Identifying strategies for norm change

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1 **Change is not just about communicating knowledge to people.**

(New attitudes)

New knowledge ⟶ New behaviour

This is how change actually happens!

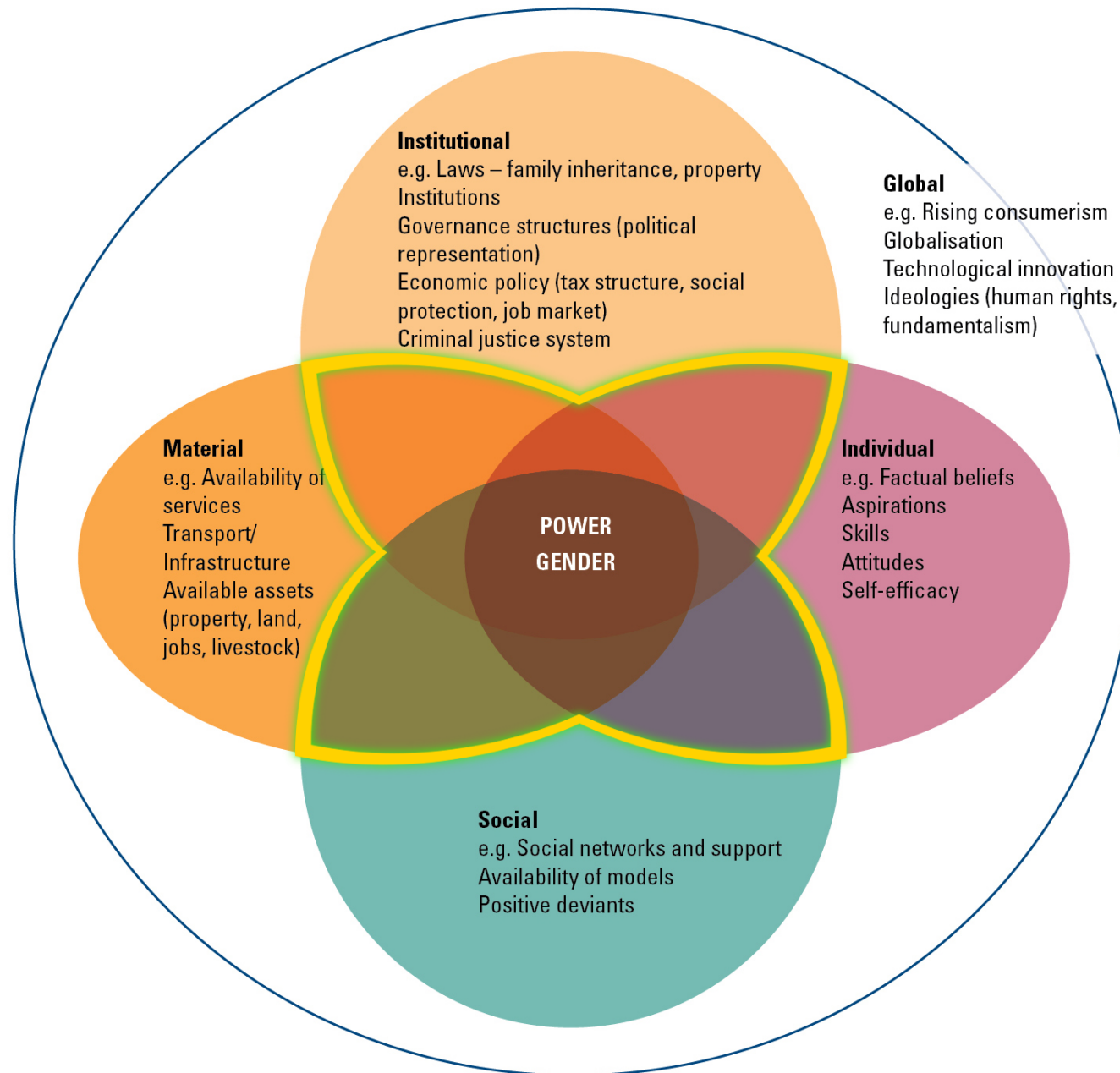**2** **Change happens when enough people see that enough people are changing.**

3 **Strong norms take more time to achieve. We will need a critical mass to create change.**

Drivers of Change

Institutional
e.g. Laws – family inheritance, property
Institutions
Governance structures (political
representation)
Economic policy (tax structure, social
protection, job market)
Criminal justice system

Global
e.g. Rising consumerism
Globalisation
Technological innovation
Ideologies (human rights,
fundamentalism)

Material
e.g. Availability of
services
Transport/
Infrastructure
Available assets
(property, land,
jobs, livestock)

Individual
e.g. Factual beliefs
Aspirations
Skills
Attitudes
Self-efficacy

**POWER
GENDER**

Social
e.g. Social networks and support
Availability of models
Positive deviants

The Flower Diagram is an adapted version of the ecological model - the 'Flower Diagram' developed by Cislaghi & Heise (2018).

Norm change strategies

Four Norm Change Strategies

1 Law & Policies

2 Mass Media

3 Personalized Normative Feedback

4 Group Discussions

1 **Laws & Policies**

This can involve legislating change, such as creating a law that dictates minimum marriage age.

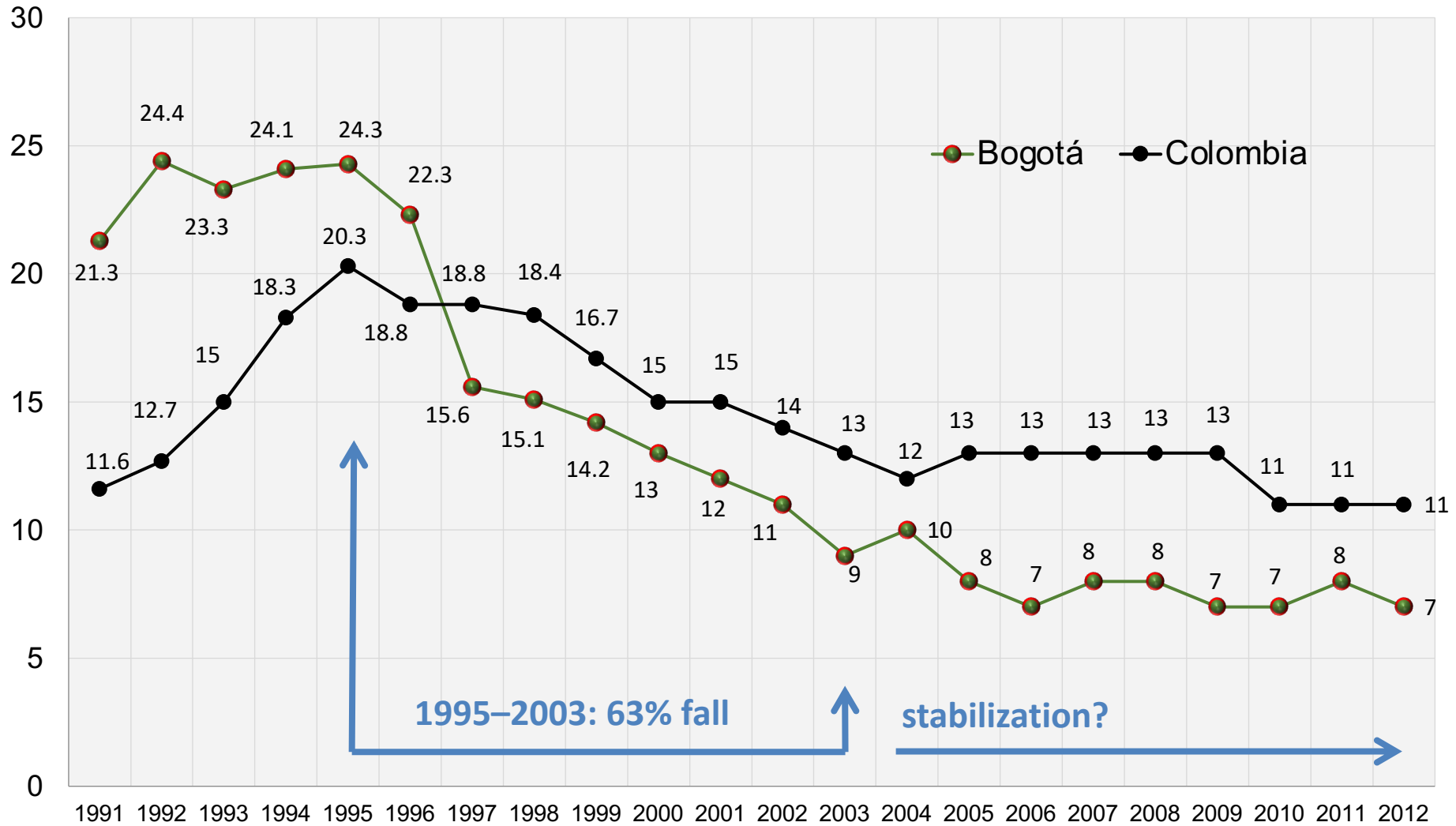It can also involve changing how existing laws are viewed or upheld.

Example 2:
traffic behavior

- **Corrupt traffic police fired and replaced:** signal of strong institutional commitment.

- **Mimes:** initially 40, then 400!

- Dramatic success in terms of **visibilization**, but replication *questionable*.

- **Further strengthened normative expectations**, promoted public deliberation—it wasn't *just a show*.

Traffic-related deaths in Bogotá and Colombia
1991 - 2012 (rate per 100 000 inhabitants)

2 **Mass Media**

Media approaches share information about harmful effects of a practice, but often focus more on the fact that the population is abandoning the practice.

Goal: to change social norms (people's perceptions about what others around them do and approve of)
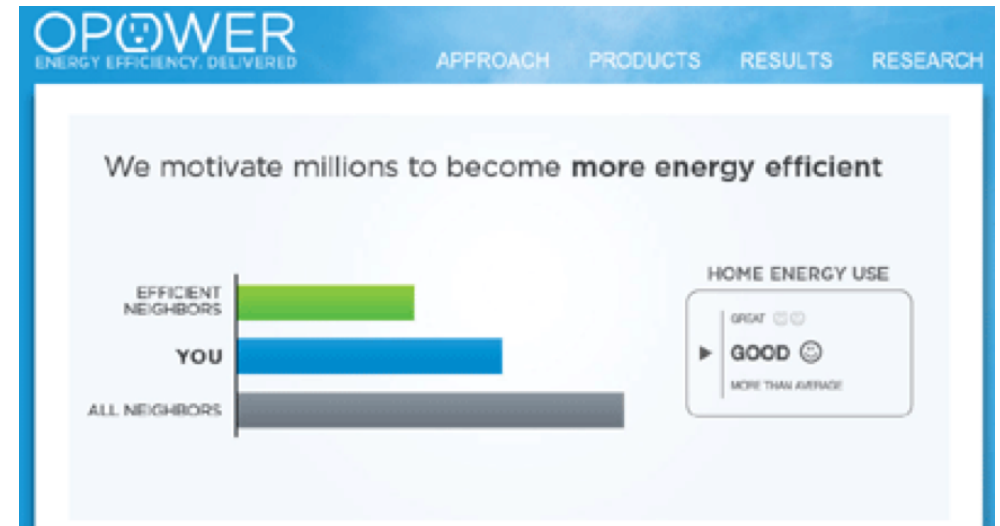
Techniques: radio broadcasts, billboards, theatre plays, and role model approaches.

3 Normative Feedback

Normative feedback refers to providing personalized information about how one performs compared to their peers.

Reduction from 0.6 to 6.3 % in household energy consumption (2% average)

Allcott, H. (2011). Social norms and energy conservation. Journal of Public Economics, 95(9-10), 1082-1095. doi:10.1016/j.jpubeco.2011.03.003

4 **Group Discussions**

Community conversations that allow for critical reflection about common experiences and issues

Particularly effective if based on a people-led approach

1/ Change of attitudes and norms within core group

Motivation

© Tostan

- **Problematisation** of current situation

- **Knowledge** to help problematisation

- **Values Deliberation** to identify common values and change practices

- **New outcomes now within reach**: individual and collective aspirations

- **Beliefs** that people can individually and collectively achieve outcome: self-efficacy

1/ Change of attitudes and norms within core group (enough?)

© Tostan

2/ Group reaches out to others, others witness change from the group

Action & diffusion

- People see themselves different

- Others see them different

- Seeing is believing

- New knowledge and understanding are shared

- Group expands to many

© Tostan

3/ Majority publicly agrees on new norm: nobody can say "I didn't know"

© Tostan

Further points on change **strategies**

Personalized normative feedback about **compliance with laws & policies**

Strategies can be mixed!

Group discussions about **media campaigns**

Choosing your Primary Strategy

If norms are a misrepresentation of reality:

Use normative feedback!

Choosing your Primary Strategy

If norms are active in a specific group:

Use group discussions!

Or if they are active in wider "society":
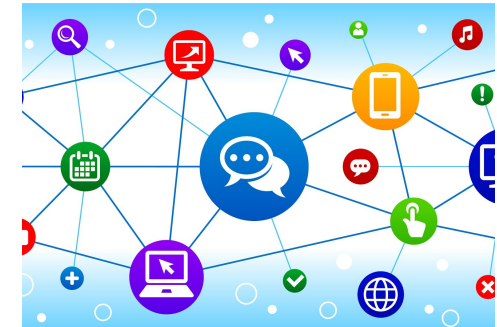

Use mass media!

Choosing your Primary Strategy

If there is only one active norm:

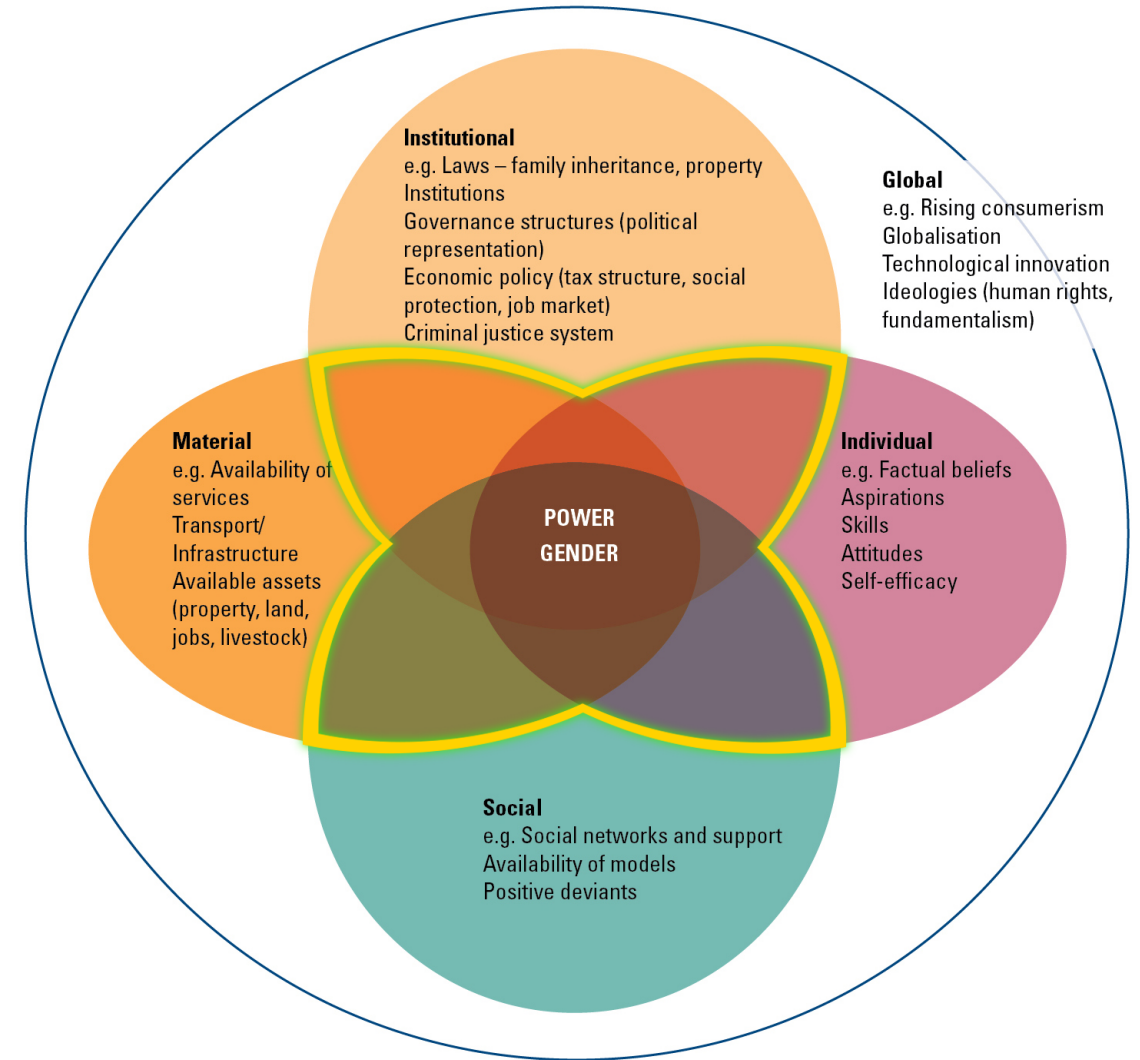**Use normative feedback!**

Or if there are multiple norms:

Use group discussions or mass media!

Who to Target?

Those exhibiting behaviour   **and/or**   **Reference Groups**

How will change occur beyond the target group?

Institutional
e.g. Laws – family inheritance, property
Institutions
Governance structures (political representation)
Economic policy (tax structure, social protection, job market)
Criminal justice system

Global
e.g. Rising consumerism
Globalisation
Technological innovation
Ideologies (human rights, fundamentalism)

Material
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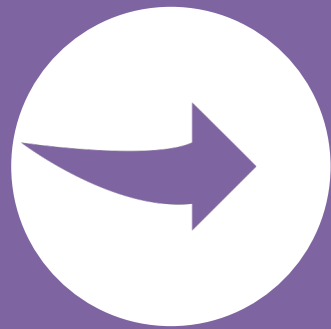
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Key Takeaways

1

Change happens when people see enough other people changing. It takes longer to achieve with social norms.
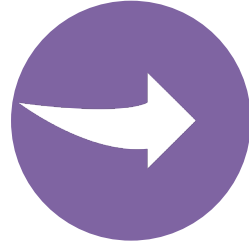
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There are 4 norms strategies:
Laws & policies
Mass media
Normative feedback
Group discussion

3

Strategies can be mixed!
Choose your primary strategy and who to target in selecting one or multiple change strategies
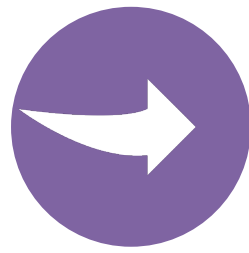
Practical Application

In small groups

**Present interventions targeting health behaviours in your work.
Discuss as a group:**

- Which norm change strategies are applied?
- What are the pros and cons of the strategy/strategies applied?
- What strategies might you suggest for the targeted health issue?

4 Strategies: Laws & Policies   Personalized Normative Feedback
   Mass Media   Group Discussions

Case Study 1: Tostan

The first is a case study of a successful holistic human rights-based community empowerment programme – Tostan. This is a programme which resulted in norms on FGM changing in Senegal although this was not the central objective of the programme.

- **3-year community-led empowerment programme based on visioning, deliberation on human rights and values, problem solving, and identifying knowledge useful to people's lives.**
- **Covering multiple topics: education, health, environment, economic issues, governance, literacy…**
- **Uses transformative, Freirean human rights education approaches**
- **Core group consisted of adolescents and adults.**
- **They sought to help communities achieve their own goals. This required working with a core group of community members who defined its vision.**
- **They equipped the core group with knowledge and facilitated a values deliberation process to identify common values and develop a vision for their community.**
- **Once these community members created their own vision, decided community goals, and designed a strategy to achieve them, Tostan supported them to do so.**
- **To achieve their goals, community members changed attitudes and norms of others around them.**
- **What happened? People started to see themselves differently and others saw them differently. New knowledge and ideas were shared and the group expanded. The group publicly agreed on a new norm.**
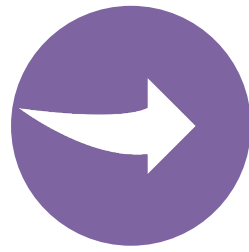
Case Study 2: OTPOR

Now we will look at a slightly different case study. It focuses on the non-violent youth movement called 'Otpor' (which means 'resistance') in Serbia.

- **This group played a key role in overthrowing Miloševic's government.**
- **They used street theatre, art, posters, pranks and satire to embarrass the government.**
- **Their use of dark humour challenged existing norms around what it means to revolt/protest.**
- **Their avoidance of violence also challenged norms.**
- **They also broke norms around how they were structured, e.g. avoiding cult of personality and decentralising power.**
- **They also spread new norms – creating their own identity/brand/vision for how to protest and how to demand democratic processes.**
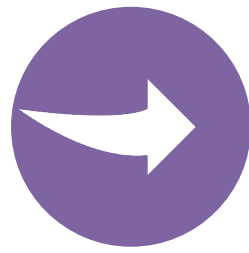
Case Study 3: Voices 4 Change

This final case study is a multi-component norms programme which focuses on addressing very complex social issues. This is a programme in Nigeria to change attitudes and practices on VAW, women's role in household decision making and women's political leadership.

- **Creation of safe spaces for discussion and debate during gender courses, radio discussions and dramas, branded communications campaigns, legislative change.**
- **V4C works with young women and men, religious leaders, community leaders**
- **Changes in attitudes and practices were observed – people began speaking out about violence against women, women's self-esteem increased and women began taking on leadership roles.**
- **Peers of those who participated also changed attitudes and practices – but to a lesser extent.**

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