

# Understanding Sexual Violence as an International Crime

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## THEME

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Addressing and understanding sexual violence as international crime

## CONTEXT

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Words such as sexual violence are often thrown around without people having a clear concept of what the terms mean or agreeing on a common definition. Sexual violence is a pervasive issue that affects individuals and communities worldwide. This activity plan seeks to raise awareness about the prevalence, causes, and consequences of sexual violence, as well as the international legal frameworks and mechanisms for addressing it.

The following activity offers a manner to engage in a discussion of these terms.

## GOALS

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- To educate students/participants about the scope and impact of sexual violence on individuals and societies
- To examine the root causes and contributing factors of sexual violence
- To explore international legal frameworks and mechanisms for preventing and addressing sexual violence
- To empower students/participants with knowledge and skills to support survivors and advocate for change

## METHODOLOGY

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- Interactive presentations
- Small group discussions
- Guest speakers or testimonials

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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- Define sexual violence and recognize its various forms and manifestations
- Identify the root causes and contributing factors of sexual violence, including gender inequality, power dynamics, and social norms
- Describe international legal instruments and mechanisms for addressing sexual violence, such as international humanitarian law and human rights treaties
- Demonstrate empathy and understanding towards survivors of sexual violence
- Discuss strategies for prevention, support, and advocacy in the context of sexual violence

## MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT NEEDED

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- Projector and screen for presentations and multimedia resources
- Printed handouts with key information and case studies
- Pen and paper for students/participants
- Zoom or other video conferencing platform for online setup implementation

## Overview of activities (process)

**Duration:** 90 minutes

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### **Introduction to Sexual Violence: 15 minutes**

The teacher/educator briefly explains what is expected of the students/participants and sensibilities them for the topic of the activity plan. Afterward, the teacher/educator tries together with students/participants to define sexual violence and discuss its prevalence and impact on local, national, and global levels. The teacher/educator can present statistics and case studies to illustrate the scope of impact that sexual violence is having on individuals and societies.

### **Understanding Root Causes: 20 minutes**

The teacher/educator is showing the JustNow animation movie about sexual violence towards the students/participants and facilitating a group discussion on the root causes and contributing factors of sexual violence, including gender inequality, cultural norms, and systemic factors. Use case studies or personal narratives to highlight the intersectionality of these factors.

### **International Legal Frameworks: 20 minutes**

Provide an overview of international legal instruments and mechanisms for addressing sexual violence, such as the Geneva Conventions, the Rome Statute, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Afterwards discuss the role of international tribunals and courts in prosecuting sexual violence as a war crime, crime against humanity, or genocide.

### **Supporting Survivors and Advocacy: 20 minutes**

Together with the students/participants explore strategies for supporting survivors of sexual violence, including trauma-informed care, access to justice, and community-based interventions. This part can be implemented as well as a group assignment with the creation of small groups that can explore and research these supporting mechanisms - afterward, the groups can present their research to other students/participants. Additionally, in this segment, it is important to facilitate a discussion of the importance of survivor-centered approaches and the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence. Share resources and organizations that provide support services and advocacy opportunities on local, national, and global levels.

### **Empowering Action: 15 minutes**

Facilitate a brainstorming session where students/participants generate ideas for taking action against sexual violence in their communities and beyond. All of the ideas should be listed on a flipchart paper or this step can be implemented as well as a group assignment in which each group of students/participants will be writing their ideas or findings from research. Encourage students/participants to identify concrete steps they can as well take or as part of collective efforts.

### Conclusion and Reflection: 10 minutes

As a teacher/educator, you are summarising the key takeaways from the workshop and emphasizing the importance of continued learning and activism. As well, as invite students/participants to share their reflections, insights, and feelings from the workshop. Additionally, you as a teacher/educator can provide resources for further reading and engagement on this topic.

The teacher/educator allows students to ask brief questions of clarification after each presentation.

### HOMEWORK IDEAS

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As a teacher/educator, you can give a task to the students/participants to research and write about recent developments or initiatives in the global work against sexual violence. Additionally, a task can be given in research about the volunteering possibilities with local organizations that provide support services for survivors of sexual violence, as well as research about possibilities of engaging in online advocacy campaigns or awareness-raising activities on local, national, or global level.

### ADDITIONAL IDEAS

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As a teacher/educator, you can think about inviting a guest speaker which can talk about the topic of sexual violence on a professional or personal level towards the students/participants. Work with personal testimonials can be as well integrated into the activity plan.

### ONLINE ADAPTATION

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This activity plan can be easily implemented in online set-ups, utilizing breakout rooms for small group discussions and activities. As well, the usage of pooling features to gather feedback and facilitate interactive discussions can be used, as well as the usage of the chat function for questions and comments of the students/participants. During the implementation in an online set-up, a shared screen option can be used for multimedia presentations and videos. As a teacher/educator, you can also provide downloadable resources and links to relevant articles or reports for further exploration.



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