIVE WORKING

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Section 5: Evaluating communications activity

It is important that communications activity is effective, but also that it can be seen to be effective and, therefore, successful. This is even more important when activity is targeted by attitude rather than demographic, or where the activity being measured is new or complex.

There are lessons to be learned from the Department of Health's use of market testing to evaluate whether there was a role for customer relationship management in its work on stopping smoking and whether multiple interventions could improve cessation rates. This is covered in *The Together programme: breaking new ground in smoking cessation*. Activity to address violence against women will be different from this and cannot rely on the support of a big national campaign, but even so the principles are the same.

Evaluation of communications activity is vital. It tells you whether the activity:

- reached the target audience;
- is likely to change or influence behaviour;
- has provided value for money; and
- is worth repeating.

It also provides a second opportunity to convince your stakeholders of the validity of activity, and can even increase the value of an activity. For example, to reignite interest in a topic, campaign or policy area, ministers can use the evaluation to talk about how effective the original activity was.

The Home Office's Communication Strategy and Insight Unit has published a best practice guide, *Evaluating communications: a best practice guide*, which sets out the importance of evaluation and how to plan and implement effective evaluation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

MEASURING AND MAPPING

USING ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION

PRE-PLANNING

POST-EVENT/ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Measuring and mapping attitudinal change

Awareness evaluation remains important in evaluating communications activity, but where violence against women and girls (VAWG) is concerned you also need to evaluate activity according to how it is influencing and ultimately, over time, changing the attitudes that support or condone violence against women and the journey from attitudinal change to behaviour change.

This is a long-term process and results may not be immediately discernable.

You might consider the following:

- clear benchmarking of attitudes, possibly through some kind of longitudinal survey;
- longitudinal assessment of attitudes and how these change over time; and
- whether claimed changes in attitude are supported by measurable (by whatever criteria) changes in behaviour, such as:
 - attitudinal statements;
 - long-term reductions in statistics;
 - approaches to support services;
 - an increase in conviction rates; and
 - an increase in reporting rates.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

MEASURING AND MAPPING

USING ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION

PRE-PLANNING

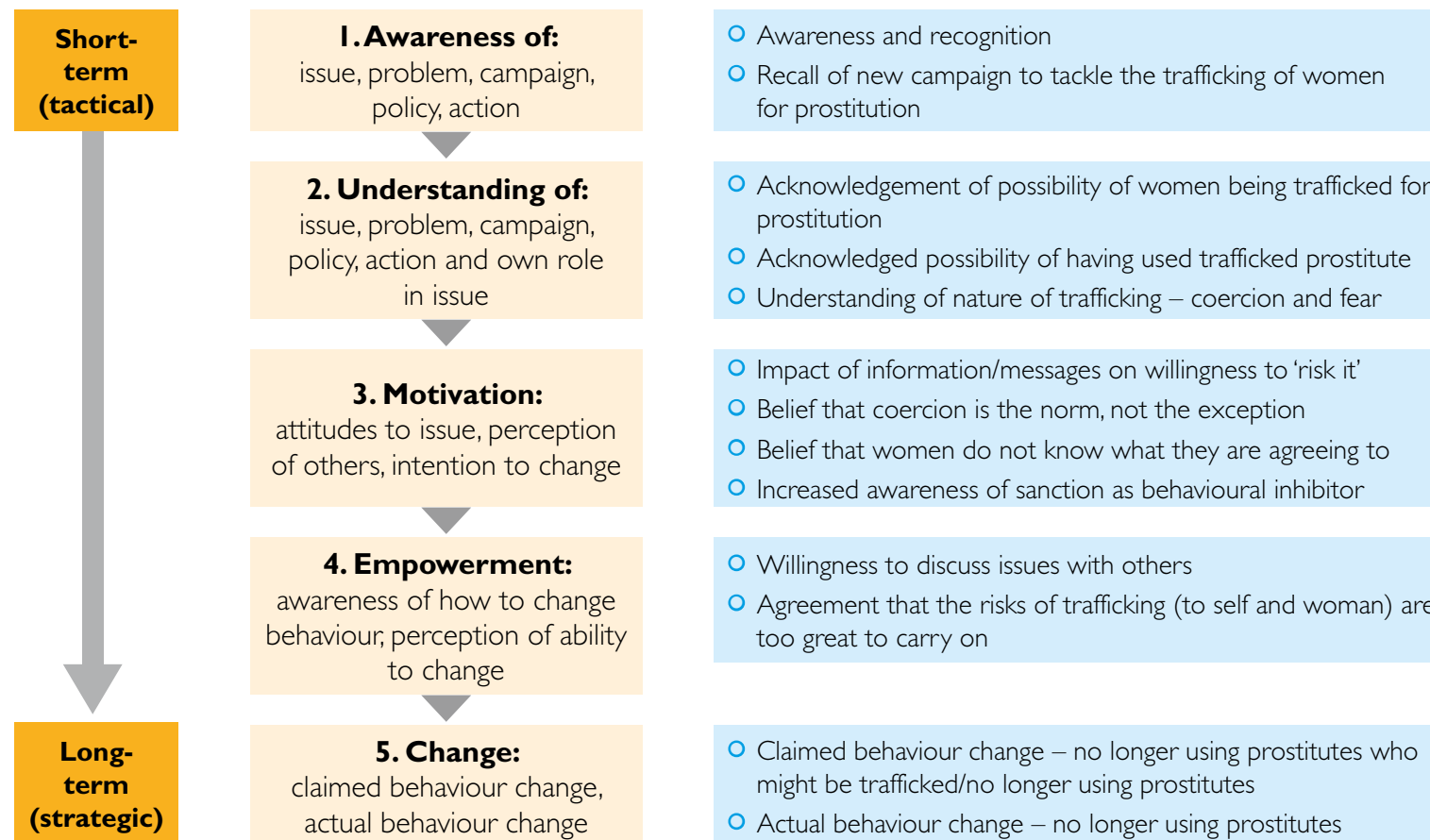
POST-EVENT/ACTIVITY

TOOLS



The flow chart below shows how you might map attitudinal change goals in relation to a specific aspect of violence against women, in this case **trafficking for prostitution**. It demonstrates the journey from attitudinal to behaviour change that may be achieved through targeted communications activity.

Mapping attitudinal change in relation to the trafficking of women for prostitution



INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

MEASURING AND MAPPING

USING ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION

PRE-PLANNING

POST-EVENT/ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Using attitudinal segmentation in evaluation

Attitudinal segmentation of target audiences can be used as a tool to set objectives for communications activity and then to track behaviour change.

See [Section 2](#) for more information on attitudinal segmentation.

Pre-planning

- Use the attitudinal segmentation, any past evaluation and insight research to determine where on the spectrum of attitudes your target audience currently sits.
- Decide how far a specific piece of activity can reasonably be expected to move your audience, taking the following into account to set your metrics:
 - objectives
 - issue
 - key messages
 - target audience
 - channels available
 - timing.
- Benchmark attitudes and awareness.
- Plan what your evaluation activity will comprise and set your budget.

There are specific tools to support using segmentation in communications in [Section 6](#).

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

MEASURING AND MAPPING

USING ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION

PRE-PLANNING

POST-EVENT/ACTIVITY

TOOLS



Post-event/activity

- Carry out your evaluation activity using agreed metrics. This could include:
 - tracking research
 - response monitoring
 - web statistics
 - in-depth analysis
 - evaluating the media mix
- Check the results against public service agreements, national indicators or other organisational targets.
- Use the results of your evaluation to help plan the next phase of communications activity. What worked? What didn't work? What was good value for money?
- Share your evaluation with partners, stakeholders and other colleagues where possible, so that learning and good practice are widely disseminated.

See **Section 6** of this guidance for an example of how attitudinal segmentation can be used in communications planning and evaluation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

MEASURING AND MAPPING

USING ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION

PRE-PLANNING

POST-EVENT/ACTIVITY

TOOLS

Section 6: Tools

This section contains a range of tools you may find useful in planning and implementing communications activity. All of these tools were developed using the insight gained from research into the views, behaviours and attitudes of the identified priority target audience segments and the most effective ways to communicate with them (see *Research Summary* for details).

- An **example** campaign showing how the attitudinal segmentation may be used.
- A **blank segmentation grid** to guide planning and evaluation.
- Summaries of common attitudes to the areas of violence against women which were covered in the research. These suggest appropriate language to use and ways to develop empathy, covering:
 - **prostitution**
 - **rape and sexual violence**
 - **domestic violence**
 - **trafficking**
 - **forced marriage**
 - **so-called 'honour' crime.**
- Detailed description of **hard-to-influence groups**, with suggested levers for change, communications channels and message positioning.
- A **blank grid for planning your campaign**, including target audiences.
- Three **pen portraits** based on attitudinal segmentation to offer insight into attitudes and appropriate messaging.
- Some **example visuals** with guidance on how the audience might interpret them and suggestions to address this.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

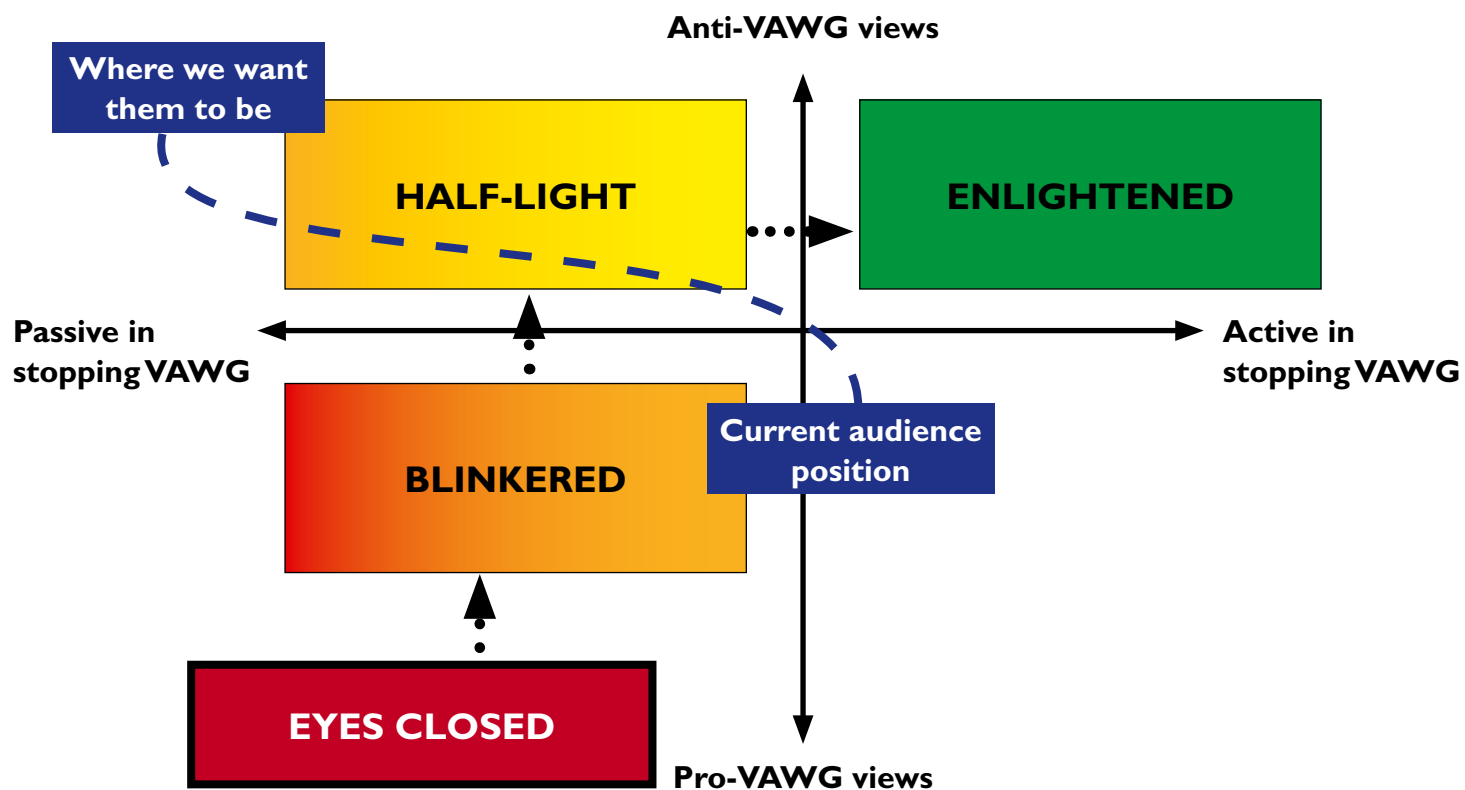
Answer the following questions:

1.	What are our communications objectives? – Awareness, support, sanction, challenging attitudes
2.	What are our core messages? – Ensure these are based on insight, are well targeted and support the core VAWG messages
3.	Who are the target audience? – General public, victims, perpetrators
4.	What are the target audience's current attitudes? – This will inform tone, language, channels, messages and visuals
5.	What are the desired outcomes? – How far do we want to influence attitudes?
6.	What is the time-scale for change? – Short term, e.g. call to action; medium term, e.g. support; long term, e.g. behaviour change
7.	What are the most appropriate activities/channels?
8.	What have we learnt from creative development/user testing?
9.	What does the evaluation tell us? – The feedback loop is important and will help to track attitudes over time and act as a benchmark

Using the segmentation to plan communications activity – an example campaign

Primary goal: to make users of prostitutes aware of the issue of trafficking for prostitution.

Secondary goal: to encourage these men to reconsider attitudes that support using prostitutes.



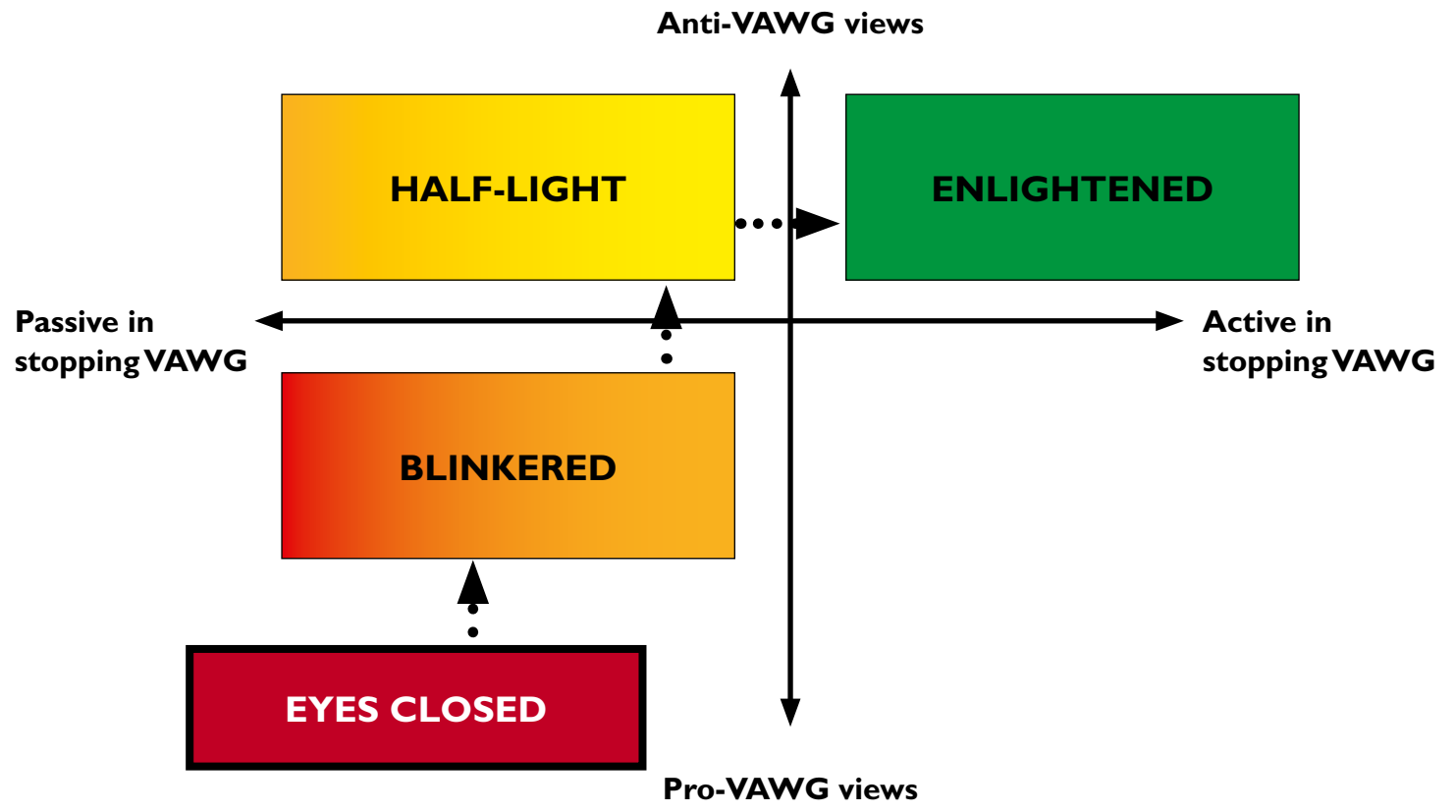
Target: Blinkered (Misguided) – May be open to change – require right message, high level of proof (PUSHABLE).
Required journey: To Half-light – Starting to be aware of consequences, desire to change – BUT will not be a linear journey.
Channels and influencers: Colleagues, newspapers, peer group conversations, online, blogs, forums.
Messages: No one chooses this; You know it's not right; Trust your instincts; Sex against her will is rape; What would everyone think if you got caught?
Evaluation: Pre- and post-awareness and attitudes, qualitative research, web hits, click-through.

Answer the following questions:

1. What are our communications objectives? – Awareness, support, sanction, challenging attitudes
2. What are our core messages? – Ensure these are based on insight, are well targeted and support the core VAWG messages
3. Who are the target audience? – General public, victims, perpetrators
4. What are the target audience's current attitudes? – This will inform tone, language, channels, messages and visuals
5. What are the desired outcomes? – How far do we want to influence attitudes?
6. What is the time-scale for change? – Short term, e.g. call to action; medium term, e.g. support; long term, e.g. behaviour change
7. What are the most appropriate activities/channels?
8. What have we learnt from creative development/user testing?
9. What does the evaluation tell us? – The feedback loop is important and will help to track attitudes over time and act as a benchmark

You can use this blank segmentation as a tool for planning communications and evaluation

– answering the questions in the blue box will help you to plan and consider where on the segmentation you want to move the target audience to and how effective your activity has been.



Target:
Required journey:
Channels and influencers:
Messages:
Evaluation:



ATTITUDES TO PROSTITUTION

This page tells you what common attitudes are and how to establish empathy in order to make communications more effective. It also gives you some choices of language to use that will resonate with the target audiences, while supporting the Government's policy on VAWG.

THE COMMON VIEW:

- Widespread moralising and aggression against prostitutes and vocal belief that 'escorts' are just too lazy to get 'real jobs'
- Refusal to recognise harm caused by prostitution except in 'extreme' cases – this is **not** considered to be violence against women
- Views are supported by acceptance of male right to sex

AUDIENCE

Males paying prostitutes for sex

ATTITUDES

- Belief that some prostitutes are 'career' prostitutes with stable lives and families serves to mitigate harm in their view
- Perceived difference between on-street prostitute and 'paid-for girlfriend'
- Comfort zone of language – escort or 'paid-for girlfriend' preferred to reduce idea of harm
- Belief that there is no risk of discovery or sanction for them
- Understanding and exploitation of legal loophole, e.g. what defines a brothel

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Psychological harm
- Named woman with back-story
- Perceived 'extremes' as the norm for women
- Proof that she has no choice
- Evidence lack of desire/respect on woman's part for 'punter'

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Challenge ideas that support habitual behaviour that is, to some extent, expected and condoned
- Challenge view of prostitution as a choice which is harmful to women only in extreme cases
- Move the audiences from idea of 'exchange' and service delivery concept to potential for harm
- De-bunk the Belle de Jour myth which positions prostitution as a glamorous career
- Humanise prostitutes rather than focus solely on sanction, e.g. for kerb crawling

AUDIENCE

Religious and traditional females

ATTITUDES

- Belief and some acceptance that males might feel compelled to buy what they can't get at home – level of understanding and excuse
- Strong hope that their husband would not feel the need to use a prostitute, but would see it as their own 'failure' if he did
- The prostitute is absent as a 'real' person – two-dimensional with limited back-story and so limited empathy

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Psychological harm
- Named woman with back-story
- Perceived 'extremes' as the norm for women
- Proof that she has no choice
- Wider social harm
- Harm to children/family

“It's better he pays a willing person than rapes somebody.”

Female, White British, 55+ C2DE

CHOOSING LANGUAGE

DO SAY: prostitute, low self-esteem, abuse, loss of autonomy, humiliation, struggling to pay the rent, frightened, trapped, embarrassed, isolated, stuck, addiction, for longer than she ever thought, life sentence, no choice, not the easy option, day after day, pretending to smile on the outside, judging him, self-loathing

DON'T SAY: escort, massage parlour, paid-for girlfriend, sex worker, clients, call-girl

ATTITUDES TO RAPE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

This page tells you what common attitudes are and how to establish empathy in order to make communications more effective. It also gives you some choices of language to use that will resonate with the target audiences, while promoting the Government's policy on VAWG.

THE COMMON VIEW:

- General agreement that rape is wrong, but supported by a range of caveats and grey areas that blame women for rape and excuse perpetrators
- Views supported by belief in male right to sex
- Belief that women deliberately manipulate situations – 'cry wolf'

AUDIENCE

Women

ATTITUDES

- Expectation that they would be able to fight off any attacker – so if a woman is raped she must have wanted to be (at some level)
- Seeing women as very two-dimensional with no right to say no after any kind of 'come on'
- Belief that there is a 'point of no return' beyond which a woman loses the right to say no
- Ambivalence and belief in women's mixed messages mean they find it hard to believe in acquaintance rape
- Being drunk confers blame

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Humanise women in this situation
- Psychological harm
- Physical harm
- Any sex without consent is rape
- She wasn't expecting this to happen

AUDIENCE

Men

ATTITUDES

- Belief that there is a 'point of no return' beyond which a woman loses the right to say no
- Female responsibility – women need to be aware of the sexual signals they are sending out
- View that 'persuading' or 'cajoling' are legitimate ways to get a woman to have sex with them – little awareness of psychological effects of this or potential for women to feel that they had no choice
- Expectation (traditionalists) that 'their' woman would rather die than be raped
- Being drunk implies consent

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Humanise women in this situation
- Encourage deeper thought into the line between persuasion and coercion
- Ideas about abuse of trust
- What a coward would do
- Appeal to self-respect and self-esteem

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Challenge ideas that confer blame for rape where a woman is drunk
- Promote view that 'drunk enough' is too drunk
- Challenge view of rape as solely 'stranger danger'
- Promote view of rape as cowardly abuse of trust
- Humanise women in this situation – promote understanding that they have needs and feelings and are not responsible for others' actions
- Raise awareness of what rape is – define, then challenge grey areas

“When you hear the word ‘rape’ you immediately think of someone being violent, using a knife or something... Crimewatch...”

Male, Pakistani, 16–25

CHOOSING LANGUAGE

DO SAY: flirting, fun night out ruined, slightly drunk and liked him, reasons for pulling back – he was getting the wrong signals, he was more interested in sex than she was, she never intended to but he ignored her, abuse of trust, against her will, man has no right to take sex, a cowardly act, forced her to say yes, she knew she had no choice but to give in, by the time she realised it was too late to get away, she couldn't believe he'd do anything like that

ATTITUDES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

This page tells you what common attitudes are and how to establish empathy in order to make communications more effective. It also gives you some choices of language to use that will resonate with the target audiences, while promoting the Government's policy on VAWG.

THE COMMON VIEW:

- Perceived solely as physical abuse – understanding is driven (and hampered) by media/soap stories that focus on short-term highly visible abuse
- Widely condemned but great willingness to find excuses
- Investment in minimising extent and seriousness

AUDIENCE

All

ATTITUDES

- Psychological abuse rarely considered – especially long-term abuse that erodes confidence and reduces efficacy and ability to resist
- Assumption that domestic violence is a single instance with anger, stress or alcohol as the catalyst or driver
- Clear assumption that a woman will leave 'if it's that bad'
- Physical abuse is easier to explain – framework of slaps and arguments culminating in 'losing it once'
- Harm is minimised or ignored
- Little awareness of numbers of women killed by a current or former partner
- Domestic violence is private and not part of the public world so intervention is inappropriate
- Domestic violence diagnosed as a failure of the female to react appropriately to situations
- Male resistance to 'mental' abuse and 'her controlling his mind' – example of mental abuse: complaining, expressing unhappiness with the relationship, asking where he had been
- Some belief that women want/need a level of violence to engender the proper level of respect for their man

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Humanise women experiencing this
- Ongoing fear and uncertainty faced
- Psychological violence and damage
- How he kept her down
- Threats
- Abuse of trust, from the person who should love her most

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Encourage alternative ways to consider domestic violence, e.g. bullying is well understood and opens up the perspective of sustained, long-term psychological abuse that is difficult to resist/ challenge
- Promote the view that domestic abuse does not always involve violence but is always about control and is always unacceptable
- Promote understanding that domestic abuse includes financial control and monitoring of actions
- Challenge view of domestic violence as a private act
- Challenge view that aggression/violence are routes to respect

“It's wrong to hit anyone full stop, but if someone made you angry... sometimes it's just a natural thing to hit someone.”

Male, Pakistani, C2, 16–25

CHOOSING LANGUAGE

DO SAY: bullying, beating, wearing down, self-esteem, putting his weakness onto her; making her feel small, belittling, putting her down, spite, won't control his temper; knows he can persuade her it was the last time, Jekyll and Hyde, average lifestyle – it could be anyone you know, ashamed, doesn't understand why she can't make him stop, two women die every week, rocking the boat – but worth it, what if you're her last hope?

DON'T SAY: stronger

ATTITUDES TO TRAFFICKING

This page tells you what common attitudes are and how to establish empathy in order to make communications more effective. It also gives you some choices of language to use that will resonate with the target audiences, while promoting the Government's policy on VAWG.

THE COMMON VIEW:

- Little consideration given to this issue – well hidden and little desire to know
- Views – where they exist – are supported by acceptance of male right to sex

AUDIENCE

Mid-age white
British females

ATTITUDES

- Little awareness about trafficking
- Belief that it only happens to foreign women
- No awareness of trafficking within UK of British women
- Low awareness of levels of coercion and violence that are connected with trafficking
- Some suspicion of the fact that the woman does not run away
- Some hostility to the woman as an individual who wanted to 'come to Britain and trusted the gang'

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Isolation and exploitation
- Raped every day
- Abuse of trust
- Lied to
- Sold
- Threatened
- No escape

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Promote understanding of the financial and social factors that support and facilitate trafficking
- Raise general awareness of trafficking and what it means for a woman to be trafficked – daily rape, threats, violence, fear; worry about repercussions on family
- Promote and reinforce view that sex with a trafficked woman is rape
- Challenge idea that only 'innocent' victims deserve help
- Over time, challenge perceived distinctions between trafficked prostitutes and those from UK

AUDIENCE

Males visiting
prostitutes

ATTITUDES

- Belief that only using British prostitutes means it's not an issue for them
- Belief that they would know if a woman was having sex with them against her will
- No awareness of internal trafficking
- Surprise and interest when they realise that ignorance is no defence and sex with a trafficked woman is rape – prompts re-think to methods of procuring prostitutes, but not to prostitution per se

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Sex against her will is rape
- Raped every day
- No escape
- You are inflicting long-term physical and mental damage
- Abuse of trust
- Don't be part of it, don't make it worse

“... can you imagine if a lad was taken to a brothel aged 18 [as a rite of passage] and then came out a rapist?”

Male, White British, BCI, BC2, 25–54

CHOOSING LANGUAGE

DO SAY: helpless, beating, no escape, you could be her last hope, raped every day, do the right thing, abuse of trust, abuse of power, human rights, deserves better, loss of liberty, you know it's not right, trust your instincts

ATTITUDES TO FORCED MARRIAGE

This page tells you what common attitudes are and how to establish empathy in order to make communications more effective. It also gives you some choices of language to use that will resonate with the target audiences, while promoting the Government's policy on VAWG.

THE COMMON VIEW:

- Where it is acknowledged to exist, belief that this is solely an Asian issue
- Reluctance from some to admit that it's an issue

AUDIENCE

All

ATTITUDES

- Belief that this is a possibility only in Asian families
- Understanding of drivers: personal 'face' and relationship management, family status, immigration concerns
- Belief that forced marriage doesn't exist in other cultures
- Willingness to discuss as issue that affects others or people they know about – no claim to direct personal experience
- Belief that women should be able to rescue themselves – speak up!
- Forced marriage not connected with rape – rather physical or emotional limitation
- Willing to pass on telephone numbers/information where a need is perceived

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Rape as a consequence of forced marriage
- Attitudes that support forced marriage exist in all communities
- Ambivalence and need for family approval
- Confusion and unwillingness to believe that family will abuse power and trust in this way
- Isolated
- Vulnerable
- No support, nowhere to turn
- Bullied and worn down

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Promote idea that all forms of violence are everyone's problem
- Promote awareness of forced marriage as a type of domestic violence and abuse of trust like any other
- Challenge ideas of honour
- Over time, work to re-frame ideas of honour and family obligation
- Exploit widespread (female) willingness to pass on information about support and help
- Address the issues, but without seeming to stigmatise a specific group/culture
- Raised awareness that forced marriage can also be an issue for (learning) disabled, LBT and Traveller women

“There's no such thing as a forced marriage... it's arranged.”

Male, South Asian C2, 25–54

CHOOSING LANGUAGE

DO SAY: shame, face-saving, no love – no respect, sex against her will/rape, torn between two terrible things, no way out, needs help, marry for love, not the same as an arranged marriage, abuse of trust, abuse of power, she knows she is being forced but she doesn't want to lose her family, support, pass the number on if you are concerned, this harm lasts a lifetime and her children's lifetime, right to choose, resistance worn down, human rights, would you allow your child to be raped every day?

ATTITUDES TO 'HONOUR' CRIME

This page tells you what common attitudes are and how to establish empathy in order to make communications more effective. It also gives you some choices of language to use that will resonate with the target audiences, while promoting the Government's policy on VAWG.

THE COMMON VIEW:

- Little understanding of this as a concept
- Where it is understood, seen purely as an Asian issue

AUDIENCE

Some (but need to engage across all audiences)

ATTITUDES

- Belief that actions of this type are wrong, but difficulty connecting them with motive, i.e. preservation of honour in some way
- Where harm or risk is established, expectation that the woman will take steps to save herself
- Reluctance from some to intervene in private family sphere, especially if harm to family or social structure is the result
- Broadly willing to help if given information about what to do

ESTABLISHING EMPATHY

- Victimized by family – whom they should be able to trust
- Ultimate abuse of power
- Living a life of fear
- Physical and psychological attack
- Constant surveillance – no freedom or privacy
- Imprisoned
- Bullying
- Long-term abuse and control
- Confusion and unwillingness to believe that family will abuse power and trust in this way
- Isolated
- Vulnerable
- No support, nowhere to turn

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Promote idea that all forms of violence are everyone's problem
- Promote awareness of 'honour' crime as a type of domestic violence and abuse of trust like any other
- Over time, work to re-frame ideas of honour and family obligation
- Use nascent willingness to pass on information about support and help
- Address the issues, but without seeming to stigmatise a specific group/culture

“Murder? Kidnapping? Of course these are crimes!...Why are they telling us these are crimes?”

Female, Pakistani, 36–54

CHOOSING LANGUAGE

DO SAY: shame, saving face, abuse of power, human rights, protection in law, no tolerance for domestic bullying, children are not your property, respect for family members, different choices, motives for crimes make no difference, torn between family and own choices

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: General public

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

Across these target audience segments there is a lack of equality education in the first instance, and a lack of understanding of the effects of inequality on women and girls. Basic facts are missing, and there is not a sense of women as a group who generally suffer disproportionate violence. In some cases, there is a misconception that 'the system' favours women over men and vocal resentment of this. Any challenge to existing attitudes is labelled as feminism and is disregarded as too extreme and not really 'how the real world operates'. Any kind of challenge is likely to be heard as strident, didactic and interfering.

These segments tend to bond with their own community against the outside world when it comes to any attack on cultural or social beliefs – this is as true of White British communities as it is of ethnic minority groups. Therefore, men and women in these segments can become very sensitive to criticism of 'their men', particularly if it appears that sons or husbands/partners are being attacked or stigmatised.

Women are valued according to a hierarchy – Daughter, Wife, and Worker roles offer the female a way of being seen and understood by others; women without a role of this kind are seen as dangerous, out of control and a threat to social structures.

There is a perceived hierarchy of violence against women – for example, prostitution is considered to be a choice rather than violence. Rape and sexual violence are viewed in relation to the question of how the female managed to get herself into the situation, focusing on the belief that she must have sent the 'wrong signals' or done the wrong thing to be suddenly unprotected. Further, the mechanics of rape are not understood; there is a strong assumption that it would be easy to escape, especially among younger women. Sex is seen by many as a male right and persuasion techniques are regularly used to ensure that sex happens; females feel very unable to resist this type of 'persuasion' and are ill-equipped to recognise when 'persuasion' is likely to become coercion – many feel that they have little right to refuse sex in these circumstances.

VAWG is not acceptable, but under certain circumstances can be understood, excused or condoned. For example, where rape is concerned, the woman is likely to have contributed to the sexual signals that got her into that position, and therefore likely not to be deserving of sympathy, help or belief.

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: General public

Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>Broad and wide equality education that explains basic discrimination – a global perspective is helpful to move people from cultural specificity to human generality.</p> <p>Any messaging must be backed up by compelling statistics and case histories to create and reinforce empathy.</p> <p>Rape is never acceptable; it is an abuse of trust.</p> <p>People who have been raped did not expect it would happen to them.</p>	<p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG and sanctions that will attend even VAWG that they do not believe is violence.</p> <p>Rape is having sex with someone without their consent; it is never acceptable. Whatever the relationship, the male has the responsibility to gain positive sexual consent.</p> <p>Rape does not always involve additional physical violence – many attackers use fear or psychological violence.</p>	<p>Your issues are not isolated and personal; they are part of something larger which happens and is supported because you are female.</p> <p>You wouldn't want other women to deal with this on their own. Don't deal with it on your own (this can be supported by compelling statistics and case histories about VAWG to illustrate that this is a universal issue).</p> <p>Any sex without consent is rape. You have the right not to have sex against your will, whatever the circumstances, whatever has happened up to that point and whoever the other person is.</p> <p>Rape does not always involve additional physical violence – many attackers use fear or psychological violence.</p> <p>People who have been raped did not expect it would happen to them.</p>
<p>Suggestions for positioning messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophisticated or ironic imagery/messages are not appropriate; audiences lack the base level of sophistication necessary to unpack these and the underlying message may be ignored or misunderstood. • Add in human detail, to humanise women generally and victims of VAWG in particular; this helps significantly to create empathy, which will distance men who are not perpetrators from those who are. • Close the gap between victims of violence against women and the female audience's own experience; this creates empathy, which will bring about a willingness to support and possibly to intervene. • Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims' behaviour or attitudes. 	
<p>Channel possibilities</p>	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage), supplemented by trade or other media where appropriate; education routes aimed at younger people, but also influencing parents; outdoor – near sports centres or other community venues; washrooms in clubs or pubs; buses/bus stops, other public transport; social marketing-type activity – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes (particularly for younger people); radio, television.</p> <p>NB Overly sexual imagery will inhibit effectiveness of the messaging; for those who are most entrenched, borrowing from the current lexicon endorses their world view – words are read but overarching meaning is not heard. For those who are more religious/traditional, sexual imagery is inappropriate and will be removed or disregarded.</p>	

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Males

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

In general, for males, there is a suspicion that the discourse will place them as the enemy (feminists vs men) and that the subject is too contentious, argumentative and unnecessarily touchy to engage in. They are likely to use avoidance strategies to avoid discussing the question of female equality or its implications for VAWG in any depth.

Across the **older males in these segments**, an individual may be very traditional and blinkered with regard to one particular issue which they can defend with ease because it is an accepted behaviour in their community, for example the role of women in marriage, but see themselves as staunchly pro-woman where other issues are concerned, typically those where the debate is newer or might become more complicated, for example trafficking for prostitution. However, they are likely to adopt a pro-choice 'if that's what they want to do..' attitude to certain types of sexual exploitation, such as prostitution, pornography or lap dancing; this enables them to avoid having to judge or censor friends or relatives who engage in these activities. They are able to detach themselves from the issues with ease where not to do so might necessitate challenge to the status quo or their peer norms.

Definitions of violence are complex among this group; they do not spontaneously define actions as violence unless they involve high levels of physical force. However, it is likely that some can recall incidences where they used psychological violence or manipulation rather than physical force to get what they wanted. Recalling such cases, males can recognise where they took advantage of women and may be receptive to re-examining their own behaviour and how it relates to VAWG. For example, rape is an area where some men may be willing to re-examine past behaviour and admit to what they characterise as 'over-persuasion' techniques to get sex from a partner. If reminded that this type of 'persuasion' is very close to coercion and approaching the definition of rape, it is possible that some might be more willing to think about their activity and to reconsider past experiences, although not necessarily to the extent that it immediately influences future behaviour or their opinions of others' behaviour.

Young men in the target audience excuse and rationalise violence by blaming their temper and anxiety, although there is no evidence to suggest that they are more prone to feelings of this type than young women or other segments of the audience. Even when made aware of gender inequality, they are unlikely to challenge attitudes or speak out among peers. They are able to take on board the 'right' messages personally and to espouse them, but are not always likely to be able to execute them. This is the case with domestic violence, for example; domestic violence per se is condemned, but these segments are able to see and understand a range of mitigating circumstances where others would not be able to help perpetrating this type of violence or abuse.

Gender inequality per se is a hot button – easily criticised, disregarded as too extreme and not really 'how the real world operates' and attributed to a strident feminist agenda.

Many younger males have firm ideas about what constitutes 'maleness'; for example, violence shows an alpha mindset which women may think they do not want, but which they will respect.

VAWG is not acceptable, but under certain circumstances can be understood, excused or condoned. For example, where rape is concerned, the woman is likely to have contributed to the sexual signals that got her into that position and therefore likely not to be deserving of sympathy, help or belief.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page



HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Males

Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>Reinforce and recognise that most men don't perpetrate violence – this can be supported by compelling statistics about VAWG.</p> <p>Invite men to be part of the solution.</p> <p>Broad and wide equality education that explains basic gender equality and its relationship to VAWG. Harm from discrimination (psychological and physical) clearly shown.</p> <p>Conscience raising – you know this is wrong – combined with a clear call to action.</p> <p>Rape is never acceptable; it is an abuse of trust.</p>	<p>Perpetrators will fall into the Eyes Closed segment (or, very rarely, the Blinkered segment), but will hear some messages incidentally or by chance.</p> <p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG and sanctions that will attend even VAWG that they do not believe is violence.</p> <p>Promote a clear understanding of harm to this (humanised and personalised) woman.</p> <p>You know when 'no means no'. Don't be <i>that man</i>.</p> <p>Rape is having sex with someone against their will; it is never acceptable. Whatever the relationship, it is your responsibility to gain positive sexual consent.</p>	n/a
Suggestions for positioning messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add in human detail, to humanise women generally and victims of VAWG in particular; this helps significantly to create empathy, which will distance men who are not perpetrators from those who are. • Avoid double meanings or anything that is too sophisticated or requires lateral thinking to make the point. • Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims' behaviour or attitudes. 	
Channel possibilities	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage), supplemented by EM media where appropriate; education routes, especially for younger males; outdoor near sports centres or other community venues; washrooms in clubs or pubs; buses/bus stops, other public transport; social marketing-type activity – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes (particularly for younger men); radio, television.</p> <p>NB Overly sexual imagery will inhibit effectiveness of the messaging; for those who are most entrenched, borrowing from the current lexicon endorses their world view – words are read but overarching meaning is not heard. For those who are more religious/traditional, sexual imagery is inappropriate and will be removed or disregarded.</p>	

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Females

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

Fellow feeling with other women is not a driver for supporting or understanding experiences relating to VAWG; they are strongly connected to their communities and families and resist any perceived attempts to judge or label them in a negative manner. Older women tend to be highly traditional in outlook. They are reluctant to consider a vision of how things might be different; they believe in the importance of preserving personal safety, security and the status quo at almost any cost. They are likely to be unclear about how sexual rights and autonomy can be secured within marriage, which may lead them to condone or excuse behaviour that could otherwise be defined as violence. They also have a desire to protect and endorse the way things are, rather than hear their men being judged or attacked by outsiders who do not understand the issues and problems they face.

In addition, females in the **Blinkered** and **Half-light** segments are not sure what action is being asked of them and are highly unlikely to act unless:

- harm is imminent; and
- their own personal security can be guaranteed.

An exception is **forced marriage**, where South Asian women are likely to receive information about the Forced Marriage Unit with interest and where they would be willing to disseminate the unit's details where they perceived a need.

In general, this group exhibit much higher levels of aggression and judgement against women victims than males do and display much harsher criticism of victims' behaviours. They are likely to move to exclude an 'undeserving' victim from their protection unless they can see her human side or connect with her story.

Outsider females – especially those who are shown as sexually provocative – are received with some suspicion and judged to be responsible for violence.

Younger women believe that they are pro-woman at a simplistic 'girl-power' level. Their confidence in their own ability to be equal to men and belief in their own physical strength limits their sympathy for victims who they believe should be able to resist/defend themselves.

This group are more likely to empathise with psychological than physical harm.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page



HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Females

Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG.</p> <p>Clear understanding of levels of physical and psychological force used that render victims incapable of retaliation/defence.</p> <p>Clear awareness and understanding of psychological harm to this woman (humanising her). Two women a week are killed by a partner or former partner.</p> <p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, be aware that it is serious/is connected to serious harm.</p> <p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, trust your instincts, acknowledge that it's wrong and do this/call/help/stop/give information/support.</p> <p>Stay anonymous but save a life.</p>	<p>Perpetrators will fall into the Eyes Closed segment, but will hear some messages incidentally or by chance.</p> <p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG, and sanctions that will attend even VAWG that they do not believe is violence.</p> <p>Fewer women are likely to be perpetrators, but some strongly held views will support/condone the actions of some perpetrators to the extent that they bear culpability in the same way.</p>	<p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG.</p> <p>Empowering women/victims to trust their instincts.</p> <p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, trust your instincts, understand that it's wrong and do this/call this number, say this.</p>
<p>Suggestions for positioning messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add in human detail, to bring victims of violence against women closer to the female audience's own experience; this helps significantly to create empathy, which will bring about a willingness to support and possibly to intervene. • Avoid double meanings or anything that is too sophisticated or requires lateral thinking to make the point. • Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims' behaviour or attitudes. 	
<p>Channel possibilities</p>	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage), supplemented by EM media where appropriate; education routes, especially for younger women; community routes – via GP/health visitor, community venues; outdoor – near service providers; washrooms in clubs, pubs; buses/bus stops, other public transport; social marketing-type activity – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes (particularly for younger women); radio; changing rooms.</p>	

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Religious/ethnic/social traditional groups

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

The concept of equality and that of VAWG as a single issue is easy to disconnect from as 'not me'. Ideally, evidence needs to be introduced that will illustrate, prove and support the issues and that can be used to prove that harm has been perpetrated (within their community/religious group) and that the group itself does not currently condone this. It will be harder to influence this group to act to protect women outside their group/community.

This group is not confined to ethnic minority groups – any group with a strong religious ethic that is used to promote social cohesion or a single community view or traditional views supported by a close or closed community is likely to fall into this group.

Rejection of messages that challenge the status quo without harm being strongly indicated.

Rejection of messages where the woman is perceived as drunk, sexually aggressive/sexually proactive and has only suffered 'minimal' physical hurt – psychological harm is rarely considered.

Rejection of messages that might prompt towards divorce (without intermediate steps being strongly suggested/prompted), for example a reluctance to intervene in domestic abuse in case it leads to family break-up.

Strongly proactive action is unlikely to be countenanced; generally more passive action such as offering information/passing on phone numbers would be preferred.

Expectation that the woman would take steps to resolve her own issues; even in extreme cases of trafficking and rape, this group express disbelief that the woman has not left or taken steps to protect herself.

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS



Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>No one condones or supports this violence/ event/activity. We do not want it in our society.</p> <p>We all have a duty to help women suffering harm. There are many ways to help – by providing information, support or advice.</p> <p>It happens in our group/community as well.</p> <p>Evidence provided by statistics to show seriousness and extent of harm.</p> <p>No one will know that you helped/passed on information, there will be no repercussions for you, but you might save a woman from serious harm.</p> <p>Helping is the right thing to do.</p>	<p>Perpetrators will fall into the Eyes Closed segment, but will hear some messages incidentally or by chance.</p> <p>No one condones or supports this violence/ event/activity. We do not want it in our society.</p> <p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG and sanctions that will attend even VAWG that they do not believe is violence.</p>	<p>No one condones or supports this violence/ event/activity. We do not want it in our society.</p> <p>You have a right to be safe; you don't have to keep quiet to save face or to protect your community.</p> <p>This is violence and it happens in our group/ community as well as others.</p>
<p>Suggestions for positioning messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messages must be straightforward, simple and clear. • Avoid double meanings or anything that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising victims' behaviour or attitudes. • Examples need to be straightforward and unambiguous; not 'unusual' but average. • If relevant, messages should include clear ethnic signifiers so that they are perceived as targeted towards their group and therefore, relevant to them. 	
<p>Channel possibilities</p>	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage), supplement with EM/specialist media where needed; education routes, via GP/health visitor; outreach via community intermediaries (may need to sell in views on VAWG in the first instance) (religious leaders may have a role, depending on issue), community venues; local press and PR activity; discreet leaflets in community shops (food and clothing); credit card-sized leaflets with telephone numbers handed out in the street, in buses, in schools; events, festivals or gatherings (these should be approached with caution, but may be a forum to address some issues).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow established good practice in communicating with ethnic minority or other hard-to-reach groups – see <i>COI Common Good Research</i> and <i>Guidance for Local Authorities on Translation of Publications</i> for some advice. <p>NB Where appropriate, communications need to include translation into community languages in order to enable members of 'closed communities' to take these messages on board.</p>	

- INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE
- AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION
- CHALLENGING ATTITUDES
- GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION
- EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY
- TOOLS**
- SUMMARY OF TOOLS
- SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE
- LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE
- LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE
- COMMUNICATIONS GRID
- PEN PORTRAITS
- USING VISUALS



HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Lower SEGs

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

The idea of equality as a concept holds little relevance, is fairly easy to disconnect from as 'not me' and is likely to be perceived as being part of a strident feminist agenda or interference from 'nanny state' government. Women are likely to see themselves as strong and believe that they have agency, while deferring to male partners, peers or family members as a matter of course.

Women have very clearly defined roles which establish a hierarchy of women and confer the right to safety, consideration and protection – so long as those roles are not transgressed. Both men and women subscribe to the belief in these roles and support those who conform, while judging those who do not.

This group is unlikely to act/change their views unless:

- harm is clearly indicated and is high level and imminent; and
- their own personal security can be guaranteed.

Rejection of messages that challenge the status quo without harm being strongly indicated.

Rejection of messages where the woman is perceived as drunk, sexually aggressive/sexually proactive and has only suffered 'minimal' physical hurt – psychological harm is rarely considered.

Rejection of messages/ideas that 'intrude' into the private sphere of life.

Strong desire not to get involved – fear of peer disapproval or violence in extreme cases.

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS



HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Lower SEGs

Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, be aware that it is serious/is connected to serious harm.</p> <p>Trust your instincts, and do this/call/help/stop/give information/support.</p> <p>Resulting harm to children (but take care to avoid implying that harm to women is unimportant).</p> <p>VAWG is everyone's problem – this is what it is and these are the consequences (supported by case studies and statistics).</p> <p>You can stay anonymous but you might save a life.</p>	<p>Perpetrators will fall into the Eyes Closed segment, but will hear some messages incidentally or by chance.</p> <p>No one condones or supports this violence/event/activity. We do not want it in our society.</p> <p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG and sanctions that will attend even VAWG that they do not believe is violence.</p>	<p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG.</p> <p>Clear understanding of long-term harm to self and children.</p> <p>Empowering women/victims to trust their instincts and act for themselves when they are harmed.</p>
<p>Suggestions for positioning messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messaging needs to include and represent the average household: it must be straightforward, simple and unambiguous. • Avoid double meanings or anything that is too sophisticated or requires lateral thinking to make the point. • Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims' behaviour or attitudes. 	
<p>Channel possibilities</p>	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage); education routes; community routes – via GP/health visitor; community venues, sports centres; local press and PR activity; outdoor – near service providers; washrooms in clubs, pubs; buses/bus stops, other public transport; social marketing-type activity – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes.</p> <p>NB Some members of this audience may have issues with literacy, so make allowances for this in your channel choices.</p>	

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Young men and boys

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

Fear of becoming scapegoats.

Definitions of violence are complex among this group; they do not spontaneously define actions as violence unless they involve high levels of physical force.

VAWG is not acceptable, but under certain circumstances can be understood, excused or condoned. For example, where rape is concerned, the woman is likely to have contributed to the sexual signals that got her into that position and therefore likely not to be deserving of sympathy, help or belief.

They are able to take on board the 'right' messages personally and to espouse them, but are not always likely to be able to execute them.

Young men in the target audience excuse and rationalise violence by blaming their temper and anxiety, although there is no evidence to suggest that they are more prone to feelings of this type than young women or other segments of the audience.

Many have firm ideas about what constitutes 'maleness'; for example, violence shows an alpha mindset which women may think they do not want, but which they will respect.

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS



HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Young men and boys

Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>Reinforce and recognise that most men don't perpetrate violence – this can be supported by compelling statistics about VAWG.</p> <p>Invite men to be part of the solution.</p> <p>Broad and wide equality education that explains basic gender equality and its relationship to VAWG. Harm (psychological and physical) clearly shown.</p> <p>Conscience raising – you know this is wrong – combined with a clear call to action.</p> <p>Rape is never acceptable; it is an abuse of trust.</p>	<p>Isolation: reinforce that most men don't perpetrate violence – this can be supported by compelling statistics about VAWG.</p> <p>Invite men to be part of the solution.</p> <p>Broad and wide equality education that explains basic gender equality and its relationship to VAWG. Harm from discrimination (psychological and physical) clearly shown.</p> <p>Conscience raising – you know this is wrong – combined with a clear call to action.</p> <p>Rape is never acceptable; it is an abuse of trust.</p>	n/a
Suggestions for positioning messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add in human detail, to humanise women generally and victims of VAWG in particular; this helps significantly to create empathy, which will distance men who are not perpetrators from those who are. • Avoid double meanings or anything that is too sophisticated or requires lateral thinking to make the point. • Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims' behaviour or attitudes. 	
Channel possibilities	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage); education routes; outdoor near sports centres or other community venues; washrooms in clubs or pubs; buses/bus stops, other public transport; social marketing-type activity – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes; radio, television.</p>	

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Young women and girls

General attitudes – target audience insight from research

Younger women believe that they are pro-woman at a simplistic 'girl-power' level. Their confidence in their own ability to be equal to men and belief in their own physical strength limits their sympathy for victims who they believe should be able to resist/defend themselves.

This is highly superficial: the majority of girls in these segments subscribe to – and live by – highly traditional gender roles and expectations.

They are likely to move to exclude an 'undeserving' victim from their protection unless they can see her human side or connect with her story.

This group are more likely to empathise with psychological than physical harm.

Considerations for communications activity are shown on the next page

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS



HARD-TO-INFLUENCE GROUPS: Young women and girls

Levers for change identified in research		
General public	Perpetrators	Victims
<p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG.</p> <p>Clear understanding of levels of physical and psychological force used that render victims incapable of retaliation/defence.</p> <p>Clear awareness and understanding of psychological harm to this woman (humanising her). “Two women a week die at the hands of a partner or ex-partner.”</p> <p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, be aware that it is serious/is connected to serious harm.</p> <p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, trust your instincts, acknowledge that it’s wrong and do this/call/help/stop/give information/support.</p>	<p>Fewer women are likely to be perpetrators, but some strongly held views will support/condone the actions of some perpetrators to the extent that they bear culpability in the same way.</p>	<p>Clarification – a clear understanding of what comprises VAWG.</p> <p>Empowering women/victims to trust their instincts.</p> <p>Call to action: when you think this might be happening, trust your instincts, understand that it’s wrong and do this/call this number, say this.</p>
<p>Suggestions for positioning messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add in human detail, to bring victims of violence against women closer to the female audience’s own experience; this helps significantly to create empathy, which will bring about a willingness to support and possibly to intervene. • Avoid double meanings or anything that is too sophisticated or requires lateral thinking to make the point. • Avoid messaging or creative that can be perceived as ambivalent or as criticising women in general or victims’ behaviour or attitudes – e.g. risk of sexual assault to consider controlling alcohol consumption. 	
<p>Channel possibilities</p>	<p>Consider the following: mainstream media (for coverage); education routes; community routes – via GP, community venues; outdoor – near service providers; washrooms in clubs, pubs; buses/bus stops, other public transport; social marketing-type activity – local targeted media support by education and challenge via trusted routes; radio; changing rooms.</p>	

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

Target audience: communications grid

In the same way as we have populated the preceding communications grids you can add information to this grid to help you plan your communications. This will ensure that your work is based on insight, that you have considered your messaging and strategy and that you have explored the channel possibilities in advance. You might use existing research and insight or anecdotal evidence. However, where possible test your hypotheses or conclusions to ensure that they are robust and actionable.

Target audience/hard-to-influence (HTI) group:			
Characteristics: Reasons for HTI status/rationale for identifying as target audience			
General attitudes	Levers for change identified in research		
	General public	Perpetrators	Victims
Suggestions for positioning messages			
Channel possibilities			



Pen portraits

The following pen portraits are intended to give an overview of the attitudes and lifestyles of people who fall into some of the different attitudinal segments within the identified hard-to-influence audiences. The information contained in them and the views expressed come from the research carried out in developing this guidance. They are intended as an example of the benefits of using insight to plan communications activity so that the context informing the target audiences' views is well understood and can be taken into consideration in order to achieve maximum communications effectiveness.

See [Section 2](#) for a detailed explanation of the segmentation used.

You may wish to develop pen portraits of this type to explore target audience attitudes to a specific issue. Where possible you should base these on research and insight or test them after development. This will ensure that they are representative of your audience and accurately portray their relevant views, needs, preferred channels and drivers for action or change.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS



Blinkered (Committed)



Male, 40–50

J lives in the Midlands. He works for the local council. He married young and had two children, then divorced. He lives with his second wife.

J has always read *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, magazines like *Razzle* and more recently *Loaded*, *Nuts* and *FHM*. J sees his sons every so often; they are 15 and 13. He keeps his mags in his flat and doesn't hide them, so his sons know all about that kind of thing. There's no problem. He also talks to his boys about adult films either on DVD or on the internet – there's no point mollycoddling a boy. Boys will be boys; they need to see what's on the menu.

J has visited prostitutes since he was in his early 20s. He first went with a group of friends after a drinking session; it was a dare and a bit of a laugh, a rite of passage. All the lads were keen to go and knew from some of their older brothers and mates where to find prostitutes in the area.

J has never picked up a girl off the street and paid for sex – in his younger days, there was no point. Friday and Saturday, he was always able to get free sex with girls he knew. He has gone back to these women's houses on occasion, but that's a bit risky, he thinks. You never know if her old man will turn up! He would prefer to take women back to his, but now that he's remarried, that's out.



Now, Friday and Saturday pick-ups are too much like hard work; there's no point and he can't be bothered. After a few drinks at a strip club with work-mates, he might go to visit a prostitute. The two prostitutes he visits regularly live on an estate, near where he was brought up and went to school. He's been going to see them on and off for about 15 years. It's not that far from where he lives now. They are clean and have nice places. Their boyfriends know what they do and put up with it – if they don't have a problem, why should he? One is a girl who was at school with him and his friends. Some of his friends have been with her in the past, but most of them don't go any more. Sometimes afterwards they have a cup of tea and have a quick catch-up. Usually he is out within half an hour, especially when he's on his way home from work.

J is a creature of habit and draws information from his own experience or from the experience of close peers. He does not automatically believe what he reads in the news or sees on the TV; 'they' (the Establishment) don't often know what they are talking about, especially when it comes to the workers like him. They have had an easy life – and his has not been easy. If he listened to what they say, no doubt he would have to give up all the things that he likes doing: smoking, sex, breathing, butter. What do they know?

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

Half-light (Naïve)



Male, under 20

D is a young man living in an estate in the centre of a city. He lives with his mother and his two younger half-sisters. D's dad left when he was nine. His step-dad left when he was 15. D's now the man of the house and he's quite good at helping and looking after the girls. He makes sure they get to school when his mum's on early shift. D has tried lots of different highs, including skunk weed, pills and cocaine – he didn't particularly like the loss of control he felt with the pills or the paranoia with the weed, but he thought the cocaine was all right and made him quite chatty, but he's not really into any drugs in a big way.

D is not working. He was studying but now he's looking for a job. Most of the time, he's with his mates – a group of local boys and girls from the area – hanging out. D spends what little money he has on alcohol, cigarettes and phone credit. He has to ask his mum for money sometimes, which he doesn't like doing, but she's usually okay about it.

D doesn't read newspapers, and he watches TV only occasionally. Most often, he and his mates play computer games or sit by bus stops or out in the park. Their days are not structured but they do have places to go. They are most likely to see outdoor media or flyers – especially vouchers or promo flyers.

D knows that men and women should be able to do the same things; after all, he sees that his mother has done the job of being a parent pretty well. Of course women can work, and of course men shouldn't tell them what to do.

However, D's also got a temper and his relationships with girlfriends are very traditional. He doesn't always approve of the clothes they wear. He feels more comfortable with the boys in the group; they have jokes about sex that he can join in with and they talk about which girls they would or wouldn't want to go out with. The sluts are obviously out – you don't want to go out with someone skanky – although you might shag them.

D knows that no bloke has the right to rape a woman. That's obviously wrong. But the girls are pretty sexually aggressive – especially when they're drunk. He lost his virginity to an older girl who basically wanted him, so he knows they can be really pushy. Girls can control your mind, and they can do your head in. They can get all sorts of ideas into their heads and then go on and on about it. So while he wouldn't be the first one to be starting an argument, if she went too far, he could see himself thumping a girl if she made him lose his temper. His last girlfriend was like that, always jealous, so he'd want a girlfriend who wasn't always on at him. He wants a quiet life.



Portrait

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

Half-light (Inert)



Female, over 30, with family, living in the UK

F is a mum of two children – one of whom is over eight years old. She could be any ethnicity or culture, and she could have been born in the UK or arrived here as a bride. She has very good English, and very likely works in paid employment outside her family home, although her job is not necessarily well paid or highly responsible. She might work in the local newsagents or petrol station, for example, or do shifts at the supermarket.

If Asian, she is likely to live with her husband and possibly her in-laws as well. If White British, she may well be living on her own with her children. She is likely to live in a fairly close community, so she would know the neighbours and would rely on them for her daily interactions.

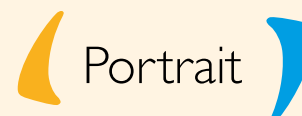
She is likely to use the television for her main information sources, and although soaps are commonplace in her diary, she would also be watching light factual – *Crimewatch*, or light documentaries – as well as *CSI* and *Holby City*. Her mornings are very full and hectic so *GMTV* might be on but not really watched. She doesn't get much chance to see daytime TV – although she does watch if she's there. *Jeremy Kyle* and *Trisha* are interesting. She often has the radio on while she's doing the housework.

Her days are filled getting on with what she needs to get on with. Washing, cooking, sorting out – there's not enough time in the day to think about politics and rights and things like that. She has no spare energy to debate or to get into

anything 'heavy'. But she notices that things changed when she had her kids. Employers don't want to know about the problems she has with her children and that their dad wants her to do all the looking after. She doesn't get any help to sort out childcare, no extra money for being a single mum and no time off when she's got difficulties or when it's school holidays. So she sees that the world is not fair.

But her family isn't going to change. And so she just gets on with it. She does what she has to do on a daily basis; she keeps her job, she would help if a friend needed a place to stay because she was running away from home, she would even get her to the Citizens Advice Bureau or to the social services if it got that bad. But she's not going to go out and start 'changing the world'. Her man, if she has one, also has a hard time with work and being low-paid – when she starts to think about it, maybe it isn't about being a woman – maybe it is about being poor. The people who can afford to think about these things are people with better jobs and better houses.

Obviously you wouldn't leave someone who was being beaten up, but would you see that as an isolated incident within a particular relationship or an example of violence against women? F doesn't really know, and there's no quick and easy way of thinking about it. So it's pushed to the back of her mind, for a time when she's less tired.



Portrait

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

Case study

IMAGES OF DISABILITY

Be ahead of the game on disability inclusion and be seen as a leader in this field.

Target audience:

Government communications professionals

Aims:

- To help government communicators ensure that disabled people know about government information and services.
- To make sure disabled people can get the messages from government that all citizens need to hear.

The guidance was created by a working group led by the Office for Disability Issues (ODI), brings together a range of good practice guidance and is a summary of the law in this area. It provides information on:

1. **Inclusive marketing**
2. **Alternative communications formats**
3. **Strategy and planning**
4. **Involving disabled people in communications planning**
5. **Representing disability effectively**
6. **Disability equality and communications**
7. **Publishing and disability equality**
8. **Digital communications**
9. **Signposts to further information**
10. **Top tips**



Benefit for the citizen:

One of the things that makes the biggest difference to people's quality of life and their life chances is the ability to get information that affects them and their families. This could be anything from hearing on

the TV about digital switchover to receiving a leaflet about how to claim tax credits. Some of the ways in which government and others communicate may not work for disabled people. They may not be able to see the paper, to understand the words written on the page or to hear the radio; this means that we have to seek ways to ensure that our communication is accessible and inclusive, and we need to plan our communications to take these needs into account at the beginning.

The ODI also provides an image bank of photographs of disabled people in a range of situations; these are available free of charge to UK government departments.

For more information and to see the image bank go to:
www.officefordisability.gov.uk/iod/

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

CHALLENGING ATTITUDES

GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

EVALUATING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TOOLS

SUMMARY OF TOOLS

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCE

LEVERS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

LEVERS BY AUDIENCE TYPE

COMMUNICATIONS GRID

PEN PORTRAITS

USING VISUALS

VISUALS – SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The images that follow are pictures that could be used in communications activity around issues relating to violence against women and girls. Visual imagery is designed to have immediate impact, to illustrate the point being made and to encourage various types of action. However, audiences generally make snap judgements about what they see, and images are not always received in the way you might intend. This section looks at some examples of visuals and considers how the target audience might view them.

Section 4 of this guidance considers the use of imagery in more detail.

The issue:

Images of this type could be used to illustrate:

- **domestic abuse** – to show levels of fear, intimidation, vulnerability and despair
- **trafficking for prostitution** – to portray the idea of restriction of freedom, vulnerability and feelings of menace experienced
- **rape and sexual violence** – to show levels of menace, intimidation and feelings of vulnerability.

The picture at a glance:

- A young woman
- She appears to be crying and very upset
- She looks vulnerable
- The man standing behind her appears to be the cause of her upset
- The location looks slightly chaotic and squalid.

How the audience might interpret this

- The squalid nature of the location could reinforce ideas that VAWG and related issues only affect people from lower SEGs.
- In the absence of overt or explicit violence, the audience may struggle to believe in the seriousness of the issues.

Considerations

- Need to ensure that communications – the locations and copy – depict a range of situations.
- It is important to accustom audiences to the idea that violence and abuse are serious whether or not there is visible evidence of abuse.



Source: © Science Photo Library. Picture posed by models

Generic images of this type are useful if funding is limited, a campaign is being refreshed or re-launched or if creative is being shared with other organisations. The copy, locations, accompanying communications and channels will supply the context and the relevance. In addition, audiences often need repetition to accustom them to an idea or raise and maintain awareness, so reusing creative need not be a problem.

VISUALS – SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The issue:

Images of this kind could illustrate:

- **date/acquaintance rape** – to highlight the reality that acquaintance rape is an issue and that rape does not always start with violence and to challenge the idea that women lose the right to say no if they know their attacker or if they have been drinking.

The picture at a glance:

- A relaxed scene
- A young man and woman share a drink
- They seem to know each other and to be on good terms.



Source: © Alamy Images. Picture posed by models

How the audience might interpret this

- The initial good relations between the two could prejudice some segments of the audience – especially those who struggle to believe in the concept of acquaintance rape.
- The attractive appearance of the young man could lead the audience to believe that he would not 'need' to rape someone and so mistrust the woman's motives.
- The presence of alcohol could lead some audience segments to believe that the woman has compromised herself and her right to say no, or to excuse the idea that the man might become too drunk to control himself.

Considerations

- It is important to challenge prevailing views of rape and the idea that rape is always perpetrated by dangerous strangers.
- There is a need to challenge the idea that only 'perverts' or men who are socially or sexually inadequate commit rape.
- There is a need to accustom audiences to the idea that alcohol consumption does not negate the need for the women to give consent, nor does it excuse rape.

Ideally this could be used as part of a suite of materials and executions – possibly with a social marketing element – designed to raise awareness of the issue, but also to challenge prevailing attitudes over time.



VISUALS – SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The issue:

Images of this type are typically used to illustrate:

- **domestic abuse** – to raise awareness of the issue and also to show the visible effects of abuse and violence.

The picture at a glance:

- A woman with severe bruising and obvious facial injuries
- She looks scared
- She seems withdrawn.



Source: © Alamy Images. Picture posed by model

How the audience might interpret this

- Depictions of severe and obvious injury could reinforce the idea that domestic abuse is only an issue when it is visible and results in visible harm.
- Reinforcing ideas which only consider severe injury could allow the audience to discount and minimise the severity of less visible forms of domestic abuse – such as monitoring or controlling behaviour, financial control and emotional or psychological abuse.

Considerations

- It is important to show the visible injuries that perpetrators can inflict on women who are living with domestic abuse, but images of this type should be used alongside copy/other communications/information showing the range of actions that make up domestic abuse.
- It is important to show that abuse takes many forms. For some women it will be mainly psychological or emotional, others will experience severe physical harm; the audience needs help to understand that these are all unacceptable and that abuse can escalate – on average, up to two women a week are killed by a current or former male partner.
- Consider employing several executions showing different women from a range of age groups, SEGs, ethnicities and faiths in order to show the universal nature of the problem and to underline the fact that domestic abuse is not confined to any single group.

The *ACT Campaign* from Women's Aid uses images of visible abuse to grab the audience's attention, but the copy explicitly challenges the view that domestic abuse comprises only visible harm:

"A picture of a celebrity with fake bruises may seem like a cheap trick but at least you noticed her: It's the 500,000 plus British women that are abused by their partners every year who go unnoticed. The thing is, real victims rarely show their bruises, or indeed their emotional scars. All too often they don't even admit that there is a problem. But domestic abuse is not something that should be kept quiet. Which is why we want you to act now: admit it's a problem, call it by its name and then talk to someone. Contact womensaid.org.uk."

VISUALS – SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The issue:

Visuals of this type could be used to illustrate more than one issue.

For example, you might use it in communications activity around:

- **domestic abuse** – to show that abuse does not just include physical abuse but also psychological abuse and intimidation
- **forced marriage** – to show the level of fear, aggression and intimidation that can occur.

The picture at a glance:

- Older male, possibly Asian
- He is shouting/behaving aggressively to a young woman
- This woman is likely to be his daughter or a female relative
- She appears to be scared
- The surroundings are neither affluent nor noticeably poor.

How the audience might interpret this

- The absence of visible and severe physical harm could lead the audience to minimise levels of harm/potential harm.
- The depiction of a single or particular ethnicity may lead other audience groups to distance themselves from the issue.

NB Depictions of ethnicity need careful consideration to avoid stigmatising one group or allowing others to distance themselves from the issue. Ideally any communications will be part of a suite of different visual executions and media – each targeted at different/relevant audiences. Consider producing additional/complementary communication targeting a general public audience to raise awareness of the universal importance of issues that might otherwise be considered as only relevant to a particular community or group. This leaflet produced by the Home Office is a good example of a broadly targeted resource which could then be supported by additional targeted communication: *Supporting a friend or relative*.



Source: © Alamy Images. Picture posed by models

Considerations

- The copy needs to reference harm taken from non-physical abuse and the likelihood that violence will escalate.
- Other creative executions need to reference the universal relevance and responsibility for the issue.



Acknowledgements

The Government Equalities Office would like to thank the following partners and stakeholders for their help in producing this guidance. They kindly gave us their time and their expertise to ensure that this guidance would have a sound grounding in existing theory and campaign work on violence against women, thus ensuring its usefulness to communications experts and policy-makers across government, within the third sector and elsewhere.

Association of Chief Police Officers	Office for Criminal Justice Reform
Broken Rainbow	POPPY Project
Crown Prosecution Service	Rape Crisis England and Wales
Department for Children, Schools and Families	Rape Crisis Scotland
Department of Health	Refuge
End Violence Against Women	Respect
Equality and Human Rights Commission	Scottish Executive
Government Communication Network	Southall Black Sisters
Greater London Authority	South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre
Home Office	UK Human Trafficking Centre
Home Office, Organised and Financial Crime Unit	Women's Aid
Ministry of Justice	Women's National Commission

Thank you also to anyone else who has contributed to the production of this guidance.

© Crown copyright 2009

The text of this document may be reproduced without formal permission or charge for personal or in-house use.

Pictures may not be reproduced without permission of the copyrights holder: 297847 1p Dec09

