

EXERCISE:

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FORMAT:

PRESENTATION

Threats Presentation

TIME: 15 MIN

REQUIRED MATERIALS: FLIPCHART WITH DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS SUCH AS 'CAPACITIES', 'CHALLENGES', 'RISKS', 'THREATS' AND 'VULNERABILITIES'.

SUMMARY:

This is a brief presentation that grounds thinking on threats and sets the stage for the next exercise.

TOOLS TO ASSESS THREATS²²

Key risk-related concepts are as follows – facilitators should prepare the definitions on a flipchart beforehand:

Risk: the possibility that some harm will occur;

Perceived risk: the idea, or absorbed concept, that a threat is real;

Threat: a declared or indicated intention to inflict harm;

Capacity: any resource (including abilities and contacts) that improves security;

Vulnerability: any factor that makes it more likely for harm to materialise and that may result in greater damage

Note that capacities and vulnerabilities are flip sides of the same coin.

KEY EXPLANATION POINTS:

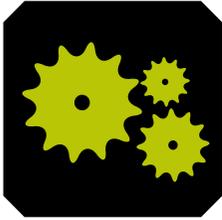
threats are strategic: there is always a reason behind a threat, and there is always a source;

threats are based on fear: ironically, a woman human rights defender only will face threats because she is effective, and because her work is perceived as a challenge to existing systems and power structures;

threats can be subtle and particularly gendered: while we are very familiar with threats such as direct physical violence and arrest, there are many other ways in which women human rights defenders are threatened, such as through isolation, defamation, slander, psychological intimidation and threats to family members at their place of work and in schools;

threats hold far less power when we examine them clearly and extract them from this hidden, subtle context, by:

- recognising the *strategies and motives* behind threats;
- understanding the *what, the why and the who* behind threats;
- assessing your vulnerabilities, and your capacities to combat these threats; and
- determining *what level of risk is posed, and what level of risk is acceptable to you, your organisation and your family.*



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FACILITATION NOTES:

- Some aspects of these talking points can be incorporated into earlier sessions or integrated into a more dynamic discussion – if you find that the previous session has resulted in the group naturally entering into a discussion of threats, then you can go straight into the following exercise and incorporate some of the threats text as commentary. This depends on the group – some need to spend more time with you to ground them in ‘theory’, whereas others prefer you to talk less and for there to be more of a dynamic dialogue.
- It may be helpful to distribute the ‘Threshold of acceptable risk’ handout for reference (see Part Three: Facilitator’s Toolkit)