Gender Theatre
Deconstructing and Reconstructing Social Norms in China

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Prevalence of Gender-based violence

- Domestic violence
- Sexual violence
- Girls/Women Trafficking
- Sexual harassment at workplace / schools
- Prenatal Sex selection
- Marginalization / discrimination of SOGI
- Acceptance and silence to gender-based violence

gender-based violence is deeply rooted in institutions and culture
Dimensions of Change

Belief and Value

Policy and Laws

Attitude and Behavior

Norms & Practice

State

Market

Family

Community

Individual
Theory of change – Boy preference

Policy research to reveal real problems
Providing solutions and winning support

Lobbying authorities

Grassroot driven changes

Making gender inequality a community/public issue
Changing belief and attitude;
Deconstruct custom, norms and practices

Engendering village rules and regulations

Altering gender injustice rules
Reconstruct norms and practices
Gender Theatre – platform for changes

script
- Collecting stories, thoughts and experiences
- Listen to unheard stories

show
- Empowerment process: voice out, reflect, action for change
- Making gender issue public
- Challenging and deconstruct conventional beliefs and custom

action
- Reconstruct social norms and rules
- Disseminate messages
Why Gender Theatre?

- empowering women (people) of the oppressed / participants
- easily integrate with local communities
- easy to understand, touch people’s hearts and have resonance
- deconstruct and analysis gender issues
- challenge conventional beliefs and practices
- create space and platform for public discussion
- facilitate change happen and reconstruct norms
Wider Applications

• Vagina Monologues in China – various versions in a decade

• forum theatres for migrant communities
• documentaries and films
• flash mob, public dance and so on
Thank You
Stories of Mothers and Daughters
Mother: oh...I am only able to bear girls.
Changing social practices

Women’s status in Wedding and Funeral
Burial of baby girls’ placenta
Amending Village Rules and Regulations