

## What is Gender-based Violence?

**Gender-based violence is any act directed at someone because of their sex and gender, that results in physical, sexual, and/or psychological harm or suffering.** Gender-based violence mostly refers to violence against women and girls, but men and young boys can also be victims.

*It includes sexual violence such as:*

- rape (forced or unwanted sex)
- Incest and carnal abuse
- spousal abuse
- sexual harassment
- forced prostitution (and trafficking)
- *threats* of carrying out the above sexual violence



*Abuse of Gender Power such as:*

- Depriving a woman of having friends
- Restricting her movement
- Preventing her from making her own life choices

*... can lead to Gender-based Violence*

Whether the victim is female or male, violence is mostly initiated by males. **Men who are violent are often motivated by their need to enforce male power through dominance, control, coercion and fear.** Note this headline:

**DON MARKS YOUNG GIRLS FOR SEX  
COMMUNITIES PAY HIGH PRICE FOR PROTECTION**

## Gender Equity & Power

Gender relations refer to the relative position and status of women and men in society.

These are reflected in the:

- *Responsibilities and rights* of women and men.
- *Power and privileges* of women and men.
- Way in which women and men *relate*.

### Gender Equity

Women and men have equal rights under the law in the Caribbean. Nations are striving to translate this legal equality into real gender equity where women and men have equal rights and equal access to opportunities and resources.

**A person with more rights, status and access to resources has more power.**

### Gender Power

Many Caribbean societies promote the superiority of men over women. Male gender power derives from this idea, giving men more rights and authority. **When we value men's roles more than women's roles this strengthens male gender power.**

More men than women do work which society values highly (corporate executives, sports stars) thus receive recognition and power. This is how male gender power is perpetuated.

This unequal gender power is reflected in many areas of life, including woman-man relationships.



