

THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE ON GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES IN SRHR PROGRAMMING

TRAINING MANUAL



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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT SONKE GENDER JUSTICE

Founded in 2006, Sonke Gender Justice is a womxn's rights organization committed to feminist principles and grounded in a rights-based and gender-transformative approach. Sonke's creation was driven by a shared understanding that violence against womxn and girls is one of the most pervasive human rights violations, with far-reaching effects that undermine South Africa's democracy. Additionally, Sonke was motivated by the belief that gender inequalities, harmful gender norms, and power imbalances contribute to domestic and sexual violence. These issues not only negatively affect womxn but also have adverse effects on men. Harmful perceptions of what it means to be a man or a womxn encourage men to engage in high-risk behaviours, making their active involvement essential in ending violence, transforming gender roles, and contributing to gender justice.

Sonke envisions a world where all forms of violence are socially unacceptable and significantly reduced. In this world, various stakeholders — including multilateral agencies, governments, religious and traditional leaders, the private sector, and community leaders —along with womxn, men, and gender-non-conforming people, take action to prevent and address violence. This vision is rooted in four pillars: **Rights**, **Action**, **Accountability**, and **Sustainability**. These principles form the continuity between our past and present strategic plans, ensuring that our work remains focused on creating long-lasting change. We strive for a future where **human rights** are upheld, individuals and communities take **action** against gender injustice, and systems of **accountability** are put in place to ensure **sustainable** social transformation.

Recognizing that people live within social, economic, religious, and cultural contexts, Sonke adopts a socioecological approach. We understand that addressing violence, ill-health, and discrimination requires engaging all levels of society—individuals, families, communities, institutions, and governments—in a process of transformation. This multi-level engagement is essential to achieving sustainable and systemic change.



WHO CAN USE THIS TRAINING MANUAL

This training manual is intended to enhance the capacity of diverse program implementers, enabling them to influence change and promote gender-transformative approaches in their work. It is designed for a wide range of practitioners, including communications officers, program managers, advocacy and monitoring officers, safeguarding and child protection specialists, legal support teams, and community engagement personnel. The quality of the manual is ensured by Sonke GTA specialists, GTA trainers and SRHR specialists. The guide is delivered by senior trainers who have been trained in transformative pedagogy and are equipped to facilitate training sessions using participant-centred methods.

MODE OF DELIVERY

This manual emphasises reflexivity and knowledge acquisition through facilitation rather than traditional instruction. Facilitators are encouraged to lead discussions in a way that draws out participants' ideas and life experiences, enriching the learning process. Co-facilitation is also encouraged, promoting collaboration among trainers. Various methods will be employed to ensure the training is accessible to non-academic participants, including local languages, short videos, role plays, and community stories. Other interactive learning techniques used include group work, brainstorming, buzz groups and plenary discussions.

This manual is grounded in the principle of **facilitating reflexivity and knowledge acquisition**, rather than simply delivering information. The role of facilitators is to lead discussions by drawing out the ideas and experiences of participants, rather than dominating the conversation with their perspectives. The facilitation process emphasizes the life experiences that participants bring to the table, recognizing that these enrich the learning experience. Facilitation will also involve **co-facilitation**, another key pedagogical approach that promotes collaborative teaching.

Various methods are employed to encourage adult learning for non-academic groups, including the use of local languages, role plays, short videos, and community stories. The interactive techniques include lectures, group work, brainstorming, and more informal methods such as buzz groups and the "marketplace" approach. These methods, which are elaborated upon in the annexes, aim to create an inclusive and dynamic learning environment.

THE "DO SHOPS" MODEL

This manual, aligned with transformative pedagogy, is designed to be **practical, collaborative, and hands-on**, offering participants opportunities to critically examine their socio-cultural, economic, and political norms, beliefs, and practices. Since gender transformation begins with self-awareness, the manual encourages participants to reflect on their own attitudes toward gender and consider how these can either promote or hinder equality.

The training sessions are delivered through **interactive sessions** called “Do-Shops,” which emphasize **learning by doing**. A total of two “Do-Shops” are recommended and will be held for each cohort over a 12-month period. Each Do-Shop will take place over a four-day period, with a six-month break in between to allow participants to apply the knowledge and skills acquired to their chosen GTA interventions. This combination of structured sessions and fieldwork is referred to as the “**programmers-in-action**” model, where participants actively implement change interventions within their communities and organizations.

The **Do-Shops** model provides programmers with the tools to challenge harmful gender norms and power imbalances, engaging them in critical thinking and action-oriented processes.

SUPPORT AND CERTIFICATION

Throughout the implementation of their GTA interventions, participants should receive ongoing support from GTA specialists and senior trainers through both in-person and online sessions. Upon successful completion of the training, including participation in all Do-Shop sessions and implementation of interventions, participants should be awarded certificates of merit.

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH (GTA) TRAJECTORIES

Gender transformation is a complex, gradual, yet highly rewarding journey. It is not a simple or linear process that can be completed with a checklist. Organisations must invest time and energy into this journey, engaging with various partners at different stages. The road to gender transformation requires organizations to continually reflect, explore new ways of working, and remain open to collaboration with different actors. During the Do-Shops, participants will be guided in selecting their **GTA trajectories** — whether in advocacy, campaigns, or community engagement—and will develop interventions that align with these journeys.

HOW THIS MANUAL IS STRUCTURED

The manual is organised into two Do-Shops, each with a number of training sessions. Each session consists of about four activities. Each activity follows the same standard format to give maximum support to facilitators, such as:



Learning outcomes: These describe what participants should learn or take away as a result of doing the activity. It is a good idea to begin each activity by explaining what the learning outcomes are so that participants know what to expect and understand why they are doing the activity and what they can hope to get out of it.



Suggested timing: This indicates how long the activity should take and is based on prior experience of using the activity. These timings are not fixed, and you may need to change them because of the context in which you are working, the group you are working with, or because of issues that arise.



Materials and advance preparation: Where necessary, this sets out what you need to prepare for each activity and what materials to take with you for each activity.



Steps: These are the suggested steps you follow to use the activity most effectively. The instructions are numbered, and you should follow them in the order in which they are written – as one process builds on another and another.



Facilitator notes: These notes help you to facilitate the activity most effectively. They identify what issues or points to be aware of as you facilitate discussions and activities. Make sure you have read these notes before you use the activity, and that you have thought through the issues and points.



Key insights: These are the main points or messages that participants should take away with them, as a result of doing the activity or session. These key insights help you facilitate and sum up discussions, and they help you to clarify knowledge, attitudes and values that are in line with promoting transformative action.



DO-SHOP

The Do-Shop One training introduces participants to the key concepts and considerations around gender and Gender Transformative Practice, deepening their understanding as they move through the sessions by using the lenses of human rights; norms and values; power and power relations, sexual and gender diversity; empowering women and girls, and engaging men and boys. During the training, they are encouraged to reflect on their own SRHR programmes, activities and intervention using a GTA approach.



SESSION 1:

UNDERSTANDING GENDER



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Recognise the conceptual differences between sex and gender.
- ❖ Understand that gender is socially constructed and often reinforces power inequalities
- ❖ Explore traditional gender roles and traditional perceptions of “masculine” and “feminine”
- ❖ Understand the importance of challenging harmful gender norms and roles to promote gender equality
- ❖ Reflect on and challenge own perceptions regarding gender

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

Gender and power dynamics are inherent in all social institutions — from the family to educational, religious, and legal institutions, the workplace, and the media. Gender is often seen as neutral, but it is socially constructed to perpetuate power inequalities. This is highly relevant in societies where women, girl children and LGBTQ+ people are marginalized. Discrimination is embedded in social norms, beliefs, values, behaviours, and policies, often going unrecognized or unaddressed as a human rights violation. This session helps participants understand gender before exploring gender-transformative approaches.

“Gender relations do not exist in a vacuum! They are shaped by institutions and social norms. Gender roles are socially constructed and culturally based!”

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Icebreaker: Do the walk	15-30 mins
Activity 2: Sex, gender, and gender roles	60 mins
Activity 3: A rope between “masculine” and “feminine”	60 mins

GLOSSARY

Biological sex	The physical attributes, such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormones. Tropical Timber Organisation
Gender	Widely shared ideas and expectations concerning men, women, non-gender conforming persons and how they should behave in various situations; usually defined by geographic or cultural contexts. For example, in most countries, females are the primary caregivers, do most of the housework, and are paid less for doing the same work as males.
Gender expression	How a person outwardly expresses their gender through clothing, behaviour, voice, etc.
Gender identity	How a person feels about their own gender. Individuals may identify as male, female, or as something else and their gender identity may or may not be the same as the sex that they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity and expresses their gender in a unique and personal way.
Gender norms	Informal deeply entrenched and widely held expectations or rules about how each gender should behave. Every society has distinct gender norms because gender itself is not fixed. But at the core of the concept of gender norms is the idea of unequal power relations and privilege between men and boys, and women and girls, or of a gender minority.
Gender roles	The expectations and behaviours that society associates with being male or female. They include how people should act, dress, and what responsibilities they should take on based on their gender. These roles can limit opportunities and shape how individuals see themselves.
Social institutions	The systems and structures in society that organize and regulate various aspects of life i.e. family, education, culture, religion, economy, government, and media. They play a major role in shaping individual behaviour, norms, and values through socialisation.
Gender socialisation	The process by which individuals learn and are taught to behave in particular ways as men or women in society, according to accepted social and cultural norms and models of masculinity and femininity.

ACTIVITY 1:

ICEBREAKER: DO THE WALK



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Explore the concept of gender in a fun way.
- Observe that we “walk” differently based on our concept of gender.



Time: 15-30 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- **Space:** The activity is ideally done in a large, indoor open space so that conversation can happen easily.



STEPS

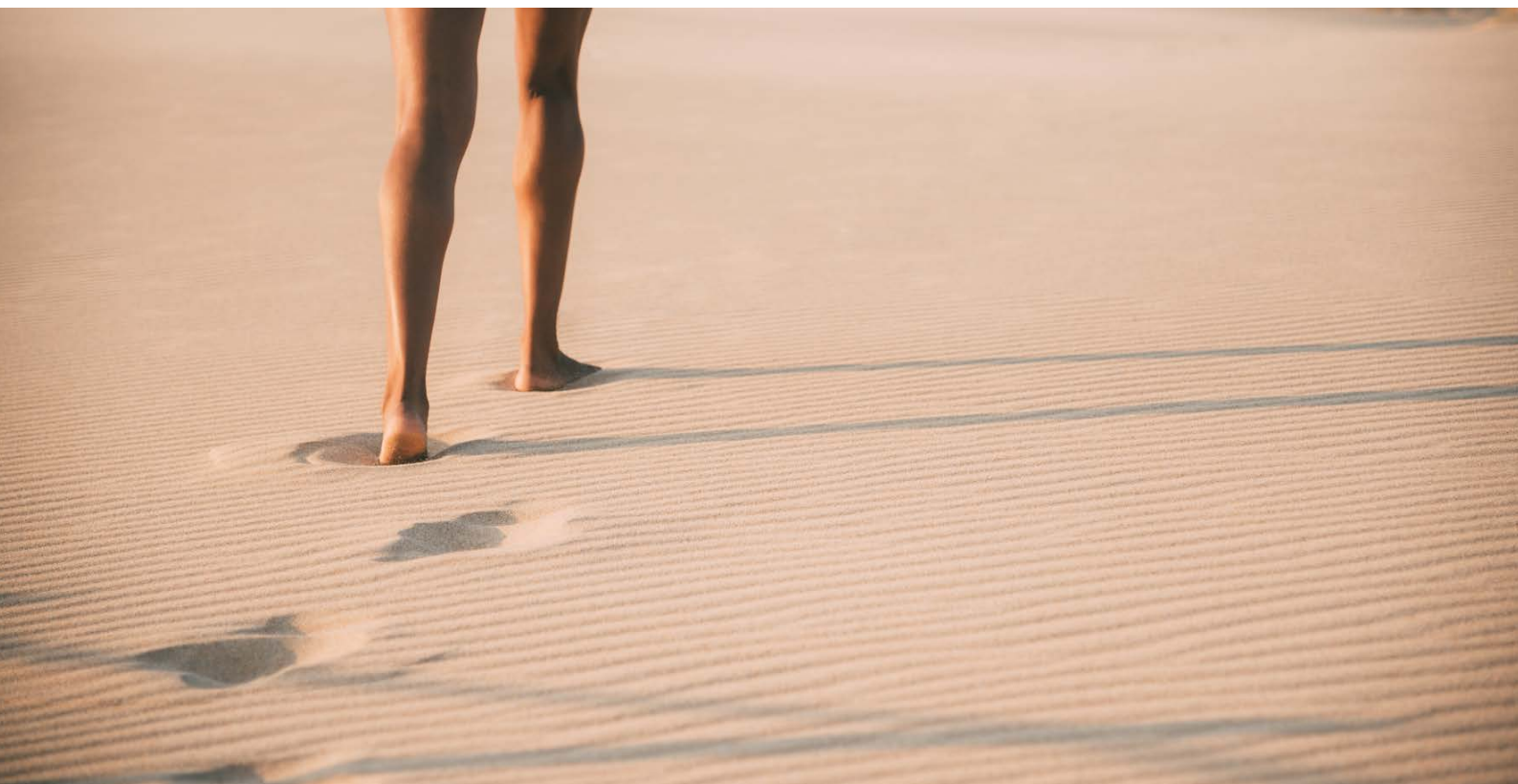
1. **Explain the aims:** In this activity, we focus on understanding gender to build a foundation for the sessions that follow.
2. **Positioning participants:** Ask all participants to pick a spot in the room where they have enough space to walk freely. Ensure everyone starts walking at the same time.
3. **Guided walk demonstrations:** Call out different ways that participants should walk, such as:
 - Walk as you normally do.
 - Walk as if you just heard the greatest news.
 - Walk like an old woman carrying a heavy load.
 - Walk like an old man with a stick.
 - Walk as if you are pregnant.
 - Eat like a girl.
 - Eat like a boy.

DO-SHOP 1

- Laugh like a girl.
 - Laugh like a boy.
 - Stand like a girl.
 - Stand like a boy.
4. **Discussion:** After the demonstrations, briefly discuss with the participants about why they “walked” or demonstrated the way they did. Keep the discussion space open – so participants themselves can share their direct thoughts and experiences.

If needed, ask a few probing questions to encourage participants to reflect on gender:

- When you were demonstrating “eating”, “laughing” and “standing”, did you perform differently if you were being a “girl” or being a “boy”?
 - Where did we learn how girls and boys should “eat”, “laugh” and “stand”?
5. **Wrap up:** Bring closure to the ice breaker.



ACTIVITY 2:

SEX, GENDER, AND GENDER ROLES



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the conceptual differences between sex and gender.
- Develop a common understanding of how gender is constructed.
- Discuss traditional gender roles and how to challenge them.



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- A notebook or piece of paper for each participant.
- A pen or pencil for each participant



STEPS

Step 1: do the activity

1. **Explain the aims:** in this activity, we focus on gender – our early memories, the gender roles our society expects us to play, and how we can challenge these roles.
2. **Individual reflection:** ask participants to reflect on:
 - Their earliest memory of being aware that they were different from the opposite sex and/or expected to behave differently from the opposite sex.
 - When they all have a memory, ask them to write it down on a piece of paper in one or two paragraphs.

Give these writing prompts to help them bring the memory to life:

- How old were you? What were you wearing; what did your hair look like, what were you wearing on your feet?

- Where were you? Do any sounds, images, smells, come to mind?
 - Who else was there?
 - What happened?
 - How did you feel about it?
3. **Small group sharing:** Organise participants into small groups of 2 to 4 and have them share their memories with each other.
 4. **Plenary discussion:** After 10-15 minutes, bring participants back to the main group. Discuss the biological and social construct differences between sex and gender. Explain that gender is socially constructed and dynamic, changing across different contexts such as culture, location, and age.

Step 2: Role plays

1. **Facilitator input:** Briefly explain “gender roles”. Give a few examples, then ask participants to share their ideas.

EXAMPLES

- Women are often expected to handle chores and childcare, while men are seen as primary breadwinners.
 - Men are often viewed as heads of households, making significant decisions, while women must be submissive and obedient.
 - Boys are encouraged to be competitive, while girls are socialized to be cooperative.
 - Mothers are seen as primary caregivers, while fathers are often viewed as disciplinarians or providers.
2. **Role play activity:** Arrange participants into small groups. Ask each group to think of a scenario that highlights unequal or rigid gender roles (e.g., a family dinner, a school setting, a workplace situation).

Ask the groups to create a short role play based on their scenario, demonstrating:

- Traditional gender roles and expectations.
- The impact of challenging these gender roles

Each group presents their role play to the larger group.

3. **Plenary discussion:** After all the role plays, facilitate a discussion with the whole group:
 - What did you notice about the gender roles in the role plays?
 - How did the characters conform to or challenge traditional gender roles?
 - What were the reactions to those who challenged these gender roles?
 - How can we support each other in challenging harmful gender roles?
4. **Wrap up:** Ask participants to reflect on one action they can take to challenge gender roles in their own lives. Allow participants to share their reflections with the group if they feel comfortable.

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

- **Gender roles are learned:** Gender roles are not natural or inherent; they are learned behaviours. From an early age, we are taught what is expected of us based on our gender, shaping our identity and how we perceive ourselves and others.
- **Impact of social institutions:** Gender roles are taught and reinforced by various social institutions such as family, schools, religious institutions, workplaces, and society at large. These institutions play a powerful role in shaping our understanding and expectations of gender.
- **Unequal valuation of gender roles:** Society prescribes specific roles and responsibilities for boys, girls, women, and men, but it values these roles differently. For example, women often have roles related to caregiving and domestic work, while men are typically viewed as breadwinners and engage in paid labour outside the home. Such divisions can reinforce inequalities in access to resources, decision-making power, and overall social status, impacting both personal and societal development.
- Gender roles impact **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)** by influencing decision-making, access to healthcare, and perpetuating harmful stereotypes. Women often lack autonomy over reproductive choices, while men may face stigma in seeking SRHR services. Gender-based violence and caregiving responsibilities further limit access to essential healthcare, contributing to disparities in health outcomes for both men and women.

ACTIVITY 3:

A ROPE BETWEEN “MASCULINE AND FEMININE”



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Identify traditional perceptions of “masculine” and “feminine”
- Reflect on where they locate themselves on the “rope between masculine and feminine”
- Understand that gender is socially constructed and often reinforces power inequalities



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- An open space where participants can move around
- A rope or tape to create a line on the floor
- Labels for "100% Masculine" and "100% Feminine"



STEPS

1. Set up the activity:

- Lay a rope or tape on the floor to create a straight line.
- Label one end as "100% Masculine" and the other end as "100% Feminine". The middle of the line represents "50%" or a balance between masculine and feminine traits.

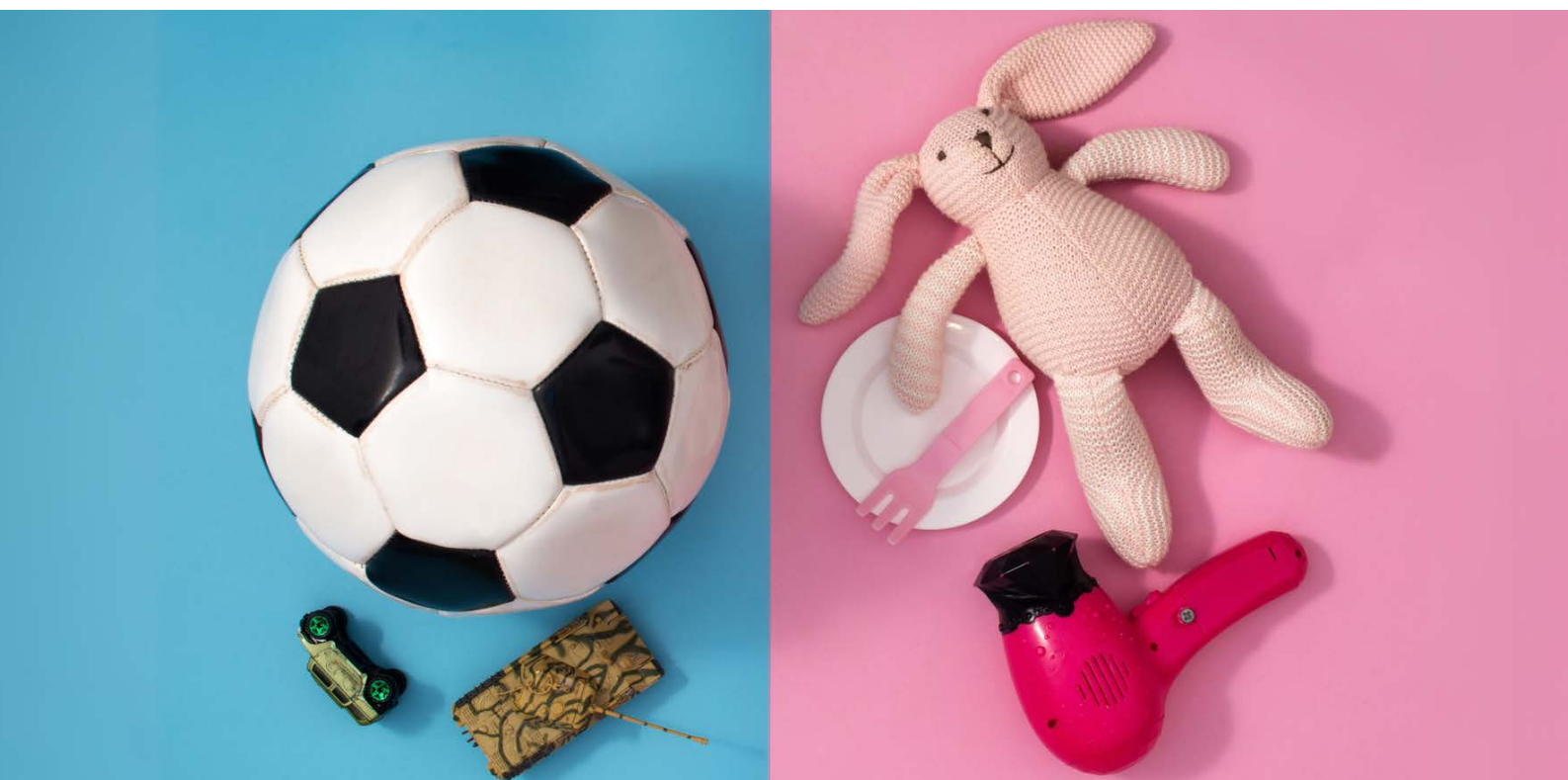
2. Explain the aims:

Briefly explain that this activity will help participants explore their own perceptions of gender and how these perceptions align with societal norms.

3. **Definitions:** Begin by defining “masculine” and “feminine”. Feminine. Ask participants to define what characteristics or traits are typically considered "masculine" and which are considered "feminine". Write these definitions on a board or flip chart if available.
4. **Positioning along the line:** Ask participants to think about where they personally fall on the spectrum between masculine and feminine based on the definitions discussed. They should consider their own traits, behaviours, and self-perceptions. Invite participants to position themselves along the line where they believe they fit. Each participant must be prepared to justify their position.
5. **Facilitated discussion:** Once participants have positioned themselves, invite a few people from each side of the line and those in the middle to share why they chose their specific position. Encourage them to explain their reasoning and any personal experiences that influenced their decision.
6. **Using the arguments and justifications provided by the participants,** remind them that "sex" refers to the biological differences between males and females, while "gender" refers to the social and cultural roles, behaviours, and identities that society attributes to individuals.
7. **Explain:** We often just accept that the traits, characteristics, and behaviours linked to our gender – because we were taught to do so from a young age. We internalize gender norms and accept our gender roles. However, gender is not neutral; it is socially constructed, and power inequalities are built into this construction. This leads to inequality for marginalized groups whose gender is undervalued.
8. **To challenge this,** we are employing gender transformative approaches that dismantle unequal power relationships and that lead to gender equality. Gender equality does not mean that boys and men, women and girls, and LGBTQ+ people should be or act the same, but rather that they should have the same opportunities, rights and access to resources and services.
9. **Wrap up:** Close the session.

SESSION 2:

THE GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Reflect on the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) as a strategy for changing harmful gender and social norms and practices, and the power relationships that reinforce gender inequalities.
- ❖ Consider how the Social Ecological Model shapes relationships and interactions at different levels
- ❖ Recognise how the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) helps to strengthen Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
- ❖ (SRHR) programmes
- ❖ Understand how to measure gender transformative change in Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR)

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

“Some gender norms are healthy, some are unhealthy – you must wake up from the patriarchal sleep to recognize which is which.”

— Abhijit Naskar

Gender transformation is a gradual and complex journey of identifying, challenging, and addressing gender-related issues that impact on unequal relations that reinforce gendered inequalities, inequities, disempowerment, and discrimination.

Gender Transformative Approaches (GTAs) are strategies that focus both on change at an individual level for women, girls, and marginalised groups AS WELL AS on changing systems, institutions, and structures that uphold unequal gender relations and inequalities. GTAs integrate gender-related issues into all aspects of programme and policy design, development, implementation, and evaluation (National Information Platforms for Nutrition: n.d.). For this to work in practice, GTAs adopt a multi-sectoral approach which involves collaboration and co-ordination across multiple sectors to address the diverse needs and rights of women, girls, and marginalised genders.

The Social Ecological Model is a particularly useful model that helps us gain a deeper insight into the relationships between individuals and others, and thus to see how these relationships might be shifted or changed. By understanding the relationships and interactions between these different levels, it is easier to see how formal and informal rules, norms, and practices either enable or constrain individual empowerment and reinforce gender inequalities.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: The Toolbox	60 min
Activity 2: What is the Gender Transformative Approach?	90 mins
Activity 3: What is the Social Ecological Model?	90 mins
Activity 4: DIY activity	90 mins

GLOSSARY

Gender Transformative Approach (GTA)

A collection of strategies for changing harmful gender and social norms and practices, and the power relationships that reinforce gender inequalities.

Norms

Expectations or rules about how people should behave in society. These norms are passed on informally through the family, culture, religion, education, media, and work. They are powerfully entrenched and passed on from generation to generation. They change over time and differ in different cultures.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

Human rights applied to sexuality and reproduction. It combines the following four areas:

Sexual health

a person's sexual well-being during different stages of their life

Sexual rights

human sexuality, and a person's sexual orientation and gender identity

Reproductive health

the health of a person's reproductive system during different stages of their life

Reproductive rights

legal rights and freedoms relating to reproduction and reproductive health.

Allies

Allies actively support and advocate for people from marginalized or underrepresented groups, particularly in the areas of social justice, equality, and inclusion. This support is rooted in empathy, understanding, and a dedication to confronting systemic power inequality, bias, and discrimination.

ACTIVITY 1:

THE TOOLBOX



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the difference between drivers and root causes of harmful practices
- Explore how the Gender Transformative Approach tackles root causes of gender inequality and unequal power relations



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Space: The activity is ideally done in a large, indoor open space so that demonstrations can happen easily.



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Facilitator input: Introduce the idea of cutting down a huge tree using a "toolbox" filled with a variety of tools. This toolbox represents the different strategies and approaches we could use to tackle the challenge of cutting down this tree.
2. Small groups: Divide participants into small groups, with at least 5 people per group. Each group must design their best strategy to cut down the tree — using any tools from the "toolbox". Give them 10 minutes to strategize and practice their plan for cutting the tree.
3. Demonstrations: After their preparation, each group takes turns to do a "performance" or demonstration of cutting down the tree using the tools and strategy they decided on.

Encourage all the participants to observe the tools, strategies, teamwork, and approach used by each group.

After each group presents, allow 5 minutes for feedback from the other participants, noting the key points on a flipchart.

Step 2: Plenary Discussion:

Once all groups have presented, move into a plenary session, and ask the following reflection questions:

Reflection Questions:

- Which part of the tree did the groups focus on cutting the most?
- Were there any parts of the tree left uncut by the groups?
- How do you know how deep and how spread out the tree's roots are?
- What tools or strategies could be used to tackle the roots so that they are removed or die?
- Compare cutting the leaves, branches and trunk, and roots—which one was the easiest to deal with, and why?
- What is the common practice in programming? Tackling the leaves, branches and trunk, or roots?

Step 3: Facilitator input using key insights:

Explain the tree metaphor (drivers, roots, and programming strategies) and provide an overview of GTA, using the KEY INSIGHTS below.



KEY INSIGHTS

The tree metaphor – drivers and roots

The tree is a metaphor – it represents our programming. It is important for us to reflect on our programming and the approaches we use to address the different SRHR issues. Let's use an example of gender-based violence (GBV) to explain the cutting of the tree and how it links to the links to the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA).

The causes of GBV are of two types – the drivers and the roots.

The parts of the tree above the soil, the tree's visible parts, — the trunk, leaves, and branches—represent the drivers of GBV. These may include: alcohol and drug abuse, poverty, weak implementation of laws, conflict and war, displacement, stress in the home, and many others. Many times, it's easy to cut these parts of the tree and there are many tools (strategies) used to cut off the leaves, branches and trunk. In relation to programming, many interventions focus on dealing with the drivers of GBV.

The part of the tree, buried beneath the soil, anchoring the tree, but invisible are the roots. They represent the root causes of GBV. These include deeply ingrained unequal power relations between men and women, which are embedded in social, cultural, and religious norms. There is a complex interplay of causal factors reaching deep into so many aspects of our conditioning and our society. Usually, until we dig them up, we cannot know how deep and spread out these roots are, and without tackling these roots, won't create lasting change.

So, in our programming, we need to dig deeper and focus on these root causes rather than just trimming the branches or leaves.

The Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) tackles root causes

The Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) focuses on tackling these root causes of gender inequality by actively questioning and challenging harmful gender norms and power relations. It aims to transform the social structures, policies, and cultural norms that perpetuate inequality.

To employ the Gender Transformative Approach, we keep aware of **six key elements**:

- Using a human rights-based approach
- Understanding power and challenging unequal power relationships
- Challenging harmful norms and values
- Ensuring gender and diversity inclusivity
- Empowering women and girls
- Engaging men and boys as allies

Through this approach, we can uproot the systemic inequalities and ensure that gender equality becomes embedded in our society at all levels

ACTIVITY 2:

THE GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the Gender Transformative Approach and its key principles and strategies
- Practice applying a GTA approach to a scenario
- Explore ways to integrate GTAs into SRHR work



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Copies of the Handout: *Gender Transformative Approach* -- for each participant



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims.

2. Facilitator input:

Remind participants the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) aims to address the **root causes** of gender inequality and unequal power. Explain that to understand and apply the GTA, we have to change our way of thinking and learn to look at our programmes through a new lens. GTA is layered and complex, and as we learn to see and work in this way, we deepen our understanding and practice. Together, we will develop these layers of understanding of GTA until we have internalized this way of thinking and can apply it to our programme work.

Explain that GTA is a collection of strategies that:

- critically challenge harmful gender roles and norms
- question, challenge transform unequal power relationships
- promote empowerment and equality.

GTAs go beyond a focus on individual change for women, girls, and marginalized groups and aim to transform unequal relations that reinforce gendered inequalities. GTAs don't just include women as participants or beneficiaries of support – instead they integrate gender issues into all aspects of program and policy design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

GTAs, recognise that some groups are more disadvantaged due to the link between gender and other forms of oppression (such as economic status, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.).

GTA is a process. It is bottom up, encourages community-led solutions, requires constant engagements – and begins with personal transformation.

3. Small group discussion: Divide participants into small groups of 4-5 people.

- Ask each group to read through the Handout: *Gender Transformative Approach* and discuss the strategies.
- Provide each small group with a different scenario that illustrates gender inequality or harmful gender norms (e.g., a family setting where daughters are not given the same educational opportunities as sons, a school where LGBTQ+ are bullied; a workplace where women face barriers to leadership roles).
- Ask the groups to analyse their scenario using a gender transformative approach.
 - What harmful gender norms are present?
 - What is the unequal power relationship?
 - How can marginalized groups in the scenario be empowered?
 - What role can boys or men play in restoring balance?

4. Plenary report back: Each group presents their analysis to the larger group, explaining how GTAs can address the specific gender inequalities in their scenario.

Explain that now that we have a deeper understanding of what GTA is and how to apply it, we can think about how we can use GTAs in our sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) work.

Step 2: GTA and SRHR

1. **Plenary brainstorm:** Explain that using a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) has a dual focus - it improves access to health and health services while also challenging and transforming harmful gender norms and unequal power relationships.
 - Write on a flipchart: Ideas for integrating gender transformative approaches into SRHR work

IDEAS FOR INTEGRATING GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES INTO SPHR WORK

- Promoting the relative position of women, girls, and marginalized groups including LGBTQ+ persons.
- Encouraging men's roles as enablers of the health and wellbeing of women, girls, and marginalized groups including LGBTQ+ persons...
- Encouraging participants to critically question the social expectations for women and men, and their impact on their roles as partners.
- Challenging homophobia and gender-based harassment.
- Addressing harmful norms of masculinity that link to heterosexual sexual prowess and gender-based violence.
- Promoting shared decision-making between males and females.
- Addressing the power relationships between women and others in the community, such as service providers and traditional leaders.
- Challenging norms around contraceptive use (e.g. that 'real men' don't wear condoms, or that women should not carry condoms).
- Changing gender norms and attitudes in influential social groups to leverage their influence as agents of change in their communities and peer groups.
- Empowering women/girls and people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and/or sex characteristics.
- identifying and addressing community power structures that prevent women from making decisions about their own health including family-planning, health/nutrition services; and
- Working to change laws and policies that promote gender inequitable access to sexual and reproductive health.

- Ask participants to brainstorm ideas to integrate GTA into their SRHR programmes. Give a few examples from the list below and write them on the flipchart.
 - Write up participants' own ideas and add any additional ideas from the list provided.
2. **Wrap up** by using the key insights to explain how using GTAs can deepen and strengthen our SRHR.



KEY INSIGHTS

- Taking a gender transformative approach to SRHR has a dual focus -- it improves access to health and health services while also challenging and transforming harmful gender norms and unequal power relationships.
- GTAs address root causes that help to transform attitudes, behaviour, choices, and power relationships.
- GTAs are grounded in an understanding of local contexts, thus facilitating solutions that are relevant and long-lasting
- Gender transformation requires sustained effort. We need to think of ourselves as change-makers who can influence policy, shift harmful norms, and promote gender equality in our personal lives, our communities, and our programme work.

HANDOUT: THE GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH

Gender transformative approaches to use when designing SRHR programmes:

1. **Gender analysis:** Gender transformative approaches begin with a thorough gender analysis of the specific context to understand the different needs, roles, and power dynamics between women, men, girls, and boys. This analysis helps identify the specific gender inequalities and challenges faced by different groups.
2. **Addressing root causes:** Gender transformative approaches go beyond addressing the immediate needs of women and girls, to tackle the root causes of gender inequality. They recognize that gender inequalities are deeply embedded in social, cultural, and economic structures and require comprehensive and sustained efforts to bring about lasting change.
3. **Challenging norms and stereotypes:** Gender transformative approaches challenge harmful gender norms, stereotypes, and roles that reinforce inequality. They aim to shift attitudes and behaviours by promoting more equitable and inclusive gender norms and roles.
4. **Participation and empowerment:** Gender transformative approaches prioritise the meaningful participation and empowerment of women, girls, and marginalized genders in decision-making processes and programme design. They recognize the importance of amplifying the voices of those most affected and ensuring their active involvement in shaping interventions.
5. **Engaging men and boys:** Gender transformative approaches recognize the importance of engaging men and boys as allies in promoting gender equality. They work to challenge rigid and harmful masculinities while promoting positive and equitable notions of manhood.

ALSO, THINK ABOUT:

Multi-sectoral approach: How do we ensure collaboration and coordination across multiple sectors, such as health, WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), education, protection, and livelihoods, to address the diverse needs and rights of women, girls, and marginalized genders?

Accountability and monitoring: How do we build in accountability and monitoring to track progress and ensure that gender equality commitments are upheld e.g. data collection, analysis, and reporting to identify gaps and challenges in implementation?

Localization and contextualization: How do we acknowledge the diversity of contexts and adapt interventions to local realities? This involves working closely with local

communities, organizations, and leaders to ensure interventions are contextually appropriate and sustainable.

ACTIVITY 3:

THE SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL (SEM)



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Examine the Social-Ecological Model (SEM) and locate scenarios on the model
- Practice designing an SRHR intervention using GTAs and the SEM
- Reflect on how to measure gender change in SRHR programmes

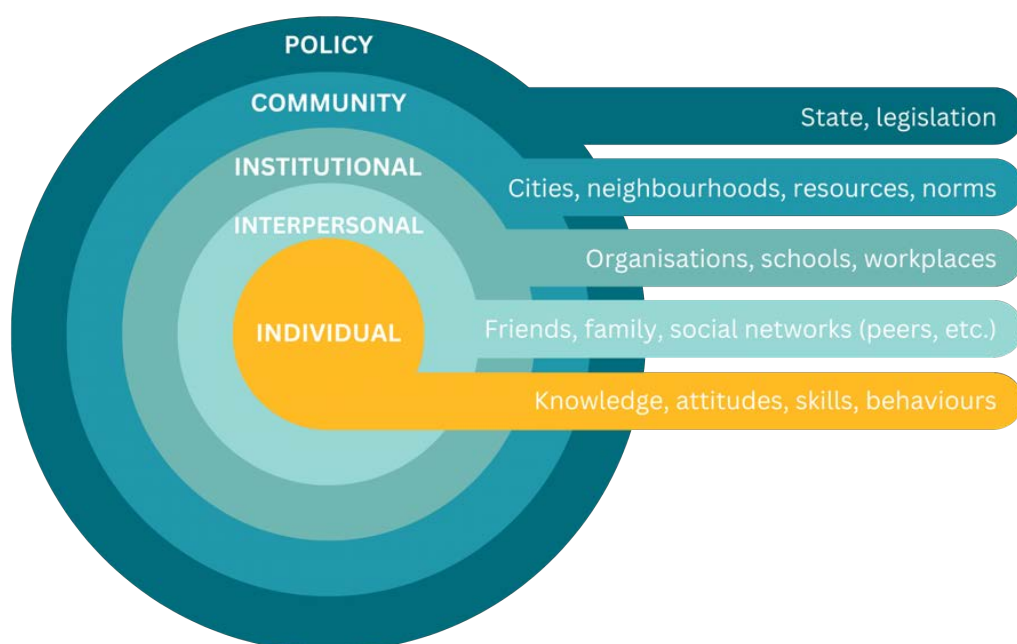


Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Handout: *The Social-Ecological Model* – for each participant
- Case Study: Improving Access to SRHR Services for Adolescent Girls in a Rural Community
- Flipchart: Draw the Social-Ecological Model





Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims of the activity.**
2. **Facilitator presentation:** Briefly introduce the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM), explaining that it is a framework for understanding how individual behaviour and societal outcomes are influenced by interactions across multiple levels:
 - Individual level: knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviours
 - Interpersonal level: the influence of relationships such as friends, family, and social networks)
 - Institutional level: the influence of organisations such as schools and workplaces.
 - Community level: the influence of cities, neighbourhoods, resources, and norms.
 - Policy level: the influence of laws and policies at the local, regional, and national level.

Explain that GTA seeks to address **gender inequality** by transforming power relations at all these levels. So, the SEM helps people working with gender transformative approaches to understand the relationships between individuals and other layers of society, and thus see how these relationships might be shifted or changed.

3. **Small groups:** Organise participants into small groups. Give each participant the Handout: The Social-Ecological Model. Tell them to look at each scenario and decide where it fits in the model — Individual; Interpersonal; Institutional; Community; Policy.

FACILITATOR NOTE

Scenarios (with correct answers in brackets)

- *Family members teaching boys to respect women from a young age – (Interpersonal)*
- *A youth club organizing a local awareness campaign on harmful gender norms – (Community)*
- *A person attending a sexual health education workshop – (Individual)*
- *A company's gender equality policy ensuring equal pay for women and men – (institutional)*

- *Government enacting anti-discrimination laws protecting LGBTQ+ rights – (Policy)*
- *Peer support group for men to discuss gender roles and masculinity – (Interpersonal)*
- *An individual deciding to advocate for gender equality in their workplace – (Individual)*
- *A local NPO offering workshops on gender norms – (Community)*
- *A school implementing a gender equality curriculum in classrooms – (Institutional)*
- *National sexual and reproductive health policies advocating for equal access to services – (Policy)*

4. **Plenary discussion:** Go through each scenario, and check there is shared and consensual understanding on where each fit in the SEM model.

Step 2: The SEM, GTA, and SRHR interventions

1. **Small group:** Divide participants into small groups. Each group will be assigned one level of the SEM (individual, interpersonal, community, institutional, or societal). Groups discuss the questions below:
 - Identify gender inequalities or harmful gender norms that exist at their assigned level (e.g., at the community level, there might be strong norms that women should not participate in leadership roles).
 - List examples of current SRHR-related interventions or programs that focus on their level.
2. **Role plays:** Provide a case study scenario related to SRHR (e.g., barriers to access to reproductive health services for women or LGBTQ+ groups).

Each group will act as a policy/programming team tasked with designing a GTA intervention using their SEM level.

Each group presents their GTA-based solution to the whole group.

3. **Plenary debrief:** Encourage reflection on:
 - The challenges of addressing gender inequality at different levels of the SEM.

- The opportunities for bringing about root cause change by using GTAs across all levels of the SEM to bring about systemic change.

Step 3: Measuring gender transformative change in SRHR

1. **Small groups:** Ask participants to work in small groups. Give each participant a copy of the Case Study: *Improving Access to SRHR Services for Adolescent Girls in a Rural Community*

In their groups, they should read the case study, and discuss:

- What was the SRHR programme before using a gender transformative approach?
 - What gender transformative strategies were used?
 - What levels of the social-ecological model were addressed?
 - What were the outcomes?
 - Was the gender transformative intervention successful? Why?
2. **Plenary:** Ask a few participants to share whether they thought the gender transformative intervention successful and why.
 3. **Facilitator input:** Explain that the case study also gives us an example of how we can measure gender transformative change in SRHR. Explain that gender-transformative change occurs at three levels: individual, relationships, and norms/structures.
 - At the **individual level**, change in SRHR programmes can be measured by reductions in gender-based violence and controlling behaviours, and improvements in communication about sexual behaviour. Other indicators include changes in assets, livelihood choices, and knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs about SRHR issues.
 - At the **relationship level**, gender-transformative programs measure social changes that promote gender equality, such as improvements in household relationships (e.g., between spouses or parents and children) and external relationships (e.g., among community members). Indicators include reduced family conflict, increased spousal communication, joint decision-making, and greater community support.
 - For change to be truly transformative, **norms and structures** must also shift. This involves altering macro-level gender relations, laws, policies, and societal attitudes. Though more difficult to measure, indicators include legal changes and shifts in societal attitudes in surveys.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.

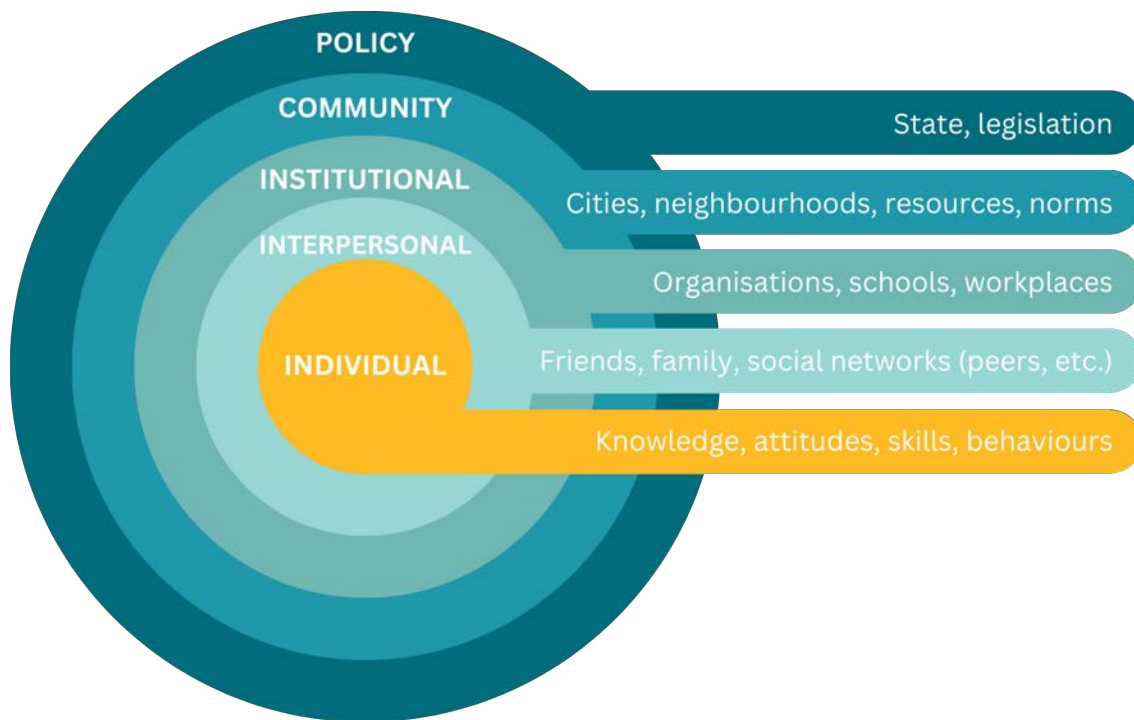


KEY INSIGHTS

- Based on research by the WHO, gender-transformative SRHR programmes that address gender inequality at all levels — individual, community, and institutional levels simultaneously — will have better outcomes than those that ignore the broader environment.
- An effective GTA needs to operate on multiple levels to ensure lasting gender transformation and equality. The social ecological model helps us to consider these levels in our programming.



HANDOUT: SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL MODEL



Scenarios

1. Family members teaching boys to respect women from a young age
2. A youth club organizing a local awareness campaign on harmful gender norms
3. A person attending a sexual health education workshop
4. A company's gender equality policy ensuring equal pay for women and men
5. Government enacting anti-discrimination laws protecting LGBTQ+ rights
6. Peer support group for men to discuss gender roles and masculinity
7. An individual deciding to advocate for gender equality in their workplace
8. A local NPO offering workshops on gender norms
9. A school implementing a gender equality curriculum in classrooms
10. National sexual and reproductive health policies advocating for equal access to services

CASE STUDY: IMPROVING ACCESS TO SRHR SERVICES FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

In a rural community, adolescent girls faced stigma and limited access to SRHR services, with decisions controlled by male partners and families. The initial intervention focused on providing contraception but did not address gender norms or engage families. As a result, service uptake was low, family communication was limited, and gender norms remained unchanged.

The program shifted to a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA):

- Comprehensive sexuality education empowered girls to make SRHR decisions.
- Family dialogues and workshops engaged male partners and fathers, promoting shared decision-making.
- Public campaigns and policy advocacy challenged harmful gender norms and improved SRHR access.

Outcomes & Indicators:

- **Increased service uptake** (more girls accessing services, reduced stigma).
- **Improved family communication** (more open discussions, joint decision-making).
- **Engaging male partners and fathers as allies** (more open discussions, more agency for girls, joint decision-making).
- **Positive shift in gender norms** (support for girls' autonomy, reduced male control).

This GTA approach led to empowered girls, better SRHR access, and transformative changes in gender norms and family dynamics.

ACTIVITY 4: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Reflect on the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) as a strategy for changing harmful gender and social norms and practices, and the power relationships that reinforce gender inequalities.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Prepare a flipchart with the small group discussion questions (see below)
- Handout for each participant: Planning activities / interventions



STEPS

1. **Explain the activity:** Explain that in this activity, participants will think about how they can apply the Gender Transformation Approach (GTA) to challenge and change harmful gender norms and power imbalances
2. **Small group work:** Divide into smaller groups of 5 people. Ask each group to use these questions to guide a discussion on the Gender Based Transformative Approach:
 - How would you explain the two or three main aims of a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA)?
 - How can you ensure that you integrate a GTA into different types of projects or interventions, such as health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), education, and livelihoods?
 - How can you apply the GTA at the institutional and policy level? For example, how can it ensure that everyone can access Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), education and services?

- How can you apply GTA at each stage of the intervention: (a) from planning; (b) to implementation; (c) to monitoring and evaluating what you have achieved?
3. **Plenary discussion:** Give each group time to share their ideas. Allow feedback from both fellow participants and the facilitator. Ask the groups if these are activities they can integrate into their existing work.

Help the group agree on one intervention or activity that they can use as an example of how to use the GTA.

Prepare a flipchart with this task:

- Handout for each participant: Planning activities / interventions
- Identify one activity or intervention that you can implement in your programme to promote a GTA approach. The activity needs to engage women, girls, men, boys, and people with diverse SOGIESC.
- Use the activity as an example of how to complete the planning chart below.

HANDOUT: PLANNING ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS

Name of activity	
Main target audience/s	
Purpose, aims, objectives of the activity	
How would the activity ensure the integration of the main aims of a GTA (e.g. analyse and address harmful gendered norms, practices, and power imbalances)?	
Frequency When will the activity take place	
Steps involved in the activity (how will it happen?)	
Who will be involved? Roles	
Estimated costs	
How will progress be monitored?	
How will you evaluate the outcomes of the activity?	

SESSION 3:

THE HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Discuss the importance of using a human rights-based approach in working towards gender transformation
- ❖ Explore rights related to sexual and reproductive health (SRH).
- ❖ Reflect on the different types of human rights discrimination and violations that occur because of power and gender inequalities.
- ❖ Identify actions to protect and defend all peoples' access to human rights.

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

The focus of this session is on understanding how GTAs cannot be realised without employing a human rights-based approach.

How do they link? GTAs focus on transforming the root causes of gender inequality by challenging and changing harmful gender norms and power imbalances, across all levels of the social ecological model – from the individual through to their relationships, community, and society. A human rights-based approach underpins and guides GTAs, ensuring that changes made respect, protect, and fulfil human rights – that the changes are fair, non-discriminatory, and empower everyone, especially those who have been most marginalised.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Human rights storytelling	90 mins
Activity 2: Duty bearers?	90 mins
Activity 3: Our vision of SRHR	90 mins
Activity 4: DIY activity	60 mins

GLOSSARY

Human rights	The freedoms that everyone is equally entitled to by the mere fact that they are human beings. They are the standards or safeguards we use in society to recognise and protect the dignity and well-being of all human beings, equally and without discrimination based on gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, race, ethnicity, or any other status in society. They govern how individuals live in society and with each other, as well as their relationship with the State and the responsibilities that the State has towards them.
Human rights-based approach (HRBA)	In the context of gender transformative practice, this is a framework that ensures efforts to challenge and change harmful gender norms and power imbalances are grounded in the principles of human rights. This approach seeks to promote gender equality by addressing the root causes of gender-based discrimination in a way that respects, protects, and fulfils the rights of all individuals, particularly marginalised groups. It ensures that gender transformative changes are inclusive, non-discriminatory, and empower those most affected by inequality.
Bodily autonomy	To have the power to make decisions about your own body – to make decisions about health care, contraception, and sex.
Bodily integrity	Where we can live free from physical acts to which we do not give our consent, for example to say no to genital female mutilation or cutting.
Accountability:	The responsibility of individuals, organisations, or governments to uphold human rights, ensuring that actions are transparent, fair, and non-discriminatory, and that failures to meet these obligations are addressed.
Rights holders:	Individuals or groups who are entitled to human rights protections and freedoms. They are the beneficiaries of human rights standards, which guarantee their dignity, equality, and well-being.
Duty bearers	Individuals, groups, or entities, usually governments or institutions, which are obligated to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights. They are responsible for ensuring that rights holders can fully enjoy their rights without discrimination.
SOGIESC	Acronym for Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics . An umbrella term to describe the diverse aspects of an individual's sexual orientation (who they are attracted to), gender identity (how they identify themselves in terms of gender), gender expression (how they outwardly express their gender), and sex characteristics (biological attributes like chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs). SOGIESC is often used in human rights discussions to ensure the inclusion and protection of all individuals, regardless of their specific gender or sexual identity.

ACTIVITY 1:

HUMAN RIGHTS STORYTELLING

? LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Share and reflect on stories related to human rights.
- Engage in meaningful discussion on human rights.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, makers, tape, coloured, pens / pencils
- Photocopy *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* for each participant, and / or put up a poster of these human rights (Example poster¹ is at the end of the activity).
- Prepare a flipchart on *Prompts for human rights storytelling*, as below. Adapt or add to the list of prompts.

FACILITATOR NOTE: !

This story-sharing activity may trigger strong painful memories and feelings – both for the storyteller and the participants. Read and apply the suggestions in Annex 2: Holding Safe Spaces and Creating a Container for Powerful Emotions so you are well-prepared to hold the group in empathy and emotional safety.

¹ Minty, Z. (2022). *Declaration of Human Rights Poster* [Image]. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Zayd-Minty/publication/360454554/figure/fig1/AS:1153396996354059@1652002681810/Declaration-of-Human-Rights-Poster>

PROMPTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STORYTELLING:

- A time when you or someone you know faced inequality and discrimination.
- A story of someone standing up for their rights.
- An experience of fairness or unfairness in the workplace.
- A story of someone asking for help because they have been sexually assaulted.
- A story about someone not being allowed to go to school.
- A time when someone was treated unfairly at the clinic.
- A story of when one was married against their will
- A story of a female was denied use contraceptives by a partner or family member
- A story on female genital cutting



STEPS

Step 1: Circle Story Sharing

1. Explain the aims of the activity.
2. **Refer to the flipchart:** *Prompts for human rights storytelling.* Give each participant a copy of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* or refer to the poster.
3. **Storytelling:** Ask participants to sit in a circle.
 - Set the tone by sharing a 1-minute story about yourself or someone else related to the abuse of human rights or standing up for human rights.
 - Then invite a few other participants to share their own stories. They can use the prompts on the flipchart if they wish or share any other human rights experience.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Make sure that each participant is allowed to speak without being interrupted. Ask everyone to listen carefully and think about the following:

- *How does the story make them feel or think?*
- *How does the story increase their understanding of human rights?*
- *What have they learnt from the story?*

Step 2: Group discussion

1. Facilitate a discussion using these questions as a guide:

- What did these stories make you think and feel?
- What was similar in the stories?
- How did these stories increase your understanding of human rights?

2. Sum up by asking: What can we learn from these stories about promoting and protecting the rights of all people – women, girls, men, boys, and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities?

Step 3: Small group work

1. Divide the group into smaller groups of 5 or 6 people. Give each group flipchart paper, markers, and coloured pens / pencils.
2. Ask each group to show (using pictures and words) how human rights are the principles that guide our work on gender transformation.
3. Encourage participants to use examples from their actual work during this exercise to highlight the connection with the human rights-based approach (HRBA). This will also help them identify potential gaps in their interventions where HRBA has not been applied.
4. After 10 minutes ask each group to display their pictures.
5. Have a quick gallery walk. Participants can comment on how the pictures shows the link between human rights and gender transformation / how human rights guide our gender transformative work.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

“Human rights are universal and inalienable. [This means that] all people everywhere in the world are entitled to them. No one can voluntarily give them up. Nor can others take them away...”

— What are human rights? | UNICEF

Information about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other Conventions

Human rights are universal (applicable everywhere), inalienable (applicable always), interdependent (mutually reinforcing), and egalitarian (the same for everyone). In other words, all people, **everywhere, always** have all the **same** human rights, no matter their nationality, place of birth / residence, sex, gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, language, or any other status. These rights have been written down in the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* and in other international conventions.

Working for the human rights of women and girls, as well as transgender and intersex people can never just be about gender. This work must also address the other forces of inequality that interact with gender inequality. Human rights violations are often worsened by experiences of other forms of violence, hatred, discrimination, and exclusion, such as those based on race, age, religion, disability, or economic, social, or other status.

For the great majority of women in the sub-Saharan Africa region, the struggle for justice is not only against gender inequalities but also against economic injustice. And for many, it is also a struggle against racism and social subordination linked to culture, religion, and age.

GTAs based on a human rights-based perspective must address the unjust conditions of life that prevent specific groups from enjoying their fundamental rights and freedoms, prioritising oppression and discrimination based on harmful gender norms and power imbalances.



The Universal Declaration of HUMAN RIGHTS

Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, the Universal Declaration states basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all human beings are entitled.

No one has the right to hold you in slavery.



No one has the right to torture you.

You have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

We are all equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law.

You have the right to seek legal help if your rights are violated.



No one has the right to wrongly imprison you or force you to leave your country.

You have the right to a fair and public trial.

Everyone is innocent until **PROVEN** guilty.

You have the right to privacy. No one can interfere with your reputation, family, home or correspondence.



You can travel wherever you want.

You have the right to seek asylum in another country if you are being persecuted in your own country.



Everyone has the right to a nationality.

All adults have the right to marriage and to raise a family.



WE ARE ALL BORN FREE AND EQUAL

EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO THESE RIGHTS

NO MATTER YOUR RACE, RELIGION OR NATIONALITY

EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO LIFE, FREEDOM AND SAFETY

You have the right to own property.



Everyone has the right to belong to a religion.



Freedom of Expression: You have the right to free thought and to voice your opinions to others.

Everyone has the right to gather as a peaceful assembly.

You have the right to help choose and to take part in governing your country, directly or through chosen representatives.



You have the right to social security and are entitled to economic, social and cultural help from your government.

Workers' rights: Every adult has the right to a job, a fair wage and to join a trade union.

You have the right to leisure and rest from work.

Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family.



Everyone has the right to education.

Your intellectual property as an artist or scientist should be protected.

We are all entitled to social order so we can enjoy these rights.

You have the responsibility to respect the rights of others

NO ONE CAN TAKE AWAY ANY OF YOUR RIGHTS



ACTIVITY 2:

DUTY BEARERS



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Discuss and analyse examples of human rights violations / abuses in SRHR programmes.
- Identify who are rights holders and who are duty bearers.
- Explain the duties or obligations of duty bearers and the mechanisms of accountability.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, makers, tape, coloured pens / pencils
- Photocopy the *Examples of a rights violation in an SRHR programme* for each participant (see the end of this activity).
- Prepare four flipcharts – one for each small group, with the chart below.

Which rights have been abused?	Who is the rights holder?	Who is the duty bearer?	What kind of harmful norms and imbalances of power limit the fulfilment of the rights?	How can we turn the harmful norms into processes that respect, protect, and fulfil the rights that are abused?



Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims of the activity.
2. **Give input:** Explain that when we discuss human rights, we must bear in mind that there are people who have these rights, who we can call 'Rights holders'. We are all rights holders. There are also people and institutions which have the responsibility or duty to respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of others. We call them 'Duty bearers.'

Duty bearers include:

- The government: Has the duty to ensure that human rights are upheld by passing laws, developing policies, and taking actions to protect and enforce the rights of individuals.
- Public institutions (e.g. police, health care workers, educational systems): Have the duty to ensure that their services respect human rights principles and do not discriminate against anyone.
- Businesses and employers: Have a duty to respect the human rights of their employees and others who are affected by the businesses or operations.
- Individuals in positions of power (e.g. judges, law enforcement officers, public officials): Have the duty to make decisions and take actions that respect and protect human rights.

Importantly, rights holders are entitled to hold duty bearers to account for their obligations and duties to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights, and not to violate these rights.

3. **Ask the group:** Are you rights holders or duty bearers or both? Explain.
4. **Divide into four small groups:** Provide each group with the following:
 - A copy of the Examples of a rights violation in an SRHR programme and a copy of the Chart: Rights holders and duty bearers.
 - Choose the four most relevant examples for your context. Assign each group one example to discuss. Ask them to try to relate it to their own programme or their organisation's activities.
 - They note down their answers on the flipchart. They should ensure that they identify who are the most important rights holders and duty bearers in their example.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. Allow each group to put up their charts and report back on their example.
2. Then lead a discussion using these questions as a guide:
 - What other examples can you think of rights violations that happen in SHR?
 - In all the examples, who are the rights holders and who are the duty bearers?
 - How do these rights violations relate to the expectations and rules about how women, girls, men, and boys should behave (gender norms)?
 - How do these rights violations relate to imbalances of power on different levels – between individuals, in the family, community, health care facility, laws etc?
 - What can you do in your programme – as a duty bearer – to ensure that the rights that are being violated are respected, protected, and realised?

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Rights and duties

Human rights involve both rights and duties or obligations. Rights-holders have certain rights to which they are entitled. Duty bearers have duties and obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil these rights.

We are all rights-holders, entitled to live in dignity. And as rights-holders, we are entitled to hold duty-bearers to account for their obligation to respect, protect, promote rights and to ensure that they are not violated. This calls for the adaptation of universal norms and standards of human rights into the local context.

HANDOUT: EXAMPLES OF A RIGHTS VIOLATION IN AN SRHR PROGRAMME

Example 1: Lack of access to safe and legal abortion

Women and young girls are denied access to safe and legal abortions because of discriminatory laws or policies. They are forced to seek unsafe, illegal abortions. This puts their health and lives at risk.

Example 2: Discrimination in health care

Women, girls, and those that have diverse SOGIESC or LGBTQI+ people often face discrimination and stigma when they seek SRH services. They are often refused, insulted, or provided with inadequate treatment. This can lead to poor health outcomes.

Example 3: Denial of sexual education

Young girls and those that have diverse SOGIESC or LGBTQI+ people are denied access to comprehensive sexual education. This limits their ability to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and contributes to higher rates of pregnancies, STIs, and gender-based violence.

Example 4: Inadequate maternal health care

Women often lack access to quality maternal health care services. This can result in higher rates of maternal mortality and morbidity due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth, which could have been prevented.

Example 5: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Women and girls face GBV, including rape and sexual assault, and are then denied access to emergency contraception, safe abortion services, or post-rape care.

Example 6: Lack of privacy and confidentiality

Young girls wanting contraception or HIV testing may have their information disclosed to family members or the community without their consent. This can lead to stigma, discrimination, and violence.

Example 7: Cultural and religious barriers

Cultural or religious norms may restrict access to certain SRH services, such as contraception or abortion. Women and girls who disobey these norms may face isolation, violence, or legal penalties. This severely restricts their rights and autonomy over their reproductive health.

Example 8: Economic barriers

Women and girls may not be able to afford contraception, prenatal care, or safe childbirth options. This leads to poor health outcomes and perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality.

ACTIVITY 3:

OUR VISION OF SRHR



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Describe what gender equitable access to SRHR looks like.
- Explore actions to empower women, girls, and people with diverse SOGIESC to challenge gender inequality in SRH and seek accountability of duty bearers.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart, markers, tape, coloured pencils / pens



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims of the activity.
2. Recap on what the concept of SRHR involves. If necessary, remind participants of the two main focus areas (ask for examples before you give them):
 - Reproductive health and disease prevention and treatment, for example:
 - Preventing and treating HIV and other STIs
 - Treatment of unsafe abortions
 - Identifying, preventing, and managing reproductive cancers.
 - Ensuring full access to sexual well-being and sexual health, for example:
 - Identifying and preventing sexual and gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation

- Providing access to safe and quality abortion services
- Promoting access to antenatal, childbirth and postnatal care
- Providing counselling and services for infertility
- Providing comprehensive sexuality education
- Providing counselling and services for contraceptives

3. Now recap on what gender equality means. If necessary, provide the definition below:

Gender equality requires equal enjoyment by women, men, girls, boys and gender minorities of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources, and rewards. It means that all persons, regardless of their gender, enjoy the same status in society; have the same entitlements to all human rights; enjoy the same level of respect in the community; can take advantage of the same opportunities to make choices about their lives; and have the same amount of power to shape the outcomes of these choices.

Step 2: Work in groups

1. Divide into small groups. Give each group a flipchart paper, markers, coloured pens / pencils.
2. Explain that each group is going to draw a picture of what gender equitable access to SRH looks like. The picture should include things like:
 - The two main focus areas of SRHR
 - How SRHR works on different levels (for rights holders and duty bearers), and how the different levels work collaboratively to ensure gender equitable access, for example:
 - On an individual level: the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours, e.g. empowered individuals who have the power to make decisions about the own body, health care, contraception, sex (bodily autonomy)
 - On the interpersonal level: the relationships between people, free from physical acts to which they do not give their consent (bodily integrity), e.g. saying no to genital female mutilation
 - On an institutional level: the influence of organisations in SRHR, such as schools and workplaces
 - On the community level: the influence of cities, neighbourhoods, resources, and norms
 - On a policy level: the influence of laws and policies at the local, regional, and national level.

- The picture can include speech bubbles to show what people are saying, feeling, or thinking, the activities they are doing, symbols, pictures, etc.
3. Ask groups to display their drawings and do a gallery walk. Each group can explain any part of their drawing that is unclear.

Step 3: Reflection

1. Use these guiding questions to help participants reflect on and discuss the drawings:
 - What is common about the drawings?
 - What is the most powerful lesson we can take away from each picture of what gender equitable access to SRH looks like?
 - What should be in place for us to get there?

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

SRHR are human rights we have, applied to sexuality and reproduction. It combines the following four areas:

- **Sexual health:** a person's sexual well-being during different stages of their life.
- **Sexual rights:** human sexuality, and a person's sexual orientation and gender identity.
- **Reproductive health:** the health of a person's reproductive system during different stages of their life.
- **Reproductive rights:** legal rights and freedoms relating to reproduction and reproductive health.

Our ideal vision is that we each have:

- **Bodily autonomy:** the power to make decisions about our own body, e.g. about health care, contraception, and sex.
- **Bodily integrity:** a society in which we can live free from physical acts to which we do not give our consent.

Remember that gender equality is not a women's / girl's issue but should concern and fully engage men / boys as well as women.

ACTIVITY 4: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Discuss activities that can meaningfully engage women and girls, men and boys, rights holders, and duty bearers to promote, protect, and fulfil human rights as they apply to SHR.



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Prepare a flipchart with this task:
- Identify one activity or intervention that you can implement in your programme to promote a human rights-based approach in SRH. The activity needs to engage rights holders and duty bearers – women, girls, men, boys, and people with diverse SOGIESC.
- Handout for each group: Planning activities / interventions



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the activity.
2. Divide into smaller groups of 5 people. Give each group a piece of flipchart paper and markers and a copy of the Handout: *Planning activities / interventions*.
3. Put up the task you have prepared on the flipchart for them to work on. Encourage the discussions by using the handout as a guide.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. Give each group time to share their ideas. Allow feedback both from fellow participants and the facilitator.

2. Ask the groups if and how the activities they developed can integrate into their existing work.

Step 3: Close the session

Thank participants for their engaged participation and deep work in this session. Close with an inspirational message:

“ I am because we are. We are human only through the humanity of others.”

— Desmond Tutu

This quote from Archbishop Desmond Tutu emphasizes the interconnectedness of all human beings and reminds us that of the collective responsibility we share to uphold and cherish the human rights and dignity of all humans – in our own hearts, and in our relationships, families, communities, organisations, and institutions.



HANDOUT: PLANNING ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS

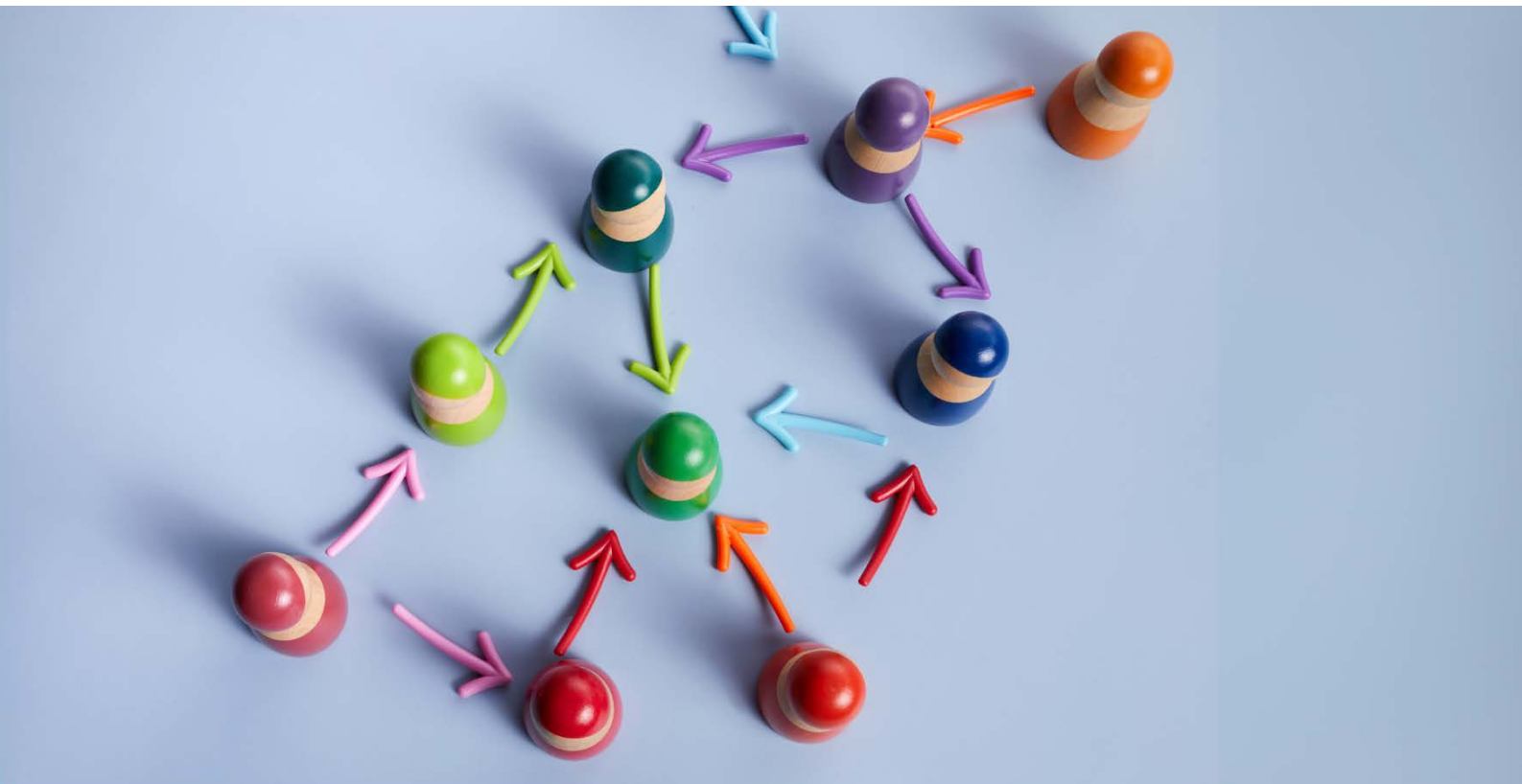
Name of activity	
Main target audience/s	
Purpose, aims, objectives of the activity	
How would the activity address the following: • Awareness raising about human rights and human rights violations in SHR services • Stop violations of human rights • Promote, protect, fulfil specific rights • Increase opportunities that lead to empowerment	
Frequency • When will the activity take place	

DO-SHOP 1

Steps involved in the activity (how will it happen?)	
Who will be involved? • Roles	
Estimated costs	
How will progress be monitored?	
How will you evaluate the outcomes of the activity?	

SESSION 4:

POWER



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Discuss the concept of power and how different people experience power and powerlessness.
- ❖ Understand the concept of intersectionality and how different aspects of identity intersect to shape a person's experiences.
- ❖ Reflect on power and privilege.
- ❖ Explore different forms of power and powerlessness.
- ❖ Identify practical actions / interventions to take to practise power differently.

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

Addressing gender inequality involves transforming unequal power relations between men / boys and women / girls and other marginalised groups; and challenging the underlying structures that perpetuate these inequalities.

This session explores the concept and practice of power, how it is socially constructed and can be used and abused. It explores the links between power and privilege, and how this determines access or lack of access to opportunities, rights, and resources.

Different forms of power and powerlessness are discussed, and different practical actions are explored to help to practise power differently to promote gender equality.

GLOSSARY

Abuse	The improper, harmful, or unlawful use of something.
Bodily integrity	Where we can live free from physical acts to which we do not give our consent, for example to say no to genital female mutilation or cutting.
Intersectionality	The understanding that a person's identity is made up of multiple, intersecting factors that cannot be separated, such as age, poverty, class, race, ethnicity, caste, language, migration or displacement status, HIV status, disability, gender identity and/or sexual orientation. These factors combine to benefit and/or disadvantage them.
Power and privilege	How power is socially constructed and can be used and abused; how power and powerlessness are interconnected; and how power is linked to privilege and access to opportunities, rights, and resources.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Understanding power	75 mins
Activity 2: The Power Walk	60 mins
Activity 3: Who is more powerful?	60 mins
Activity 4: DIY activity	60 mins

ACTIVITY 1:

UNDERSTANDING POWER



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the dimensions and expressions of power.
- Explore the expressions of power — Power over, Power with, and Power to — through body sculptures.
- Explore the dimensions of power – Visible power, Hidden power, and Invisible power – through cartoons and skits.

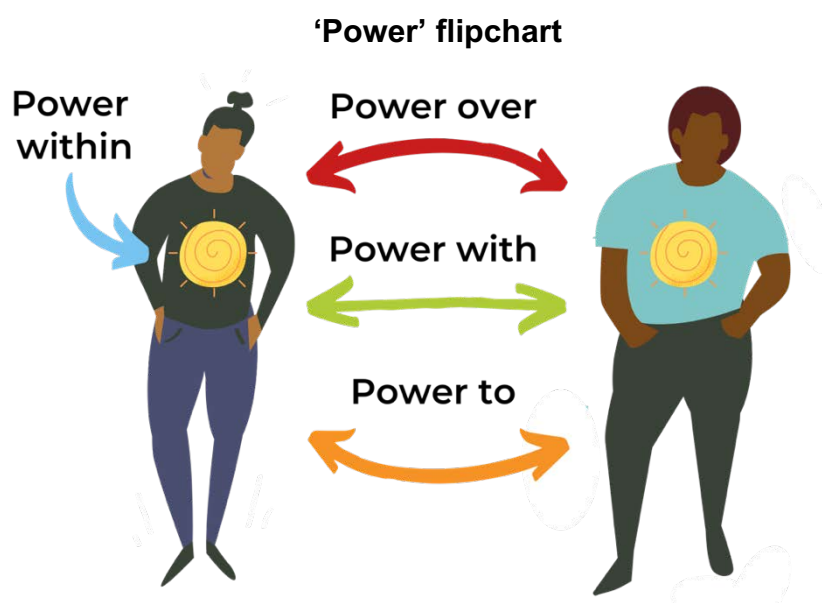


Time: 75 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, tape, markers
- Prepare a 'Power' flipchart as below (you can use stick figures)
- Make a few copies of the cartoons for participants



STEPS

Step 1: Expressions of power

1. **Explain the aims:** Briefly explain that participants will explore two ways to understand power – expressions of power and dimensions of power.
2. **Expressions of power – body sculptures:** Put up the ‘Power’ flipchart: Explain to participants that they will create “sculptures” using their bodies to represent these different expressions of power. Give the instructions for each expression of power;
 - **Power Over** (control and domination) (5 minutes): In pairs, one person sculpts the other into a pose representing Power Over (e.g., raised arm for control, hunched for submission). Freeze in position, then reflect on how it feels to embody control or submission.
 - **Power With** (collaboration and mutual support) (5 minutes): In groups of 3-4, create a sculpture that symbolises Power With, showing equality and cooperation (e.g., holding hands or leaning on each other). Reflect on the process of working together and the feeling of cooperation and collaboration.
 - **Power Within** (personal empowerment) (5 minutes): Each participant individually creates a pose that represents Power Within (e.g., standing tall, hand on heart). Reflect on how it feels to embody inner strength.
 - **Power To** (capacity to act) (5 minutes): In pairs/groups, create a sculpture symbolizing Power To (e.g., outward-reaching poses for action and change). Reflect on how the sculpture represents the power to act and make change.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

Discuss each expression of power, using the input and questions as a guide:

- We all have **Power Within**, even if we don’t realise it. This inner strength is closely tied to our sense of self-worth, self-knowledge, self-confidence, and the conviction of what is legitimate. However, sometimes this power is weak, for example when a person does not have a good sense of their own self-worth.

Ask participants to share their experiences: what it feels like when they have a strong sense of their Power Within and how this confidence influences their body language, speech, and actions. Encourage them to reflect on what diminishes their feeling of empowerment and what strengthens it.

- Some people are in the **Power Over** position because of their gender, age, physical strength, position at work or school or the community. While this power can be used positively, it is often linked to negative behaviours like force, repression, coercion,

discrimination, abuse, and corruption. Power over, used wrongly, perpetuates inequality, injustice, and poverty.

People with Power Over often misuse their power, particularly against children, girls, women, and individuals with diverse SOGIESC, who typically have less power in society. As a result, these groups often become targets of abuse and gender-based violence. Give a few examples and ask participants to share examples of individuals who hold Power Over.

- Even if there is unequal power in a relationship, people who hold more power, do not have to use this power in a harmful, violent, and abusive way. There is another way – choosing to have **Power with**. This means that people share power; they bring their power together in a positive way. They use their power to help, support and encourage each other, rather than harm. Power With builds collective strength and finds common ground among different interest groups. It is based on mutual support, solidarity, and collaboration.
- When we connect with our inner strength and can work collaboratively with others, we can unlock our **Power to** — the capacity to take meaningful action and create positive change. This type of power is about agency and joint action, so we can initiate transformation, solve problems, make constructive decisions, and build a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. This is how we work towards gender equality and equity.

Step 3: Dimensions of power

1. **Facilitator input:** Explain briefly the three dimensions of power:

- **Visible power:** Power that is openly displayed through observable behaviour, attitudes, and decision-making mechanisms, such as laws, policies, or leadership roles; winners and losers
- **Hidden power:** Power that works behind the scenes to set agendas and limit participation, often excluding marginalized voices.
- **Invisible power:** Power that shapes beliefs, norms, and ideologies, often operating unconsciously, making people accept their situation as “natural.” This is social conditioning (internalized norms).

2. **Small groups – cartoons and skits:** Divide participants into three groups. Assign each group one dimension of power: Visible, Hidden, or Invisible. Give each group a few copies of the cartoon based on their dimension of power.

Ask each group to look at the cartoon for inspiration and create their own cartoon to illustrate their assigned dimension of power. They must create a short skit based on their cartoon. Encourage them to use examples from real life, like decision-making processes

in the workplace, hidden agendas in organisations, or societal norms that limit personal agency.

3. **Plenary** – skit performances and discussion

Give each group a turn to perform their skit for the entire group, showing how their dimension of power operates.

After each skit, recap on the definition and make sure participants understand the dimension of power demonstrated.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Power

Power can be used positively or negatively; and it can be visible or invisible and hidden. If one person has power, it does not mean that they will take power away from another person. Everyone can have power – it is not in limited supply.

We all have **Power within** us, even if at times we don't realise it.

When we use our **Power over** someone else, e.g. to dominate and control them, this is an abuse of that person's rights. The person who is being controlled or dominated is in the **Power under** position as is often the target of abuse and discrimination.

We can join or share our **Power with** others or **Power to** support each other in our actions and endeavours.

When we hold power, we should be transparent and accountable. We should make sure our **power is visible**, and we use it positively.

Hidden power and Invisible power are not easily seen and can be used to perpetuate abuse and inequality. As we become aware of these dimensions of power, we can more easily identify them, understand how they function and make them visible. Then we can draw on our Power with others or Power to take action – so that we can counter them.

Intersectionality

Historically, these different types of power have been in the hands of men. This has led to the systematic domination and control of women by men using discrimination and violence, at personal and institutional levels.

Gender-based discrimination used by men to wield power over women becomes even more complex when other social categories are involved or intersect to create interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage, such as when gender overlaps with age, class, race, and sexual orientation.

It is, therefore, important to understand how gender identity intersects with all our other sources of identity, because this has an important impact on how people choose to organise themselves.



CARTOONS

Visible power



<http://www.powercube.net/analyse-power/forms-of-power/>



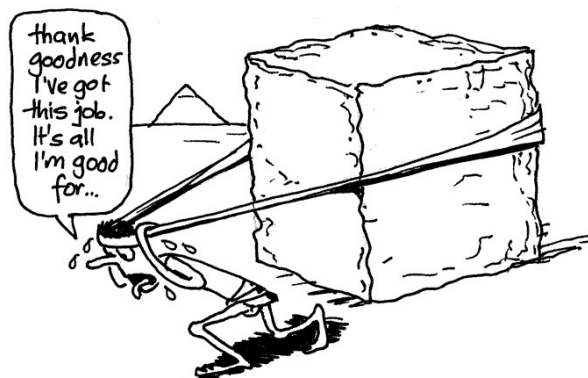
Hidden power



<http://www.powercube.net/analyse-power/forms-of-power/>



Invisible power



- Awareness of your rights and interests are invisible
- Through adoption of dominating ideologies, values, norms and forms of behavior
- Internalized by relatively powerless groups themselves.

<https://www.powercube.net/analyse-power/forms-of-power/invisible-power/>



ACTIVITY 2:

THE POWER WALK



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the concept of power and reflect on how different people experience power or powerlessness.
- Understand the concept of intersectionality and how different aspects of identity work together to shape a person's experiences.



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Paper for each participant
- Pen or pencils
- Make Character Cards for each participant (see end of Activity 1).

Space: The activity is ideally done in a large, indoor open space so that conversation can happen easily



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims of the activity.** Then ask participants to come into a large space where they can stand side-by-side in a line and where they have room to take 25 large steps forward.
2. Give each participant a **Character Card** with one of the **Power Walk** characters written on it. (See end of Activity 1 for Character Cards.) Ask them not to let anyone else know who their character is.

3. Explain that you will **read out some statements** (see end of Activity 1 for Statements). They should respond to each statement according to the character they are representing:
 - If they think the statement applies to their character and they could answer 'Yes', they take one large step forward.
 - If the statement does not apply to their character, they stay where they are.
 - Sometimes they may not be sure whether a statement applies to their character or not and then they should just make their best guess.
4. At the end of the statements, participants will be fairly spread out in the room. Ask them to remain where they are and in character for a debriefing.
5. Starting at the back of the room, ask each participant to say his or her character. Ask a few of these participants, how they feel and what it was like to be at the back of the room.
6. Then ask a few participants at the front and in the middle of the room, the same questions.
7. Invite the rest of the group to also comment.
8. Sum up by explaining that all the statements were about power or access to power. People at the back of the room usually have less power or less access to power than those at the front or in the middle of the room. The ones in the back have little ability to influence or control others, including their ability to make decisions which affect their lives.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. Ask participants to remain in their position in the Power Walk.
2. Lead a group discussion on power using questions like these:
 - Those participants who felt powerful in the Power Walk, why did you feel powerful?
 - Those participants who did not feel powerful, why not?
 - For those in the back, why do you think you were in that position?
 - What things give people power? (Some examples include money, gender, race, position in society (status), education, ability.)
 - What things contribute to abuse based on power inequalities? (Some examples include vulnerability, poverty, breakdown in family and social structures (such as during displacement), lack of legal protection, cultural beliefs, gender beliefs.)

Step 3: Discuss intersectionality

1. Give each participant a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask them to take 5 minutes to draw a stick figure of their character. Around the drawing, they should write some key facts or points about the character and his/her identity, for example, age, poverty, class, race, ethnicity, caste, language, HIV status, disability, gender identity and/or sexual orientation.
2. Ask participants to reflect on the following questions:
 - How does each of these factors shape the person / character's experiences, including their access to power or lack of access to power?
 - Do these factors work link to each other and work together to shape the person's experiences of power or lack of power in very complex ways?
3. Ask a few participants to explain their drawings and to share their reflections about how the different factors that make up the person's identity combine together to give the person benefits or advantages, or disadvantages.
4. Explain that this means that we cannot simply look at a person's gender or gender identity on its own. To understand a person's experiences, including their experiences of power, we need to recognise how the different aspects of their identity combine and interact to shape the experiences of individuals and groups in complex ways. This is called intersectionality.
5. Give this example (or another more relevant one): Often those with the least power in relationships, and who are most vulnerable to abuse, are black women and girls, who are poor, have limited access to education, health care, and life / work opportunities. They will most likely experience further discrimination if they have diverse SOGIESC, or if they have some disability. All these factors heighten or deepen gender inequalities and other forms of oppression. This means that we need to employ many different and creative approaches to help people and communities address these inequalities and to ensure that the solutions are inclusive of all people.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Power and a power imbalance

A power imbalance in a relationship or between different groups may be obvious and visible and can manifest in different ways, for example a person or group has influence or control over another, including their ability to make decisions that affect their lives. It can manifest in different forms of violence and abuse. Gender-based violence is always about power.

However, the imbalance in power may also be invisible or hidden. For example, an unhealthy power dynamic between parents /caregivers / adults and children can contribute to toxic stress among children, which is a form of abuse of power.

“Power is distributed unequally between people in all societies. Gender is one of the dimensions that seems to organize this inequality of power distribution, with women tending to have lower rank and less power than men, across different times and places.”

Intersectionality

Gender is one dimension that organises the unequal distribution of power between people. However, gender inequality is heightened or compounded by other factors that intersect to benefit or disadvantage / oppress a person, such as age, poverty, class, race, ethnicity, caste, language, migration or displacement status, HIV status, disability, gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

CHARACTER CARDS – POWER WALK CHARACTERS

District Chief	School facilitator (female)
Leader of a youth group (female)	12-year-old girl with physical disability
District Children's Officer	Community leader (female)
Community leader (male)	UN Aid Worker
Village Elder	Volunteer with Church Group
Young sex worker (under 16 years)	Married girl (Age 16)
Old man	Grandmother (caretaker of orphans)
Member of Parliament (female)	Police Officer
NGO worker (female)	Provincial Children's Officer
Traditional Birth Attendant	Village Health Worker (male)
District Agricultural Officer (male)	Village shopkeeper
Leader of youth group (male)	Homeless street boy
Orphaned boy (13 years)	Orphaned girl (13 years)
Uncle (caretaker of orphans)	Adult male soldier
Primary school boy (12 years)	International Humanitarian Worker
Primary school girl (12 years)	Girl looking after sick mother and siblings
Married girl (16 years)	Demobilised boy soldier (15 years)
Woman whose husband died of AIDS (30 years)	Unemployed boy (17 years)

STATEMENTS

Read those statements which are most relevant to the group and choose how many to read out.

- I can influence decisions made at community level.
- I get to meet visiting government officials.
- I get new clothes on religious holidays.
- I can read newspapers regularly.
- I have time and access to listen to the radio.
- I would never have to queue at the dispensary.
- I have my own bank account.
- I can speak in extended family meetings.
- I can afford to boil drinking water.
- I can buy condoms.
- I can negotiate condom use with my partner.
- I only have sex when I want to.
- I went to secondary school, or I expect to go to secondary school.
- I can pay for treatment at a hospital if necessary.
- I can speak at a village meeting.
- I eat at least two full meals a day.
- I sometimes attend workshops and seminars.
- I have access to plenty of information about HIV.
- I am not afraid of walking on my own at night.
- I can question expenditure of household funds.
- I am not afraid of violence in my home.
- I have never had to line up or beg for food.

ACTIVITY 3:

WHO IS MORE POWERFUL?



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Describe what they have learned from their own experiences of power and powerlessness.
- Identify the groups that have more power and privilege than others, and the effects of these inequalities.
- Explore the reasons for the differences in those who have power and those who don't.



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Photocopy the case studies for small group work (see end this activity) on A4 paper (one per A4 sheet).
- Prepare a 'Power chart' flipchart as below

MORE POWERFUL GROUPS	LESS POWERFUL GROUPS



Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims of the activity.
2. **Group brainstorm:** Refer to the 'Power Chart' you have prepared on the flipchart.

Ask participants to brainstorm the different groups in their own communities, and where they fit in these power categories. Help them come up with examples by suggesting categories of groups who may have power and those who lack power. Consider age, class, race, ethnicity, caste, language, migration or displacement status, HIV status, disability, gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

3. **Discussion:** Encourage discussion about how the more powerful groups have more control or influence over important aspects of life, and enjoy more benefits and privileges, simply because they are men – not because they have earned these privileges through effort. This is a key driver of gender inequality.

Step 2: Small group work and plenary discussion

1. **Work on the case studies:** Divide the group into 5 smaller groups. Provide each group with one case study and the corresponding questions. Give participants time to read through, discuss, and prepare responses to the questions.
2. **Plenary discussion:** Give each group 5 minutes to present their case study and the highlights of their responses to the questions.
3. **Discuss power and privilege:** Lead a discussion about the case studies using the following questions as a guide:
 - In each cases study, who had power? Why did they have this power? What privileges did this power give them over others?
 - Who did not have power? Why? How were they disadvantaged / have fewer privileges?
 - How does this power and privilege imbalance drive gender inequality?
 - How can we each promote gender equality by practicing power differently?

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Power and privilege

Power is socially constructed – it is not innate or something we are born with. Power comes from different sources, most especially cultural norms and traditions that grant power to certain groups.

Power is linked to privilege. People with power, control resources and have greater influence in society than those who do not have power. For example, they have access to the following:

- Economic resources: work, credit, money, social security, health insurance, housing, access to opportunities
- Political influence: positions of leadership, influence over decision-making
- Educational resources: access to education, skills, knowledge, information
- Social influence: relationships, networks, social status
- Internal resources: self-esteem, self-confidence

Challenging power and privilege

To challenge power and privileges, it is important to understand how these are established and maintained:

Groups with more power control more resources than less powerful groups, and those who control resources have greater power in society than those who do not.

Socially constructed gender norms and roles give males more control over these resources than females.

Men maintain their power over women via the social system of patriarchy, which is based on the idea that men are superior to women.

Women as well as men maintain this system (e.g., they 'buy into' the system and do not challenge it).

CASE STUDIES (ONE FOR EACH GROUP)

Case study 1: Doreen

Doreen and her husband have four children together. She would personally prefer not to have any more children. She has also recently started thinking that she wants to start up her own business. Her husband disagrees. He says that they must have another child and that there is no way he will allow Doreen to work. Doreen doesn't feel able to confront her husband on these issues, particularly because he has been violent towards her in the past.

Questions:

- a) How is Doreen being denied power?
- b) What kind of resources does she lack in this situation?
- c) What types of power are being maintained by Doreen's husband?
- d) What can men do to support women to claim power?

Case study 2: Luiza

Luiza is an informal cross-border trader and goes to a neighbouring country to buy goods that she sells back home. While she travels, she has no money for accommodation or transport. She often gets lifts from truck drivers some of whom expect her to have sex with them.

Questions:

- a) How does Luiza lack power in this situation?
- b) What factors make it difficult for Luiza to gain power in this situation?
- c) What risks does Luiza face in having to have sex to ensure accommodation or transport?
- d) What changes could be made to ensure that Luiza's job as a cross-border trader is made safer and easier for her?

Case study 3: Habiba

When Habiba was 14 years old her parents married her off because they could no longer afford to care for her, and they were worried about her safety. A year into her marriage, Habiba fell pregnant. She was in labour for two days and was then transferred to a hospital to have a caesarean. The operation did not go well – her small uterus was torn and this allowed leakage of urine and faeces into her vagina. This condition is called fistula. It left her with incontinence and pain. Her baby died just hours after he was born. Her husband left her, and the village rejected her. Today she lives alone with her mother. She no longer goes outside her house, not even to get water.

Questions:

- a) How did Habiba lack power, both when she was married off and now in her present situation?
- b) What factors make it difficult for Habiba to gain power in these situations?
- c) Who is maintaining the power?
- d) Why and how are they able to do this?
- e) What changes could be made to Habiba's present situation in her community to make it easier for her?

Case study 4: Kenneth

Kenneth is 13 years old. Three years ago, his parents were killed in a fire and since then he has been living alone on the streets. To survive, Kenneth engages in sex with other men for money, a meal, or a place to sleep. He has no idea what HIV or AIDS is.

Questions:

- a) How is Kenneth denied power in this situation?
- b) What different types of resources does he lack access to?
- c) How does this reduce his power overall in society?
- d) Who is maintaining the power?
- e) Why and how are they able to maintain power?
- f) In what ways can youth and adults work together towards the health, development, and power of young people?

Case study 5: Grace

Grace has worked for the same firm for nearly five years. Over the last year, she has applied three times for different supervisory positions appropriate to her skills and experience. On all three occasions she has seen these positions given to men, much younger than her and with far less experience. Another year passes, and a new owner takes over the firm. Grace is finally promoted to a supervisor. After a few months however she discovers she is being paid a lot less than her male counterparts.

Questions:

- a)** Who holds power in this situation?
- b)** How are they maintaining their power?
- c)** In what ways is Grace being unfairly treated?
- d)** How can Grace claim her power?

ACTIVITY 4: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Discuss how to promote gender equality by practising power differently.
- Commit to trying out one practical way of practising power differently.



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart, markers, tape



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims** of the activity.
2. **Work in pairs.** Ask the pairs to brainstorm practical ways to practise power differently to promote gender equality. You might want to give some examples, such as:
 - Create safe spaces where women, girls, and marginalised groups, like LGBTIQ groups can come together to share experiences and support each other.
 - Provide health care that is specifically tailored to the needs of women, girls, and marginalised communities.
3. **Report back:** Ask each pair to briefly report back on their ideas and suggestions. Draw up a mind-map of all the ideas on a flipchart.
4. **Plenary discussion:** Ask participants to decide on one or two ideas or suggestions that are the most practical to try out – they might think of what could be integrated into their existing programmes.

Encourage the discussions by using the guide and probing questions below. If you think it would assist participants, provide them with the Handout, Planning activities / interventions.

DO-SHOP 1

- What activity or intervention would be practical to engage in?
- Who would you target? Why this audience?
- What would the purpose, aims, and objectives be?
- How would the activity or intervention address practising power differently to promote gender equality?
- How often would the activity or intervention take place? Is it a one-off or a multiple activity?
- When would it take place?
- Who else do you need to support you in this activity / intervention and what is their role?
- What is the estimated cost?
- How will you monitor the activity / intervention?



HANDOUT: PLANNING ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS

Name of activity	
Main target audience/s	
Purpose, aims, objectives of the activity	
How would the activity address the following: Increasing opportunities that lead to empowerment Reducing vulnerabilities	
Frequency When will the activity take place How often	
Steps involved in the activity (how will it happen?)	
Who will be involved? Roles	
Estimated costs	
How will progress be monitored?	
How will you evaluate the outcomes of the activity?	

SESSION 5:

NORMS AND VALUES



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Reflect on their own attitudes, values, and norms regarding gender relations and equality.
- ❖ Identify how values and norms have a positive or negative impact on behaviour.
- ❖ Analyse the conditions that maintain harmful norms or facilitate their transformation and generate concrete strategies to address these.

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

This session seeks to encourage critical awareness of harmful gender norms and values. It helps participants identify their own norms and values regarding gender relations and equality, as well as the gender values and norms that exist in communities (family, work, neighbours, and friends). The session encourages participants to identify norms and values that will promote gender equality.

GLOSSARY

Gender norms	Informal, deeply entrenched and widely held expectations or rules about how each gender should behave. Every society has distinct gender norms because gender itself is not fixed. But at the core of the concept of gender norms is the idea of unequal power relations and privilege between men and boys, and women and girls, or of a gender minority.
Values	What we judge to be important in life. Values become the accepted principles and standards of an individual or group.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Values clarifications	60 mins
Activity 2: The Gender Box	120 mins
Activity 3: Changing sticky norms	90 mins
Activity 4: DIY Activity	30 mins

ACTIVITY 1:

VALUES CLARIFICATION



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Reflect on their own attitudes, opinions, values, and norms regarding gender relations and equality.
- Identify how we can help transform harmful practices, norms, and values.



Time: 60 minutes

FACILITATOR NOTE



At the beginning of this activity, it is important to stress to participants that each person has their own opinions, and these might differ from your own. That's okay. The important thing is that all participants are allowed to explore their own opinions and beliefs in an open, honest, respectful, and non-judgement environment. There are no right or wrong answers.

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Three signs to put up on the wall: **AGREE, NEUTRAL, DISAGREE**



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims** of the activity.
2. **Explain the activity:**

- You will read out a series of statements – one at a time (see STATEMENTS at the end of this activity).
 - After each statement, participants should move to the sign that reflects their opinion about the statement (AGREE, NEUTRAL, DISAGREE).
 - You will then ask some questions to help participants reflect on their opinion. They can choose to share their reflections or not. After some reflection they may also decide to move to another sign.
3. **Start the activity:** Read each statement, give participants time to move to a sign, and ask questions that help participants think about the underlying values and beliefs which have guided or motivated their choice.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. **Use these guiding questions:**

- Was it challenging to form an opinion about any of the statements? Why?
- How do you think people's opinions about some of the statements might affect their behaviours on these issues?
- What is your understanding of values?
- How do our values influence our opinions and behaviour (give examples)?

2. **Give input:** See the KEY INSIGHTS below for input that you can provide on values and gender norms.
3. **Provide examples:** You can use the examples below of some harmful practices and the gender norms behind them, or change or adapt them so that they are more appropriate and relevant to the context you are working in. Before explaining the underlying value in each example, first ask participants: What are the main values behind this practice and norm?

EXAMPLES

HARMFUL PRACTICE: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE / INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Underlying gender norms:

- Men and boys should be dominant, be in control, and have power; they should discipline their wives / partners / girlfriends.

- Women and girls should obey and respect their husband / partner / boyfriend; they should be passive, submissive, powerless; and they should put the desires of husband / family.

Underlying values: Patriarchal structures are important in this society. There are strict gender roles which 'say' that men should be dominant, and women should be submissive.

HARMFUL PRACTICE: CHILD MARRIAGE

Underlying gender norms:

- Women and girls need to marry, bear children, take care of the family and household, and be dependent on men (socio-economic factors). The world is not safe for unmarried women / girls; women / girls should not be having sex outside of wedlock.
- Men and boys need to provide and be the breadwinners.

Underlying values: Patriarchal structures are important in this society. There are strict gender roles which 'say' that men should be dominant, and women should be submissive. There are also values to do with cultural, social, and economic practices.

4. **Lead a discussion:** Use these guiding questions:

- Why is it important to think about the values behind these norms?
- What is needed to challenge and change harmful practices, and the underlying norms and values? (Encourage participants to think about a multifaceted approach including education, community engagement, community-based interventions, empowerment of girls and women to make decisions about their own lives, legal reform)

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Values

Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. They help us to decide what is important to us – what we value. They guide the sort of people we want to be, the way we treat ourselves and others, and our interaction with

the world around us. For example, there are values about the importance of money, status, respect, loyalty, care, safety, security, and so on.

“Norms are vital determinants of social stratification as they reflect and reproduce relations that empower some groups of people with material resources, authority, and entitlements while marginalizing and subordinating others by normalizing shame, inequality, indifference, or invisibility. It is important to note that these norms reflect and reproduce underlying gendered relations of power, and that is fundamentally what makes them difficult to alter or transform.”

— Sen et al. 2007

Gender norms

Values underlie our norms, which are the unwritten rules and expectations that many people in a community have about how we should behave. At the centre of gender norms is the idea of unequal power relations between men / boys, and women / girls, or a gender minority. For example, there are norms (unwritten expectations / rules) about women and girls needing to marry, bear children, take care of the family and household, and for men and boys to be the breadwinners. Norms are affected by class, culture, ethnicity, and other differences.

STATEMENTS

(If the statements are not an accurate reflection of the gender roles and expectations in your country or context, then use other statements that are a more accurate reflection.)

- It's okay to pull girls out of school early to help with household chores or prepare for marriage.
- It's okay that decisions about women's sexual and reproductive health is controlled by male family members.
- It's okay to make money out of cutting women's genitals.
- It's okay for a very girl to marry a much older man if the man pays his fees.
- It's okay that women are excluded from decision-making processes in the community.

ACTIVITY 2:

THE GENDER BOX



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Demonstrate the verbal and non-verbal pressure on boys to live up to the masculine ideal.
- Identify and analyse positive and helpful, and negative and unacceptable behaviours by men / boys towards women / girls.
- Recognise that it can be difficult for both men / boys and women / girls to fulfil the gender roles that are expected by society.
- Examine how messages about gender can affect behaviours and influence relationships between men / boys and women / girls.
- Identify ways in which we can support men / boys and women / girls who want to move outside their assigned gender roles.

FACILITATOR NOTE



- *Make sure that you adapt the activity so that it suits the context and group with which you are working.*
- *Be aware that not everyone wants to move outside 'the box'. Rather than pushing participants to choose a particular response, encourage them to reflect on whether these points apply to them.*



Time: 120 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Prepare a flipchart with ACT LIKE A MAN written in large letters.
- Prepare a flipchart with ACT LIKE A WOMAN written in large letters



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims** of the activity.
2. **Demonstrate: Taking the man pose**
 - Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Give each person a chance to say, “Be a man!” in a loud voice and using body language for emphasis.
 - After everyone has had a turn, ask the group to describe what they heard and saw.
 - After several comments, ask participants to now imagine a little boy being told to, “Be a man!” in these ways. How would that little boy stand to show that he is ‘being a man’? Ask each person to demonstrate how the little boy would stand.
 - Ask participants to describe what they saw.
 - Repeat the demonstration with the phrase, “Be a woman!”
3. **Identify and analyse positive and negative behaviours:** Ask if anyone has ever been told to “act like a man” or “act like a woman” based on their biological sex. Encourage participants to share their experiences. Why did the person say this? How did it make them feel?
4. **Brainstorm:** Use your prepared flipcharts. Start with ACT LIKE A MAN. Ask participants to share their ideas / brainstorm what this means to them. Draw a box on the flipchart and write their ideas inside the box.
 - Point out that these are society’s expectations of who men should be, how men should behave, how they should treat women, and what they should feel and say.
 - Go through brainstorm again, this time using the flipchart ACT LIKE A WOMAN.

Step 2: Group discussion

1. **Facilitate a discussion** about the expectations placed on men / women by society in general and by their own community in particular. Use these questions as a guide:

- What positive and helpful behaviour are 'real men' expected to show towards women? How do you think women feel about this behaviour or being treated in this way?
- What kind of behaviour are 'real men' expected to display which could be limiting and disempowering towards women? How do you think women feel about this behaviour or being treated in this way?
- What behaviour is acceptable for a man to display towards women? Why?
- What behaviour is unacceptable for a man to display towards women? Why?
- What are the advantages of 'acting like a man / woman', or being in the 'man / woman box'? What are the disadvantages?
- Can men / women live outside 'the box'? How would it be to live outside the box? What behaviour would need to change?

2. **Give input:** The messages and gender rules about 'acting like a man' can have the following effects on men's lives (encourage participants to add to this list):

- Men are valued more than women.
- Men are afraid to be vulnerable and to show their feelings.
- Men need to constantly prove that they are 'real men'.
- Men use sex to prove that they are real men.
- Men use violence to prove that they are real men.

The messages and gender rules about 'acting like a woman' can have the following effects on women's lives (encourage participants to add to this list):

- Women often lack self-confidence.
- Women are valued first as mothers and not as people.
- Women depend on their partners.
- Women have less control than men over their sexual lives.
- Women are highly vulnerable to HIV and AIDS and to violence.

3. Ask participants to work with a partner to discuss the questions you ask:

- Do you know any men and women who challenge and disregard the gender roles assigned to them? (In other words, they have lived outside 'the boxes'?)
- What do they do differently? How do these men treat women? How do these women treat men?

- How have they been able to challenge and redefine gender roles?
- Have you ever acted outside ‘the box’? What happened? What allowed you to do this? How did you feel about it? What are the advantages of living outside ‘the box’?

4. **Plenary discussion:** Move back into the group to discuss these questions:

- What could we do to make it easier for men and women to live outside of ‘the boxes’? How can we support this change?
- How can the government support this change?
- How can community leaders support this change?
- How can workplaces support this change?

Step 3: Draw a transformed box

1. **Ask:** What would a box of a transformed man / woman look like?
2. **On flipchart paper:** Draw a transformed man / woman box and write participant’s ideas inside the box.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

- Society has expectations of who men and women should be, how they should act, and what they should feel and say.
- Gender roles shape people’s lives, moulding and limiting gender identities, roles, and relationships.
- There can be serious consequences for both women and men if they try to act outside of ‘their box’. Ridicule, threats, and violence are used to keep women and men in their boxes.
- But the roles of men and women are changing. It has slowly become less difficult to step outside ‘the box’.

ACTIVITY 3:

CHANGING STICKY NORMS



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand that multiple factors can either enable or inhibit the change of (harmful) gender norms.
- Understand that norm change relates to the Social Ecological Model.
- Analyse the 'stickiness' of gender norms, and plan accordingly.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Photocopy the Handout: Changing Sticky Norms for each participant
- Photocopy the Handout: The Social Ecological Model for each participant



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims of the activity.
2. Divide the group into three groups. Give each group one of the following SRHR topics:
 - Child, early and forced marriage
 - Adolescent contraceptive use
 - Adolescent sexuality
 - Engagement of young fathers in pre/postnatal care
 - Unsafe abortion

3. Ask the groups to do the following:

- Choose one person to read through the handout, Changing sticky norms to their group. Make sure that everyone understands each point.
- The group then discusses what they know about their SRHR topic in their context. They should write their response on a flipchart:
 - What makes it a 'sticky' norm and difficult to change?
 - Which conditions would make it most likely to change (using the conditions mentioned in the handout, e.g. economics, power, one / multiple factors, religious factors, and so on).
 - What would be the most effective gender transformative strategies to use tackle their SRHR issue in their context? (They can consider the different levels of the Social Ecological Model.)
- If time and resources allow, ask participants to come up with a concrete plan to address their issue given their analysis and strategies.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. Give each group an opportunity to present their work to the rest of the group, including the strategies they would use to tackle their SRHR issue in their context.
2. Other participants can discuss how realistic each strategy is and how the norm change relates to the Social Ecological Model.

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you. However, some strategies include:



KEY INSIGHTS

Changing sticky norms requires a multifaceted approach that addresses different levels of the **Social Ecological Model**.

Examples of strategies to change sticky norms:

- Gender-sensitive education that challenges traditional gender roles and promotes equality.
- Community engagement and dialogue to raise awareness about the negative impacts of gender norms and involving men / boys and women / girls in these discussions.

DO-SHOP 1

- Public campaigns, including social media, highlighting stories of people who have successfully challenged gender norms.
- Providing women with economic opportunities to promote their economic independence, such as vocational training, access to credit, and entrepreneurship programmes.
- Promoting and ensuring ongoing access to education for girls.
- Engaging men and boys to participate in gender equality initiatives.
- Challenging media representations of stereotypes that reinforce traditional gender norms and encouraging diverse and equitable representations.
- Tackling legal and policy reforms that promote gender equality and protect against gender-based discrimination and violence.



HANDOUT: CHANGING STICKY NORMS

‘Sticky’ gender norms are beliefs and expectations that are widely held in a community or society about gender-based social roles and behaviours. They are based on power imbalances, and lead to gender inequalities and practices that are often risky for women and girls.

These norms are ‘sticky’ because they are difficult to change. They are held in place by many factors, such as practices in households, families, communities, neighbourhoods, wider society, the media, religious institutions, educational systems, laws, and policies. Individuals too maintain gender norms because they wish to fit in with their group.

However, it often happens that when these ‘sticky’ norms are challenged in one setting, this can open up opportunities for change in others. For example, promoting gender equality norms through education can lead to changes within households.

What can be used to drive change: Changes in economic well-being, social and political mobilisation for change, powerful interest groups and role models supporting change, education, legal change, and increased access to media / communications to challenge norms.

The conditions in which gender norms are most likely to change²

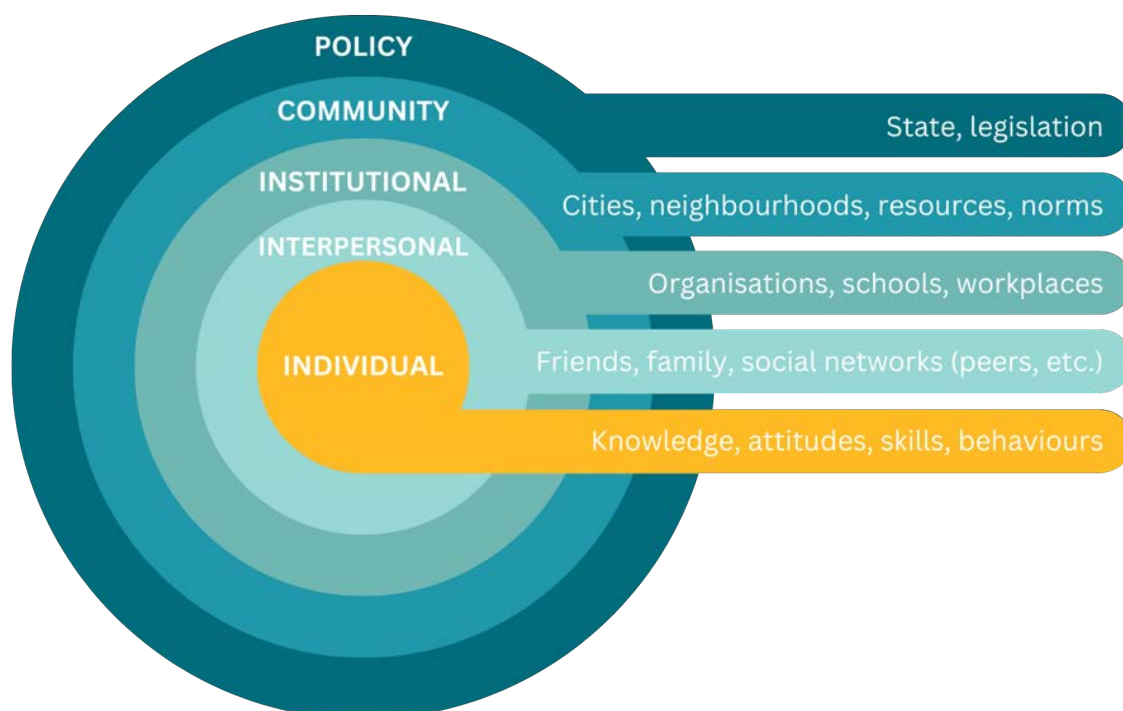
CONDITIONS	MOST LIKELY TO CHANGE WHEN ...	LESS LIKELY TO CHANGE WHEN ...
Economic interests	No one has an economic interest in continuing old norms and they do not stand to lose anything from change. Or there is an economic interest in changing norms and practices.	There are strong economic interests to continue a practice.
Power	No one’s power is threatened by the change.	Certain groups perceive their power to be directly threatened by the change.
One / Multiple factors	There is only one key factor that supports a norm (and stops it from changing).	There are many factors that support the norm.

² Marcus, R., & Harper, C. (2014). Gender justice and social norms – processes for change for adolescent girls (Adapted).

Religious factors	There are no religious or traditional reasons for continuing a certain practice.	There are religious or traditional reasons for continuing a certain practice.
How many have already changed?	A large group has already changed their practice.	Very few people have changed the practice.
Role models / leaders (including religious and traditional leaders)	Role models and opinion leaders support the change.	Role models and opinion leaders oppose the change.
Institutions	Political and institutional environments support the change.	Political and institutional environment resist the change.
Opportunities	There are opportunities to use communications and media to explain to people how they would implement the change.	It is unclear to people how they would implement the new norm.

Social Ecological Model

Working on the different levels of the Social Ecological Model at the same time tends to be more effective than focusing on interventions at a single level. But many change starts at the individual level before it cascades to other level.



ACTIVITY 4: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Reflect on how some of their own behaviour maintains the 'man / woman box', and how they can change this to a transformed man / woman.



Time: 30 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart, markers, tape



STEPS

1. **Work individually or in pairs.** Ask participants to take a deep look at their attributes and actions that harm the people around them or that hold them back.
2. Encourage them to **be present, honest, and discover their inner voice.**
3. Encourage them to **observe themselves** with clarity, the consequences of their actions and inactions in their lives, and that of others.
4. Ask them to **embrace everything they have learnt** and be living their truth.

SESSION 6:

SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY IN SRHR



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Understand the concept of sexual and gender diversity
- ❖ Discuss the diversity of human experiences related to gender and sexuality
- ❖ Map themselves on the different spectrums
- ❖ Develop empathy for the experiences of others based on diverse gender identities, gender expression, and sexual orientation
- ❖ Prioritise the most promising idea/ activity that can challenge negative attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in their programme
- ❖ Understand how discrimination and oppression based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIESC) intersect with other identity factors like race and class.

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

The focus of this session is on understanding the complex concepts of gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation, and developing empathy for those with diverse **SOGIESC**.

GLOSSARY

Biological sex	The physical attributes, such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormones.
Gender expression	How a person outwardly expresses their gender through clothing, behaviour, voice, etc.
Gender identity	How a person feels about their own gender. Individuals may identify as male, female, or as something else and their gender identity may or may not be the same as the sex that they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity and expresses their gender in a unique and personal way.
Sexual orientation	Who you are sexually attracted to and want to have a relationship with, including heterosexual, homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual.
Sexual minorities	People whose sexual identity, orientation, or practices differ from the majority of society. This includes people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or non-heterosexual, as well as transgender, non-binary, or intersex individuals. Sexual and gender minorities (SGM) can also include people with same-sex or -gender attractions or behaviours, and those with a difference in sex development.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Clarifying diversity values	60 mins
Activity 2: Mapping the Genderbread Person	90 mins
Activity 3: Breaking the cycle of harmful attitudes	90 mins
Activity 4: DIY Activity	60 mins

ACTIVITY 1:

CLARIFYING DIVERSITY VALUES



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Reflect on their own norms, values, and attitudes regarding gender and diversity
- Discuss the diversity of human experiences related to gender and sexuality



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, makers, tape, coloured, pens / pencils
- Three signs for the wall: **AGREE, NEUTRAL, DISAGREE**
- Read through the statements provided below and choose 5 or 6 that you think will lead to the most discussion. Adapt, change, add statements which are more appropriate to your context.



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims** of the activity.
2. **Explain the instructions:** You will read out several statements – one at a time. Participants should go stand near the sign that says what they think about the statement – agree, neutral, or disagree.
3. **Read:** Go through each statement one at a time (see below) allowing time for participants to move.
4. **Ask:** Each time they have moved, ask a few participants to explain why they are standing where they are and to share their thoughts about the statement. Ask if anyone wants to change their mind and move to another sign. Then bring everyone back together.

5. Continue in the same way for each statement.

STATEMENTS

- Gay men are not real men or un-masculine.
- Not everyone is born with bodily sex characteristics that are completely female or male, according to the norms in society.
- Not everyone feels comfortable with the sex assigned to them at birth.
- We must protect the rights of all citizens including sexual minorities.
- Heterosexual men should be masculine.
- Homosexuality is un-African.
- Criminalisation of same-sex behaviour can impact access to SRHR services and information.
- It is a sin to be gay or a lesbian – it is unnatural and goes against nature.
- Trans people are just confused or mentally ill.
- Non-binary identities are just a trend or a way to get attention.
- Bisexual people just cannot make a decision about their sexual orientation.
- Not everyone feels attracted to another sex.
- Trans people are in this business for economical gain, they are pretenders

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. Facilitate a discussion using these questions as a guide:
 - Which statements did you have strong opinions about? Why?
 - Which statements did you not have strong opinions about? Why?
 - How do you think people's attitudes to the statements might affect the way they behave towards diverse SOGIESCI people?
 - How do you think your own attitude, opinion and belief can affect your work with SOGIESCs?
2. **Input:** Remind participants that gender is not binary – not **either** masculine **or** feminine. Often, it's **both** masculine and feminine. There are broad variations or differences in the following:

- How people define their gender (gender identity) – not everyone feels comfortable with the sex assigned at birth or with the expected gender role behaviour for men and women in their society
- How people express, present, or show their gender identity (gender expression)
- Are attracted to other people, romantically, sexually, and/or other ways (sexual orientation) – not everyone feels attracted to another sex or prefers another sex partner
- Develop sex characteristics – not everyone is born with or develop bodily sex characteristics that are completely female or male, according to the norms of society.

All these dimensions of each person's experiences exist on a gender spectrum or continuum, as we saw when we did the activity of a rope between "masculine and feminine" In Session 1: Activity 3.

People whose sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and/or sex characteristics place them outside culturally mainstream categories may face stigma-related stress including homophobia, rejection, and discrimination. This can lead to them hiding their identities.

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap, by clarifying simple definitions of key terms, as participants need to understand them for the next activity. These simple definitions will be unpacked further during the activity.



KEY INSIGHTS

Gender identity: This refers to how an individual internally identifies in terms of gender. People might identify as male, female, a blend of both, neither, or somewhere along the gender spectrum.

Gender expression: This refers to how a person outwardly expresses their gender through clothing, behaviour, voice, etc.

Biological sex: This refers to the physical attributes, such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormones.

Sexual orientation: This relates to who someone is attracted to, whether emotionally, physically, or both.

“ We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white, red, yellow, rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God’s family. ”

– Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner



ACTIVITY 2:

MAPPING THE GENDERBREAD PERSON



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Develop a common understanding of the complexity of gender identity, expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation
- Place themselves on different gender spectrums



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, makers, tape, coloured pens / pencils, sticky notes
- Prepare a flipchart with a large drawing of the Genderbread Person with the labels and spectrums (see the Handout at the end of this activity).
- Photocopy the Handout: Genderbread Person for each participant (see the end of this activity)
- Read through the Key Insights at the end of the activity for a deeper understanding of the concepts to be covered



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims of the activity.
2. Refer to the flipchart you have prepared of the Genderbread Person.
 - Explain that this is a visual picture that helps us explore different aspects of people – their gender identity (represented in the head), sexual attraction (represented in the

heart), sex characteristics/biological sex (represented in the genitalia), and gender expression (represented externally).

- Remind participants that each aspect is not binary, e.g. it is not either male or female but exists on a range or spectrum.
 - Refer to and explain each spectrum.
3. Give each participant a copy of the Handout: *Genderbread Person*. Ask them to reflect on where they fall on each spectrum - gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation). Ask them to mark their spot on each spectrum.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Emphasise that there are not right or wrong answers. Everyone's experience of gender and sexuality is valid. We are all unique and there is a great diversity too in this room.

4. Alternatively, do this as a group activity where you draw large spectrums on flipchart paper. Participants can place a sticky note or mark where they feel they belong on each spectrum. This creates a visual representation of the diversity in the room.

Step 2: Discussion

1. **Facilitate a discussion** around the spectrums using these questions as a guide:
 - How did it feel to place yourself on these spectrums? Were there any surprises or challenges?
 - How different is each person's placement on each spectrum? How does this show us the uniqueness of each person's experience?
2. **Reflection:** Ask participants to reflect on what they learned from the activity.
 - How does this change or deepen your understanding of gender and sexuality?
 - How can you apply this understanding in your daily lives at work, in your programme, home, and community?

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

The concepts around SOGIESC can be challenging for participants to grasp. It is important to repeat explanations in different ways often. In the Key Insights below, the main concepts covered are explained, with more depth and texture.



KEY INSIGHTS

Gender identity

A person's deeply felt internal and personal experience of gender. Many people identify as male (man/boy) or female (woman/girl). A person whose gender identity fits the sex assigned at birth is called cis-gender (with 'cis' meaning 'on the same side'). Others may identify as transgender (trans man, trans woman) or non-binary, meaning their gender is neither exclusively male nor female, or it could be both.

A person whose gender identity is different from the sex assigned at birth is referred to as transgender. Transgender people sometimes transition socially e.g. in name, clothes, manners and/or medically (hormone treatment, surgery) Typically, transgender people ultimately seek to make their gender expression match their gender identity, rather than their sex assigned at birth.

Gender expression

How people express their gender to the world. This is a person's outward-facing self, and how this is interpreted by others based on gender. This outward expression includes names, clothes, hair, body posture, how they walk or speak, communication styles, actions, societal roles, and behaviour. Gender expressions are often viewed through the lens of societal norms and are often interpreted as "masculine" or "feminine."

Sex characteristics refer to the bodily traits people are born with or develop later in life, including genitalia, anatomical features, body shape, hormones, and chromosomes. At birth, a person's sex is typically assigned as male, female, or another category based on these physical characteristics.

Intersex people are born with sex characteristics that do not conform to the traditional definitions of male or female. They may not fit typical societal norms or medical standards regarding male or female bodies. Examples of intersex traits include women born with vaginas but possessing XY chromosomes, women without a uterus, men with a micropenis, and babies born with "ambiguous" genitalia.

Sexual orientation

A person's capacity for deep sexual and/or romantic attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with others; those may be individuals of a different gender, the same gender or more than one gender.

Heterosexual people are consistently oriented (sexually and/or romantically) to people of a different gender than their own.

Homosexual people, or gay (for men) and lesbian (for women) people, are consistently oriented (sexually and/or romantically) to people of the same gender as their own.

Bisexual people are consistently oriented (sexually and/or romantically) to more than one gender.

Non-binary people can experience a range of sexual orientations, as their identities may encompass various attractions that do not conform to traditional gender binaries.

Transgender people, like anyone else, can have any sexual orientation.

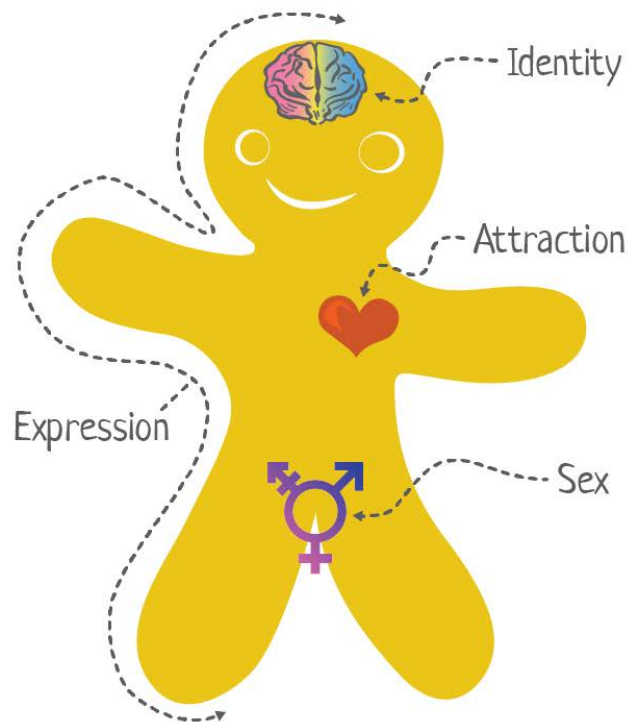
The diverse ways people can experience gender, sexuality and romantic attraction is encompassed within the concept of **SOGIESC** (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics)



HANDOUT: THE GENDERBREAD PERSON

(ADAPTED FROM THE GENDERBREAD PERSON, SAM KILLERMANN, IT'S PRONOUNCED METROSEXUAL,
[HTTPS://WWW.ITSPRONOUNCEDMETROSEXUAL.COM/2015/03/THE-GENDERBREAD-PERSON-V3/](https://www.itpronouncedmetrosexual.com/2015/03/the-genderbread-person-v3/))

The Genderbread Person v4 by it's pronounced METROsexual.com



Gender identity spectrum: gender roles, expectations lack of "woman-ness" _____ complete "woman-ness" lack of man-ness _____ complete "man-ness"	
Gender expression spectrum: actions, dress, mannerisms not feminine _____ very feminine not masculine _____ very masculine	
Biological sex spectrum: physical sex characteristics you are born (sex assigned at birth) with and develop female _____ male male _____ female female/male _____ intersex	
Spectrum of sexual attraction: Nobody _____ Women / Females / Femininity Nobody _____ Men / Males / Masculinity	

ACTIVITY 3:

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF HARMFUL ATTITUDES



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Describe the impact of harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity.
- Reflect on how intersectionality related to SOGIESCs can lead to greater discrimination, social exclusion, and reduced access to essential services, particularly in SRH.
- Brainstorm ideas to challenge harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH services.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape, coloured pencils / pens
- Prepare a flipchart as below:

Impact of harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH

Question 1: How are people with diverse SOGIESC socialised in your community?

What are the attitudes towards them in the family, school, peer relationships, religious organisations, the dominant culture?

How does this social conditioning affect how they treated?

Question 2: How do these harmful attitudes impact the accessibility of SRH services for SOGIESC people?

What are examples of barriers they create?

How can these barriers affect health outcomes?

Question 3: How do these harmful attitudes influence the quality of care provided to SOGIESC people?

What are examples of substandard care or discrimination in these services?

How can this affect health outcomes?

Question 4: What roles do health care workers' own personal beliefs and attitudes play in shaping the experiences of SOGIESC people in SRH settings?

What are examples of this?

How can this affect health outcomes?

Question 5: How do these harmful attitudes affect mental health and well-being in the context of SRH services?

What are the psychological consequences for people who experience stigma and discrimination in these services?

How can this affect health outcomes?



Step 1: Do the activity

- 1. Explain the aims of the activity.**
- 2. Divide into five groups.** Give each group flipchart paper, markers, coloured pens / pencils. Refer to Flipchart 1.
 - Assign each group one main question to focus on.
 - They should discuss their question/s and then draw a picture of the consequences of harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH. Each person should contribute towards the discussion and picture.
 - The picture can include speech bubbles to show what people are saying, feeling, or thinking, the activities they are doing, symbols, pictures, etc.

3. **Presentation:** Ask groups to briefly present (5 minutes each) and explain their drawings to the larger group. They can explain any part of their drawing that is unclear to participants.

Step 2: Group discussion

1. Use these guiding questions to help participants reflect on and discuss the drawings:
 - What is common about the drawings?
 - What is the most powerful lesson we can take away from each picture about the consequences of harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH services?
2. Reflect on how intersectionality related to SOGIESCs can lead to even greater discrimination, social exclusion, and reduced access to essential services, particularly in SRH.

Intersectionality and SOGIESC

People do not exist within a single social identity, but rather experience multiple layers of identity that influence their interactions with systems of power and inequality. This can create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

People with diverse SOGIESCs may face challenges that are compounded by other aspects of their identity, such as race, socio-economic status, ability, or immigration status. For example, a Black transgender working class woman may encounter discrimination that is different from that experienced by a white working-class transgender woman or a cisgender middle class Black woman.

Step 3: Brainstorm

1. Facilitate discussion to brainstorm ideas that could help to challenge harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH services. (Use a mind-map on a flipchart if this helps.) Use these questions to guide the discussion:
 - How can SRH services be improved to better serve SOGIESC populations?
 - What training, education and awareness raising is needed to challenge harmful attitudes and behaviours and reduce biases?
 - How can we empower SOGIESC populations to challenge these harmful attitudes?
 - How can we make the SRH environment safe and more inclusive for all?

2. Once participants have listed all their ideas, help them to filter out those ideas that are practical and possible / easy to implement. Make sure that you keep the brainstorm ideas and this list safely as you will use it again in Activity 4.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Try to move the conversation to 'ideas to address' the problems / consequences rather than continue discussing the problems / consequences themselves. Allow time for participants to build on each other's ideas.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Challenging harmful attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH services requires a GTA which focuses on an intersectional approach. This might include:

- **Education and training for** health care providers, emphasising empathy and the importance of non-discriminatory care.
- **Raising awareness** about the negative impacts of bias and discrimination on health outcomes (including mental health).
- **Promoting SOGIESC voices in SRH settings.**
- Fostering a **culture of respect and dignity** for all patients.
- **Implementing policies** to ensure inclusive practices, such as using correct pronouns, creating safe and welcoming environments, and offering services tailored to the specific needs of SOGIESC population.

ACTIVITY 4: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Prioritise the most promising activity/ies that can challenge negative attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in SRH services



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Use the flipchart you developed in Activity 3 *Step 3 Brainstorm*.
- Prepare a flipchart as below.
- Handout for each group: *Planning activities / interventions*.

FLIPCHART

Task: Identify one main idea to take forward

1. Focus on the most practical and easy-to-implement ideas that can help change negative attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity in your programme.
2. Use these questions to help you identify one main idea:
 - Why is this idea important?
 - What difference could it make?
 - Who is the specific target community?
 - What do we need to make this happen (e.g. people, equipment, money)?
 - Where can we find these resources?
 - Is it realistic to implement this idea in our programme?
3. Once you've chosen one idea, use the Handout: *Planning activities / intervention* to plan it.



Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the activity.
2. Put up the flipcharts (from Activity 3 and the one listing the task).
3. Divide into smaller groups of 5 people. Give each group a piece of flipchart paper and markers and a copy of the Handout: Planning activities / interventions.
4. Ask the groups to work on the task.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

1. Give each group time to share their idea.
2. Allow feedback from both fellow participants and the facilitator.

HANDOUT: PLANNING ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS

Name of activity	
Main target audience/s	
Purpose, aims, objectives of the activity	
How would the activity address the following: • Raise awareness about the consequences/ impact of negative attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity • Change negative attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity • Increase opportunities that lead to empowerment • Increase health outcomes	
Frequency When will the activity take place How often	
Steps involved in the activity (how will it happen?)	
Who will be involved? Roles	
Estimated costs	
How will progress be monitored?	
How will you evaluate the outcomes of the activity?	

SESSION 7: EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Explore why empowerment for women and girls is necessary, what it means, and what it looks like
- ❖ Support women and girls to engage in self-reflection and self-affirmation
- ❖ Encourage women and girls to develop their own vision and indicators of empowerment
- ❖ Facilitate women and girls to gain insight into their own assets which can be used to increase opportunities and reduce vulnerabilities (moving towards their empowerment)

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

There are many different definitions of 'empowerment'. The activities in this session are aimed at guiding women and girls to develop their own picture of what empowerment looks like and to identify the signs or indicators they can use to decide if they are on the road to achieving this picture.

“Women empowerment is important because it helps to reduce domestic violence, sexual, emotional, and physical abuse against women. It enhances their decision-making capacity at all levels in spheres of life, especially in the areas of sexual reproductive health. Women empowerment is needed to overcome gender-based discrimination and to have an independent role in society.”

GLOSSARY

Harmful practices	Persistent actions / behaviours / traditions that are grounded in discrimination, based on age, sex, and gender, among others (National Female Genital Mutilation Centre). Examples include female genital mutilation / cutting (FGM), gender-based violence (GBV), child marriages, femicide, wife inheritance, etc. These practices often cause health, physical and/or psychological harm and suffering to the affected person and the entire community. These harmful practices are a violation of human rights (UNICEF).
Gender norms	Informal, deeply entrenched, and widely held expectations or rules about how each gender should behave. Every society has distinct gender norms because gender itself is not fixed. But the concept of gender norms has at its core the notion of unequal power relations and prestige between men and boys, and women and girls, or of a gender minority.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



This session helps participants understand the importance of empowering women and girls. It includes the following activities:

ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Being a girl or woman	90 mins
Activity 2: Letter to Self	90 mins
Activity 3: Visions of empowerment	90 mins
Activity 4: DIY activity	15-30 mins

ACTIVITY 1:

BEING A GIRL OR WOMAN



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Gain deeper insight into girls and women's daily lives so as to understand their hopes, dreams, fears, and challenges.
- Explore what empowerment for women and girls looks like and why it's necessary.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Coloured pens / pencils
- Masking tape



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims: Explain that this activity examines the daily lives of girls / women, the challenges they face, and looks at their feelings, thoughts, dreams and hopes.
2. Small group sharing: Organise participants into small groups of 2 to 4. Explain that they will 'bring to life' a typical girl or woman from their community. Give each group flipchart paper, markers, and coloured pens / pencils. Ask them to do the following:
 - Draw a girl / woman from the community.
 - Give her a name and an age.
 - Draw a big speech bubble and include what she says.
 - Draw a big thought bubble and include what she thinks.

- Draw activities and include what she does each day.
- Draw a big heart and include what she feels. Who does she care about and what she loves?

Step 2: Plenary discussion and reflection

1. Give each small group 5 minutes to introduce the girl / woman to the large group. They can then stick up the drawing on the wall.
2. **Reflection (20 minutes):** Ask participants to close their eyes and imagine that things were different for this girl / woman. What could be changed for this girl / woman? What are their hopes and dreams for this girl / woman?

Ask participants to share their thoughts in buzz groups.

In plenary, brainstorm what hinders or prevents the empowerment of women and girls? What societal and cultural norms come into play?

Step 3: Application / creating change

1. **Buzz groups:** Ask participants to share strategies or interventions that could be used to challenge harmful societal and cultural norms which are creating barriers to empowerment of women / girls. How are organisations putting women and girls in charge? Ask them to think about power, voice, choice, agency, and leadership.
2. **Plenary discussion:** Ask each group to share at least two strategies or interventions. Encourage participants to note down strategies and interventions they can take into their programmes.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Empowerment of girls and women

Empowerment is “the expansion of choice and the strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations, so women and girls have more control over their lives and futures.”³

- **Economic empowerment** includes accessing access to resources, assets, education, and training that can help women generate their own income and make their own employment decisions.
- **Political empowerment** includes being able to participate in community decision-making and to hold public office.
- **Social empowerment** refers to the change in attitudes and behaviours that enable women and girls to take charge of their lives, free from violence and discrimination.

Empowerment is an ongoing process.

Empowerment cannot be achieved overnight. It involves several measures, including, for example:

- **Eliminating harmful practices**, such as child marriage, gender-based violence, and female genital mutilation.
- Improving women and girls' **access to education and skills** acquisition.
- **Advocating for changes** in laws and policies that discriminate against women and girls or are unfair to them, for example, abolishing laws that prevent women from working outside the home.
- **Creating equal employment opportunities**, for example through affirmative action programmes.
- **Providing reproductive health services** so that women and girls can have healthier families.
- Fostering more equitable **adaptation strategies to climate change**, which tends to disproportionately affect women and girls and exacerbates existing gender inequalities.

³ Rutgers' Toolkit. (2019). Adopting a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence programmes.

Our vision of empowerment involves enhancing women's and girl's assets to:

- **Make choices** in all aspects of their lives.
- **Gain greater control** over their health, careers, and overall quality of life.
- **Reduce vulnerabilities** while increasing opportunities to achieve gender equality.

An example of how this is achieved is through amplifying women's and girls' voice, i.e. their capacity to speak up and be heard in discussions and decisions that affect their lives. Voice is especially important in contesting existing power relations.

The empowerment of women and girls has profound effects on their lives and extends to their families, communities, and society as a whole. However, it must occur at all levels — from the personal to the political — by involving women and girls in dismantling harmful cultural, social, legal, and other barriers that hinder equal opportunities with men.

ACTIVITY 2:

A LETTER TO SELF



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Develop the skills and knowledge on how to support women and girls to start a ritual of self-reflection and affirmation.
- Support women and girls to identify their vulnerabilities, as well as the assets they have or need to increase their opportunities to realise personal empowerment.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Writing pad
- Pens or pencils



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims:** Briefly explain that the activity is aimed at supporting women and girls to self-reflect as the first step towards empowerment, unpacking the assets and strengths they already have and reflecting on those they need to develop, for example, awareness, knowledge, self-esteem. Explain that self-affirmation is vital in building up confidence in women and girls.
2. **Individual reflection:** In this activity, participants are invited to write a letter to themselves. This can be a bit emotional, but it is also important for participants to be honest about Self.

Ask each participant to find a space in the room where they can reflect without any interruptions. Provide each participant with writing paper and pens or pencils. Explain the following:

The journey to empowerment and change starts with personal reflection about who we are (Self), and what our dreams, goals and hopes are.

Here are some questions participants might want to write about:

- What are my goals, dreams, hopes, and aspirations for my life?
 - What are my strengths, assets, and interests?
 - What are my frustrations and downfalls?
 - What makes me feel vulnerable, and why?
 - Ask participants to keep the language simple and the message short.
3. **Reading to Self:** Once you are sure that everyone has written something, ask participants to read the letter to themselves – aloud or silently. Explain that it's okay to smile, be surprised, or feel sad while reading the letter.

Step 2: Plenary discussion

Ask participants to share how it felt to write and read their Letter to Self. Encourage them to share what makes them feel vulnerable and why. Explain that these are the key areas that will support them developing empowerment interventions. Probe for issues around norms and power imbalances.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Time capsule: Participants can store the letters in a “time capsule” – e.g. in a box or envelope in a safe place. They can revisit it 2-3 years. The letters are a good reminder to keep fighting in life, and to keep recognising the inner power they have, whatever challenges they may be facing.

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Letters to Self as a powerful tool

- Letters to yourself / Self can be powerful tools which help us gain self-knowledge and self-awareness – the first step to empowering ourselves.
- They help us affirm our strengths, as well as reflect on our fears, downfalls, and vulnerabilities.
- They can also help us to realign with our own values, remembering what's important to us and recommitting to achieving these things.
- Often societal norms make us vulnerable, lead to the violation of our rights, and deny us equal access to resources and opportunities. The way we feel about these violations is key in igniting other women and girls to amplify their voices on these issues.
- Encourage participants to write letters to themselves every two years to see whether they still feel so vulnerable or not.



ACTIVITY 3:

VISIONS OF EMPOWERMENT



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand what empowerment means and looks like to them.
- Internalise the need for the empowerment of women and girls for achieving better health outcomes.
- Identify their own indicators of empowerment.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Coloured pencils



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims:** Briefly explain that the activity is aimed at venturing into what empowerment looks like and what it takes to get there.
2. **Individual work:** Give each participant flipchart paper, coloured pencils, and markers. Ask them to think about and draw their own vision of the empowerment of women and girls. What would it look like? What would they want women / girls and men / boys to be doing differently in 10 years' time, after being part of empowerment interventions (their vision).
3. **Small group work:** Divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5 (as homogenous as possible in terms of job, status, area, sex, race, class, etc.). Distribute flipchart paper, makers, and coloured pens to each group. Ask each group to do the following:

- Produce a group drawing of what the outcome of empowerment looks like. What would they want women / girls and men / boys to be doing differently in 10 years' time, after being part of empowerment interventions?
- Make sure that they include their signs or indicators of empowerment (showing what people would be doing if they were empowered).

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Groups have a tendency to draw the process of journeying to empowerment. Encourage them to draw the outcome of the empowerment process/es.

Step 2: Gallery walk and reflection

1. **Do a gallery walk:** Ask each group to display their drawing and then to walk around and interact with each other's' drawings, explaining anything that is unclear or answering questions.
2. **Reflection:** Ask participants to make a note of the following
 - What is common to all the drawings? What is different?
 - What are the empowerment interventions that women and girls have been part of that are represented in the drawings?
 - What must be in place for empowerment to happen?
 - What are the relevant indicators of empowerment?

Step 3: Application / creating change

1. **Plenary discussion:** Lead the discussion asking these questions:
 - How can we categorise the indicators of empowerment of women / girls and men / boys? Let's look at four categories:
 - **Material or Physical Improvements:**
 - What material or physical improvements in their lives would be indicators of empowerment?
 - Example: A girl in a rural area gains access to clean water near her home, reducing the time spent fetching water. This gives her more time for school, improving her education and future opportunities.

- **Political Changes:**
 - What political changes would be indicators of empowerment?
 - Example: A woman successfully runs for local government office, gaining a platform to influence policies that improve women's health services and promote gender equality in her community.
- **Changes in Gendered Relationships:**
 - What changes in relationships between women / girls and men / boys would be indicators of empowerment?
 - Example: In a household, both a man and a woman equally share responsibilities for childcare and housework, moving away from traditional gender roles and promoting a more equal partnership.
- **Increased Bodily Autonomy and Integrity:**
 - What forms of increased bodily autonomy and integrity would be indicators of empowerment?
 - Example: A girl participates in a campaign that successfully bans female genital mutilation (FGM) in her country, allowing her and future generations to grow up free from this harmful practice.
- Do these indicators align with the key features of empowerment, such as power, voice, choice, agency, and leadership?
- How do these indicators relate to the thematic areas you are working on?
- Are there any other categories you would like to add.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Other categories include: educational access and improvement; economic empowerment; cultural and social shifts; psychological empowerment.

Step 4: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages covered, using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

Features of empowerment

- **Power:** The different dimensions and expressions of power are covered in depth in Session 4. Power Over is the unequal relationship that results when one group or person has authority and control over others, rendering them powerless. Women and girls often find themselves in a disempowered position due to patriarchal power structures, societal norms, gender inequality discrimination. These factors can lead to situations where their voices are marginalized, rights are violated, and access to opportunities is restricted, perpetuating cycles of inequality and oppression.

For women and girls, the way to reclaim their power is through “the increased material and personal power that comes about when groups of people organise themselves to challenge the status quo through some kind of self-organisation of the group (power to, with and within)” (Cecilia Sardenberg, 2009).

- **Voice:** The capacity of women / girls and men / boys to speak up, be heard and share in discussions and decisions – in public and private domains – that affect their lives (Rutgers’ Toolkit, 2019).
- **Choice:** The ability of women / girls and men / boys to make or participate in choices that affect their lives.
- **Agency:** Closely linked to both choice and voice, agency is the ability to act independently and make choices.
- **Leadership:** Leadership can be expressed individually or collectively, and may involve different expressions of power, including “power over,” “power within,” “power to,” and “power with.”

ACTIVITY 4: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Identify and prioritise the assets needed by women and girls to increase their opportunities and reduce their vulnerabilities, thus leading to their empowerment.



Time: 15 – 30 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart, markers, tape
- Writing paper / pad
- Coloured pencils
- Sticky notes

FACILITATOR NOTE:

This session can be done individually or in pairs.



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims:** To guide participants to identify the different assets needed by women and girls to increase their opportunities and reduce their vulnerabilities, thus leading to their empowerment.
2. **Explain what is meant by 'assets':** Assets are different useful resources that individuals and groups can use to improve their well-being and achieve their goals (e.g. of empowerment). There are different types of assets which are all interconnected and can influence each other.
 - **Financial assets:** This includes money or assets that are bought and sold, such as a home or a cell phone.

- **Human assets:** A person's qualities, such as their resilience or patience, or the skills, knowledge and experience they have – anything personal that can reduce vulnerabilities and expand opportunities.
 - **Social assets:** Any resources the person has because of their social networks, relationships, and community connections, which can provide support, information and opportunities.
3. **Relook at the girl profiles from Activity 1:** Ask participants to use the flipchart paper to brainstorm what assets the girl that they 'brought to life' in Activity 1 already has – financial, human, and/or social. What further assets does she need? They might want to develop a table like the one below (draw this table on the whiteboard or on flipchart paper):

Assets she currently has	Assets she needs to develop

4. **Identify the top 5 assets:** Guide participants to complete these tasks.
- **Provide sticky notes:** Give each participant sticky notes for the activity.
 - **Choose key assets:** Ask participants to review the assets they've identified for their girl and select the top 5 that she currently possesses or needs to develop.
 - **Write on sticky notes:** For each of the top 5 assets, write one per sticky note. On each note, specify whether the asset is financial, human, or social.
 - **Reflect on support from men/boys:** Finally, ask participants to consider the role boys and men can play in supporting women's and girls' empowerment and how they can contribute to the development of these assets.
5. **Application / creating change: Ask participants to:**
- Reflect on how they can develop these assets in their own community. This could include practical steps like mentorship programs, SRHR workshops, or partnerships with local organisations.
 - Commit to one action they will take to support women and girls in developing these assets. Encourage them to share these commitments with the group to foster accountability.

SESSION 8:

ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Create a platform to openly discuss masculinities.
- ❖ Discuss gender roles, stereotypes, and expectations around what it means ‘to be a man’ and identify where those messages come from.
- ❖ Reflect on how to use the GEM Scale to measure attitudes towards gender equitable norms in the programmes.
- ❖ Discuss how to build on the positive aspects of their father’s / male figure’s influence and address the negative impacts.
- ❖ Discuss interventions and activities that can meaningfully engage men and boys to challenge gender stereotypes and advance gender equality.

“Boys are not mere robots, reflexively donning the badges of boyhood. They make choices, trying on one thing or another, from options that are limited, sometimes severely limited, and often foreign to their own values. They calculate and search for openings; the chance to be themselves. When contexts are harsh and masculine norms rigid and unyielding, with gangs of boys policing the group norm and ready to jump on one another, boys feel alone, overmatched, and hopeless. But in quality relationships, equality, authenticity, and love blossom as boys grow into their visions for themselves as men.”

— Michael Reichert, *How to Raise a Boy: The Power of Connection to Build Good Men.*

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

Gender equality benefits everyone, ‘in all their diversity’ – people of different genders, ages, nationalities, races, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

It is increasingly recognised that **meaningful engagement** with all people is critical to advancing gender equality and equity. Women and girls tend to take the lead in this, but to accelerate progress we need a collective effort from allies, champions, supporters, and collaborators from all walks of life. This is critical not only for women's and girls' empowerment, but also to transform the social and gender norms that reinforce patriarchy and inequality which harm everyone.

Progress for women and girls means **changing the unequal power dynamics** that underpin discrimination and violence. While women's and girls' empowerment is essential to achieving gender equality, we must simultaneously engage men and boys to be actively committed to redistributing power in both their personal lives and in larger spheres. Framing gender equality as something men and boys have a stake in and can benefit from can be an effective way to motivate more men and boys to be involved.

There are links between rigid attitudes about gender roles and power inequalities, and **gender-based violence (GBV)**. Engaging men and boys as champions to address violence against women and girls, and redefining masculine identities at the community and household level, will help reduce GBV and other forms of discrimination.

Traditional gender divisions of labour assign males to the role of breadwinner and females to domestic work, even though women account for over 40% of the global workforce. But it has been shown that when men are more actively engaged with caregiving there is a positive effect on their children. This increases the chances that their sons will grow up to be more gender-equitable and involved fathers themselves!⁴

Boys and men are affected by gender norms too and restricted by harmful norms of masculinity. Early in adolescence, boys may start to face expectations to become income earners or to join armed groups, or they may conform to social norms that lead to disengagement from school and perpetuation of violence against girls.⁵ Finding ways to **break that patriarchal grip** is every bit as beneficial to boys as it is to girls. If we fail to teach boys about positive gender norms, then the problem becomes greater.

The engagement of all, especially men and boys, alongside women and girls, is fundamental to addressing **gender inequality in health care systems**. Men and boys have a profound role in helping to transform the rigid norms that shape sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) that will improve health care overall.

Gender Transformative Approaches in this context are considered to be any approaches that seek to:

- Challenge existing systems that perpetuate gender inequality and GBV, and that seek to transform unequal power relations between men and women, boys, and girls.
- Change the structures of inequality and shift negative social norms beyond just shifting the perceptions of individual men and boys.
- Draw out the lived experiences of individual women and girls to inform work with men and boys and consider women and girls as individuals / humans with rights and NOT just mothers, daughters, or sisters.
- Enable genuine and critical self-reflection by men and boys to understand how their personal experiences as men / boys affects the lives of women and girls around them.
- Change attitudes and perceptions of men and boys towards promoting gender equality and non-violent behaviours in communities.
- Use men to mobilise other men in the community against GBV and to question men's privileges, use of power, and the behaviours of violent men.

⁴ Van den Berg, W., Makusha, T., & Ratele, K. (Eds.) (2021). *State of South Africa's Fathers 2021*. Cape Town/Stellenbosch: Sonke Gender Justice, Human Sciences Research Council, & Stellenbosch University.)

⁵ UNICEF. (2021). *Gender Transformative Education: Reimagining education for a more just and inclusive world*.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: What is masculinity?	60 mins
Activity 2: The Man Box	80 mins
Activity 3: The Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale	60 mins
Activity 4: My father's legacy	90 mins

GLOSSARY

'In all their diversity'	This includes people of different genders, ages, nationalities, races, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.
Stereotype	A widely held, fixed idea or image of a particular type of person or thing.
Masculinities	The different socially constructed ways of being and acting, and the values and expectations associated with being and becoming a man in each society, location, and space. While masculinities are mostly linked with biological men and boys, they are not biologically driven and not only performed by men.
Gender-equitable (or positive) masculinities	Masculinities that are supportive of women's empowerment and gender equality and that undermine patriarchal structures and unequal gender power dynamics.
Restrictive (or toxic) masculinities	Masculinities that confine men to their traditional role as the dominant gender group, undermining women's empowerment, and gender equality.
"Unparking masculinities"	The process of critically examining and challenging traditional notions of masculinity that are restrictive or harmful. This concept encourages individuals and communities to "unpark" or move away from fixed, outdated, or toxic ideas about what it means to be a man.
Norms	Expectations or rules about how people should behave in society. These norms are passed on informally through the family, culture, religion, education, media, and work. They are powerfully entrenched and passed on from generation to generation. They change over time and differ in different cultures.

ACTIVITY 1:

WHAT IS MASCULINITY?



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Discuss the meaning of masculinity / masculinities.
- Understand that masculinities are diverse, and that men are not a homogenous group.
- Practice using a methodology (small groups) to openly discuss masculinity / masculinities.



Time: 60 minutes

FACILITATOR NOTE:

This activity is meant for men-only groups. However, it can be adapted for mixed groups.

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Enough space for group sharing
- Flipchart with questions for male-only group/s and flipchart with questions for female-only group/s (see below)
- A screen and projector if you want to choose the option to show the video “What is masculinity?”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjeZMQPMNMQ>

“ Masculinity is not something given to you, but something you can gain. And you gain it by winning small battles with honour. ”

— Norman Mailer

 STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims:** This activity examines what masculinity means and the different types or expressions of masculinity.
2. **Group sharing:** Organise participants into a circle. If it is a big group, have smaller groups of 8 to 10 people each. If it is a mixed gender group, organise men-only groups and women-only groups.
3. **For the male-only group:** Put up the questions and explain that each person should share one point only for each question.
 - What makes men feel shame?
 - How do you know you have become a man?
 - What does it mean to become a man, today?
4. **For the female-only group:** Put up the questions and explain that each person should share one point only for each question.
 - What makes men proud of themselves?
 - What makes men vulnerable?
 - How do women affirm men to let them know that it is okay to show their emotions such as fear or sadness, including crying? What are the challenges women face when trying to support this emotional openness?

FACILITATOR NOTE:

An alternative way to do this activity is to begin with this trigger video called: What is masculinity?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjeZMQPMNMQ>

If you use the video, add this question to the discussion: Are there situations when groups of men and women sit together and have such discussions?

Step 2: Plenary discussion / debrief:

1. Debrief on the activity to connect it to "unparking masculinities" as participants share their experiences from their groups. Use questions such as:
 - Who decides when one becomes a man or not?

- What was common in the groups for men and for women?
- Was it easy or difficult to open up about some of these issues in a group? Why?
- Were there instances where participants questioned their masculinity?
- Share the key highlights from the discussion that define masculinity.

2. **Conclude** the plenary discussion with the key insights below:



KEY INSIGHTS

Masculinities are socially constructed:

Masculinities are simply ideas and expectations that both men and women in a society have, about how men should behave. These ideas are socially constructed. We are not born with a fixed masculinity, and it is not linked to biological maleness. We learn the dominant form of masculinity through our relationships and through the interactions we have from early childhood into adolescence and adulthood. These ideas are transmitted from generation to generation. They develop and operate at different levels, including interpersonal, communal, institutional, and societal. They are shaped by and part of social institutions – formal and informal laws, social norms, and practices. This means that masculinities can change.

Masculinities are diverse:

Masculinities are not a fixed historical entity because **masculinities are diverse** – men are not a homogenous group who all behave in exactly the same way in every setting. Different masculinities have also existed across different cultures, geographical areas, and time periods, and different masculinities have also existed within the same cultures, geographical areas, and time periods. These ideas are informed by factors such as age, socio-economic background, race, and religion. **It is important to recognise the diversity of masculinities and that masculinities can change.**

Gender-equitable (or positive) masculinities:

Many voices are challenging the traditional view of restrictive or toxic masculinity and are promoting gender-equitable or positive masculinity that values emotional expression, vulnerability, and nurturing qualities, as well as the important role of men in building gender equality.

ACTIVITY 2:

THE MAN / BOY BOX⁶



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Examine gender roles, stereotypes, and expectations about what it means 'to be a man', and identify where those messages come from.
- Discuss how ideas about gender and gender roles can change and that individuals can challenge gender roles and stereotypes.



Time: 80 minutes



FACILITATOR NOTE:

This activity is preferably meant for men-only groups

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart paper prepared with the title, The Man / Boy Box
- Markers
- Tape
- Cloth, canvas, or tarpaulin of about 1.83 m X 1.83 m (6 X 6 ft) per 8 participants

⁶ Adapted from: Next Gen Men. (2023.). *A manual for men: A guide to understanding and addressing men's issues*. <https://www.nextgenmen.ca/manual>

 STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims:** This activity aims to help us unpack gender roles, stereotypes, and expectations about what it means to 'be a man / boy', identify where those messages come from, and how they can be challenged.

Introduce the Man / Boy Box. Put up the flipchart with the title, The Man / Boy Box. Draw a large square in the middle of the paper – this is 'The Man / Boy Box'. Leave enough space around the square to write in.

2. Explain the following:
 - In our society, there are lots of expectations about what it means to be a 'real man / boy'. There are certain gender stereotypes – ways in which men or boys are supposed to act, and certain ways in which they are not supposed to act.
 - The Man / Boy Box is a visualisation or picture of these gender stereotypes – it is not necessarily what we believe ourselves.
3. **Write inside The Man / Boy Box.** Lead a group discussion using the questions below about how men and boys are expected to act. Note down key points inside The Man / Boy Box:
 - How are boys and men expected to look and dress?
 - What kind of toys and activities are boys supposed to play with and participate in?
 - What feelings and emotions are men and boys supposed to have, and how are they supposed to express them?
 - Who are boys and men supposed to be attracted to? How are they supposed to act in dating and relationships?
4. **Write outside The Man / Boy Box.** Lead a group discussion about how men and boys are not supposed to act. Note down key points outside The Man / Boy Box (leave space under the box for point 6 below.)
5. **Discussion:** Ask if anyone was surprised by what was put inside and outside The Man / Boy Box? Point out that none of us were ever given rules about how to be a man or boy, and yet they all know what's expected of us.
6. **Write under The Man / Boy Box:** Add key points about where these cultural messages come from. Use these questions for the discussion:
 - How do we learn what it means to be a boy or man?
 - Where do we see representations of manhood around us?

7. **Fitting into The Man / Boy Box** (20 minutes): Divide the group into small groups of 8 people and place the cloths on the floor for each group. Ask participants to remove their shoes. Give them these instructions:

- The aim of this exercise is for all 8 men or boys to fit onto their cloth. They can arrange themselves in any way, but no one can touch the floor or any furniture at any time.
- Each time they succeed in getting all 8 people on the cloth, the cloth will be folded in half, and they must start again.
- Lead participants through the activity, ensuring that they stay safe, and that the cloth is folded each time.
- After 20 minutes, stop the exercise.

“Particular ways of being a boy and man are dominant, while others are stigmatised, punished, or silenced. These dominant constructions of gender, shape boys’ and men’s lives. Boys and young men may conform to the dominant form of masculinity, or they may resist it or fail its expectations, but all live in its shadow. Conforming to the Man Box exacts a real cost, both among young men themselves and for the women and men around them. There is an urgent and powerful need to promote change in dominant norms of masculinity.”

— The Men’s Project, The Man Box

8. **Debrief** (20 minutes): Use the following questions to lead the discussion:

- Did each group succeed each time? What happened in the end?
- Did every part of every person fit on the cloth each time?
- How do you think the cloth relates to The Man / Boy Box?
- What happened each time the cloth was folded? How does this relate to The Man / Boy Box.
- What happens to boys and men who don’t fit into The Man / Boy Box?
- What is something you would try to do if The Man / Boy Box did not exist?

9. Wrap up:

- Explain that The Man / Boy Box isn't a visualisation of what is good or bad, or toxic and non-toxic. For example, there are many reasons why strength is valuable, and there are times when it's important to be tough.
- Encourage participants to rather think about The Man / Boy Box in terms of the parts of themselves that don't fit into the typical stereotypes about how to be a 'real man / boy' and why those parts matter.
- Finally go around the circle and have each participant share an appreciation for someone else in the group.



ACTIVITY 3:

MEASURING ATTITUDES: THE GENDER EQUITABLE MEN (GEM) SCALE



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the difficult (harmful) gender norms in intimate relationships, as well as the social expectations for men and women
- Internalise the different domains of the GEM Scale
- Measure their own attitudes towards gender-equitable norms using the GEM Scale
- Reflect on how to use the GEM Scale to measure the impact of their programme interventions



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Markers
- Pens
- Signs: AGREE, **PARTIALLY AGREE**, DISAGREE
- Handout for each participant: GEM Scale



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. **Explain the aims:** The GEM scale is a structured questionnaire of 24 statements that measures attitudes towards 'gender-equitable' norms. The scale is designed to measure attitudes towards gender norms in intimate relationships or different social expectations for men and women. In this activity, participants test their own attitudes towards gender-

equitable norms and get familiar with a tool for the monitoring and evaluation of GTA in their GBV and SRHR programmes.

2. **Prepare for the activity:** Explain that participation in this activity is voluntary. If anyone is not willing to answer personal questions about their gender attitudes, they can choose not to participate.
3. **Stick up the signs** on the wall: AGREE, PARTIALLY AGREE, DISAGREE.
4. **Read each statement** on the GEM Scale (in the Handout below) one at a time:
 - After each statement, ask participants how they feel about it. Do they agree, partially agree, or disagree with the statement? They should move to the sign that represents their answer.
 - Once they have taken their position, motivate discussion between the different groups by asking questions. Or ask the groups to try to convince others to join them, e.g. to move from AGREE to PARTIALLY AGREE or DISAGREE.
 - The domains of the GEM Scale were developed after research was done with young men and are 'ideal' descriptions of 'equitable men'. These descriptions could help to guide discussion during the activity.

GENDER EQUITABLE MEN (GEM) DOMAINS

Domain 1: Violence. The equitable man is opposed to violence against women under all circumstances, even those that are commonly used to justify violence (e.g. sexual infidelity).

Domain 2: Sexual relationships. The gender equitable man seeks relationships based on equality, respect, and intimacy rather than sexual conquest. This includes believing that men and women have equal rights and that women have as much right to sexual agency as do men.

Domain 3: Reproductive health and disease prevention. The gender equitable man assumes responsibility for sexually transmitted infection prevention and reproductive health in his relationships. This includes taking the initiative to discuss reproductive health concerns with his partner, using condoms or assisting his partner in acquiring or using a contraceptive method.

Domain 4: Domestic chores and daily life. The gender equitable man seeks to be involved in household chores and childcare, meaning that they take both financial and caregiving responsibility for their children and household.

5. **Reflection:** Give each participant a copy of the Handout: *The GEM Scale*. Explain more about the scale and how it works using the information below:

- **Structure:** The GEM Scale is organised into four domains: violence, sexual relationships, reproductive health and disease prevention, and domestic chores and daily life. This structure helps to assess attitudes towards gender equity across these specific areas.
- **Scoring:** A person responds to each item, and their scores are summed. A high total score indicates strong support for gender-equitable norms. Some items must be reverse scored, if a high score would reflect low support for gender equity.
- **Application:** The GEM Scale is used to establish baseline measures for a programme and for monitoring and evaluation afterwards.

Step 2: Application / creating change

Plenary discussion: Ask participants how they could use the GEM Scale for setting a baseline for GTA in their SRHR programmes, and for monitoring and evaluating movement towards gender equitable attitudes.



THE GENDER EQUITABLE MEN (GEM) SCALE

	Agree (1 point)	Partially agree (2 points)	Disagree (3 points)
Domain 1. Violence			
There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten			
A woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together			
It is all right for a man to beat his wife if she is unfaithful			
A man can hit his wife if she won't have sex with him			
If someone insults a man, he should defend his reputation with force if he has to			
A man using violence against his wife is a private matter that shouldn't be discussed outside the couple			
Domain 2. Sexual relationships			
It is the man who decides what type of sex to have			
Men are always ready to have sex			
Men need sex more than women do			
A man needs other women even if things with his wife are fine			
You don't talk about sex; you just do it			
It disgusts me when I see a man acting like a woman			
A woman should not initiate sex			
A woman who has sex before she marries does not deserve respect			
Domain 3. Reproductive health and disease prevention			
Women who carry condoms on them are easy			

Men should be outraged if their wives ask them to use a condom			
It is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant			
Only when a woman has a child is she a real woman			
A real man produces a male child			
Domain 4. Domestic chores and daily life			
Changing diapers/nappies, giving a bath, and feeding kids is the mother's responsibility			
A woman's role is taking care of her home and family			
The husband should decide to buy the major household items			
A man should have the final word about decisions in his home			
A woman should obey her husband in all things			

ACTIVITY 4:

MY FATHER'S LEGACY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Reflect on the influence that their father or other male authority figure has had on them.
- Discuss how to build on the positive aspects of their father's / male figure's influence.
- Discuss how to address the negative impacts of their father's / male figure's influence so as not to repeat harmful patterns.



Time: 90 minutes

FACILITATOR NOTE:

While this activity focuses on men, it is also appropriate for boys or young men. Adapt the language for their current context.

This activity can have a deep emotional impact on participants who may recall violent experiences or other traumatic life events, such as abandonment. It is vitally important to give participants emotional support during this process. Read and apply the suggestions in Annex 2: Holding Safe Spaces and Creating a Container for Powerful Emotions so you are well-prepared to hold the group in empathy and emotional safety.

It is also important to note that difficulties in relationships are not always gender driven. Try to help participants identify which are gender driven and which aren't.

If a participant needs to talk more deeply about their relationship with their fathers to heal and learn from negative experiences, and to apply this awareness to their own roles as parents, refer them to professional counselling services, or organisations who have groups or processes for this type of work.

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipcharts, markers, tape



STEPS

Step 1: Do the activity

1. Explain the aims: Explain that participants will continue to reflect on their own values, attitudes, and behaviour (particularly as men and boys) towards gender equality.
2. Prepare for the activity: Ask participants to close their eyes and think of an object that reminds them of their father or male authority figure. (Let there be some silence for a few minutes; you can play very soft music if available.)
3. Work in pairs: Ask pairs to take turns to:
 - Share the object that they thought about and explain why it reminds them of their father or the male authority figure.
 - Ask them to discuss one positive thing that this person has passed on to them, and one negative thing.

Step 2: Plenary discussion:

Debrief: Ask each participant to share:

- One positive thing about their father that they would want to pass on to their children.
- One negative thing about their father that they would rather leave behind and not pass on to their children.

Discussion: Ask participants to explain the meaning of these terms: “family”, “patriarchy” and “legacy”.

Then, facilitate a discussion using these questions

- How is manhood traditionally defined in our culture (especially in patriarchal cultures)?
- How did this impact on the way our fathers acted in the home?
- How did this impact on the way they related to their wives / partners?
- How did this impact on the way they raised their children?

- What kind of positive legacy do we want to pass on to our children / the next generation?
- What should NOT be passed on to our children / the next generation?
- How can we break down traditional gender roles and build gender-equal partnerships?

Ask participants if there are any aspects of the activity that they could share with their partners or families. For example:

- Could they share some of the negative aspects of their father's influence, so as not to repeat these harmful patterns?
- Could they share the positive aspects of their fathers' influence?

Step 3: Sum up with key insights

Briefly recap on the main messages using the KEY INSIGHTS below to help you.



KEY INSIGHTS

- We reflected on the influence that our fathers or other male authority figures had on us while we were growing up. We discussed how to build on the positive aspects of our fathers' influence. And we discussed how to address the negative impacts of our fathers' influence, so we do not repeat harmful patterns.
- We should all try to identify those positive aspects of our life stories that we can replicate with our own children, as well as the negative aspects that we do not want to repeat.
- This commitment empowers us to create a more equitable and supportive foundation for our children, shaping their understanding of healthy relationships and masculinity.

“ Fathers have the capacity to leave a powerful legacy for their children and the generations to come. Every father will leave a lasting mark on his children. Legacy isn't confined to a will or an inheritance; it's far more important and substantial than dollars and cents.

The legacy a dad leaves has to do with the things he passes on to his children, what he gives them in terms of love, support, wisdom, character, and Faith. ”



ACTIVITY 5: DIY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Discuss interventions and activities that can meaningfully engage men and boys to challenge gender stereotypes and advance gender equality.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Flipchart
- Markers
- Tape
- Prepare a flipchart with the brainstorming questions below
- Handout: Planning activities / interventions – make copies for each group



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims:** To explore interventions or activities that meaningfully engage men and boys to challenge gender stereotypes and make progress towards gender equality.
2. **Small group work:** Break participants into groups of 5. Each group should complete the following:
 - Brainstorm and discuss at least one intervention or activity that would enable men and boys to:
 - Challenge gender stereotypes
 - Take care of their health
 - Make a positive impact on their communities
 - Push for progress on gender equality

- Discuss what interventions or activities would help boys and men feel less pain and cause less harm? (Brainstorm: When do men and boys feel pain? When do they cause harm and pain?)
 - Reflect on your existing work / programme:
 - What is the current situation around engaging men and boys? Are there any gaps or challenges?
 - What is not working well and needs to be addressed?
 - Choose one activity or intervention to develop using the guiding questions below. If it will help, participants can use the Handout: Planning activities / interventions with men and boys.
 - What is the name of the activity / intervention?
 - Who is the target audience? Why choose this group?
 - What are the purpose and objectives of the activity?
 - How would the activity address human rights, norms, power dynamics, and diversity? How often would the activity take place? Is it a one-off activity or part of a larger, recurring program?
 - When and where would it take place?
 - What would the activity involve in practice?
 - Who else do you need to support you in this activity and what is their role?
 - What is the estimated cost for the activity?
 - How will you monitor the effectiveness and outcomes of the activity?
3. **Plenary discussion:** Give each group time to share their ideas. Allow feedback both from fellow participants and the facilitator. Ask the groups if these are activities they can integrate into their existing work on engaging men and boys for gender equality.

HANDOUT: PLANNING ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS WITH MEN AND BOYS

Name of activity	
Target audience	
Purpose, aims, objectives	
How would it address and challenge the following: Gender stereotypes Gender inequality	
Frequency When will it take place	
Steps involved in the activity	
Who will be involved Roles	
Estimated costs	
Monitoring and evaluation	



DO-SHOP

The Do-Shop Two training should take place at least six months after the first one. The purpose of this gap is to allow participants to use the knowledge and skills gained in the first Do-Shop to integrate and implement interventions using the GTA approach. It is therefore necessary to take time for reflecting on how the knowledge has been translated into practice. Ideally, the same team that participated in the first Do-Shop should attend this session for continuity. During this Do-Shop, participants will revisit their understanding of GTA, reflect on their GTA journeys, and assess how they are documenting their successes.

2

SESSION 9: GTA JOURNEYS



OVERALL LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Reflect on their organisation's current projects and pinpoint key areas for gender transformation, establishing clear priorities for their GTA journey.
- ❖ Apply a gender transformative approach when designing interventions and practice reviewing activities through this lens to ensure alignment with gender equity principles.
- ❖ Understand the importance of prototype testing transformative activities, obtaining feedback, and revising their activities accordingly to enhance effectiveness.

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

The focus of this session is on understanding and practical implementation of a GTA journey. A GTA Journey refers to the ongoing process of critically assessing and transforming practices, beliefs, and systems to dismantle harmful gender norms and inequalities. It emphasizes reflection, stakeholder engagement, and continuous learning to promote gender equity within organisations and their work in communities.

GLOSSARY

Prototyping

The process of creating a simple version of a product or idea to test and evaluate it. This allows you to gather feedback and make improvements before finalizing the design, helping you learn and refine your concept along the way.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES		AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1:	Planning your GTA journey	90 mins
Activity 2:	GTA Activity Guide	90 mins
Activity 3:	Prototyping GTA Activities	2 hrs and 30 mins

ACTIVITY 1:

PLANNING YOUR GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH (GTA) JOURNEY



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Reflect on their organisation's current projects and identify areas and opportunities to prioritize for gender transformation.
- Develop a concrete plan and set ambitions for their organisation's GTA journey.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Existing project plans from the participants' organisations
- Flip charts, markers, tapes



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims:** Gender transformation is a gradual and complex, yet incredibly rewarding process. It requires time, reflection, collaboration, and continuous adjustment. Each organisation must find its unique path while integrating the gender transformative approach with different partners and stakeholders at various stages. This activity empowers participants to take ownership of their gender transformation journeys and provides a collaborative, reflective space for developing concrete plans tailored to their organisation's specific context.
2. **Project scan (45 minutes):** This step helps participants assess their current projects and identify areas for integrating the Gender Transformative Approach.
 - **Pair work:** Divide the participants into pairs. If there are multiple participants from the same organisation, they should work together.

- **Scanning projects:** Ask each pair to review their organisation's projects or interventions. They should identify which components or domains of their work might intersect with gender transformation (e.g., advocacy, campaigns, community engagements, etc.).

Questions to guide the scan:

- What are the key activities of the project?
 - Which domain or component forms the largest percentage of your project?
 - Where could a gender-transformative approach be most impactful?
- **Prioritizing:** Once the scan is complete, participants should choose **at least one domain** to focus on for their gender transformation journey. Encourage pairs to reflect on how they can integrate GTA in practical, actionable ways.
3. **Plenary sharing and discussion (30 minutes):** Participants share their reflections and receive feedback on their chosen focus areas.
 4. **Sharing GTA Journeys:** Each pair presents their project focus and the GTA journey they have chosen to prioritize. Encourage them to explain why they chose that particular domain and how they envision gender transformation taking place.
- **Group reflection:** After each presentation, the facilitator asks the group to reflect on the following:
 - What insights can you share about their approach?
 - What challenges might arise in integrating the GTA?
 - Who could they collaborate with or seek support from?
 - Encourage participants to consider their organisational capacities and resources and to brainstorm possible solutions to anticipated challenges.

FACILITATOR NOTE:



Example GTA Journeys:

Provide participants with practical examples of GTA trajectories. These may include:

- *Focusing on gender-transformative advocacy within a community health program.*
- *Integrating gender-sensitive approaches into a political campaign.*
- *Shifting harmful gender norms in a local education initiative.*

5. **Wrap up (15 minutes):** The final step emphasizes the importance of documenting and sharing the learning process.
- Commitment to the Journey: Reinforce that this gender transformation journey is a continuous learning process. Encourage participants to document both their successes and challenges as they implement gender-transformative approaches.
 - Engaging their organisation: Participants should present their chosen GTA focus to their organisations and get buy-in from their colleagues. It's essential to involve other team members in planning and to ensure that all interventions are viewed through a gender-transformative lens.
 - Next steps: Encourage participants to think about the next stages of their journey. What further steps can they take? How can they sustain momentum in their organisations?

ACTIVITY 2:

THE GTA ACTIVITY GUIDE



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand how to apply a GTA lens when designing interventions.
- Practice reviewing an activity using a GTA lens.
- Revise activities to integrate changes and iterate based on feedback.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Participants should come up with their own project plans where they intend to implement the gender transformative approach.
- Flip chart, markers, tape



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims:** Now that the teams have chosen their Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) journeys, they will learn how to analyse activities through a GTA lens — specifically, identifying what elements of GTA are embedded within their activities.
2. **Choosing an activity:**
 - Divide participants into **groups of 5-7** people.
 - Ask each group to select one activity they intend to implement in their project using the Gender Transformative Approach. Distribute a printed copy of GTA Activity Guide to each group.
 - Walk the groups through the guide, addressing any questions they may have.

- Encourage the groups to analyse their chosen activity using the guide, prompting open discussion about each bullet point as they document their insights in their notebooks. One group member should write down the key points on the flip chart.

3. Plenary discussion:

- Bring the entire group back together and allow each group 10 minutes to share their activity, followed by 5 minutes of feedback from other participants.
- After all groups have presented, give them 15 minutes to return to their discussions and integrate the feedback received.

4. Wrap up:

- Encourage teams to consistently use the GTA Activity Guide for all future activities before engaging with their communities. If feasible, they should consider involving representatives from the target audiences in this review process.

ACTIVITY 3:

PROTOTYPING TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIVITIES



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the importance of testing transformative activities and obtaining feedback.
- Develop skills for analysing activities through a GTA lens.
- Practice designing transformative activities.



Time: 2 hours and 30 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Large space for movement
- GTA Checklist



STEPS

Step 1: Pre-Activity: Obstacles (20 Minutes)

1. Obstacle Course Setup

- Divide the participants into three groups and have each group set up an obstacle course in a straight-line using furniture in the room. Ensure there are no sharp or dangerous objects that could cause injury.
- Each group will switch lanes and attempt to navigate each other's obstacle courses.
- Ask one person from each group to volunteer to be blindfolded and stand at the starting point of an obstacle course they didn't create.
- Instruct them that their goal is to reach the finishing point without bumping into anything, as safely as possible.

- Start a timer and allow the blindfolded participant to navigate the obstacle course.
- After 30 seconds to 1 minute, stop the timer. Once they finish or the time runs out, ask them to remove their blindfolds and discuss with their group what went wrong and what went right.
- Inform them that they will attempt the obstacle course again, this time with a helper who can provide verbal feedback for the first 30 seconds.
- Have the blindfolded volunteer paired with another participant who will guide them with cues to navigate the course.
- Start the timer again to see who finishes first.

2. Debrief Lessons

- In plenary, pose the following questions to the group:
 - What was different when you had a partner providing cues on how to proceed?
 - Why was their feedback helpful?

3. Wrap up

- Explain to the group that when running programs, especially those using the gender transformative approach, it can often feel like navigating an obstacle course blindfolded, necessitating guidance.
- If we rush into implementation without preparation, we are more likely to encounter challenges and issues. Often, we remain unaware of what is going wrong or why there is no change until we reach the midpoint or endpoint of the program.
- Practicing how to integrate GTA into activities and obtaining feedback is crucial for improving understanding of GTA and ensuring it is effectively incorporated into activities.

Step 2: The Gender Transformative Activity (1 hour 30 Minutes)

1. **Provide context** for the activity by explaining: In the civil society sector, it is common for practitioners to brainstorm activities, write concept notes, and quickly implement them in communities. However, given the complexity and sensitivity of Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA), thorough preparation is essential. Activities must be tested and refined to achieve desired outcomes. While teams may generate numerous compelling ideas, they may also encounter unforeseen challenges related to language, approach, and context. Prototyping offers an opportunity for practitioners to either refine or discard suggested activities based on real feedback, fostering innovation, and learning from mistakes.

2. Group activity design

- Divide participants into smaller groups of 5-7 people. Each group should come up with an activity they want to implement in the community that challenges a harmful practice of their choice. Encourage them to select from activities they brainstormed in the previous Do-Shop session, activities they have already implemented, or those they intend to implement.
- Inform them that they will have 30 minutes to develop their activity. Using the checklist from the previous session, they should consider how their activity can create critical awareness of the power imbalances and norms underpinning the harmful practice they are addressing.
- Encourage creativity and interactivity in their activities (sharing an example may be helpful).
- Refer to the GTA Activity Checklist, ensuring they pay attention to the questions during their activity design process.

3. Presentations and feedback

- Once each group has prepared their presentation, have them present to the other participants in turn. The groups not presenting should act as community members, encouraging them to role-play and respond as community members would in a real-life feedback session.
- Allow each group 10 minutes to present their prototype and collect feedback from the "community members."

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Feedback Session Guideline

- *Take notes.*
- *Avoid reacting to people's feedback.*
- *Ask guiding questions, such as: "Why do you think that?" and "What could make this better?"*
- *Remind participants that feedback is not personal.*

BE SURE TO THANK PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR TIME AND INSIGHTS.

4. Debrief

- After the feedback sessions, give each group 15 minutes to reflect on the feedback and consider how they will incorporate it to modify their activity.
- Once each group has had time to reflect and make changes, invite them to share what they adjusted:
 - What did they change?
 - What remained the same?
 - Was all the feedback useful? Why or why not?

5. Wrap up

- Emphasize that integrating feedback involves synthesizing lessons learned during prototype testing to determine what changes to prioritize for the next version. Encourage participants to continue the cycle of testing, learning, and evolving to refine their activities.
- Suggest they try out one of these methods when taking their activity into the field for testing. Iterating on-the-fly involves making real-time adjustments based on insights gained from prototype experiments.
- Mention that co-creation can be beneficial in model-testing, as it allows the community to be involved in the design process, ideally if resources permit.

SESSION 10: THE GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Explain the difference between a “gender-blind” and “gender-aware” programme.
- ❖ Explain the difference between a “gender-exploitative”, “accommodating”, and “transformative” programme.
- ❖ Understand the Gender Equality Continuum framework and apply it to various media
- ❖ Use a checklist to locate their own programme along the Gender Equality Continuum.
- ❖ Explore key strategies and steps needed to move the programme along the continuum toward a gender transformative approach.

FOCUS OF THIS SESSION

Many organisations working in the development sector built strong programmes before there was widespread awareness of how critical it is to challenge gender inequality and structural power imbalances across all interventions. Addressing gender inequality now requires an integrated approach that spans all levels of programme design, ensuring that transformative change is embedded in every aspect of development work.

This session explores the **Gender Equality Continuum**, a development tool introduced by the **Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG)** in 2002. The continuum serves as a planning framework or diagnostic tool, particularly for behaviour change communication programmes (IGWG, 2013). The continuum shows a process of analysis that begins with determining whether interventions are “gender blind” or “gender aware. As a planning framework, organisations can use the continuum to determine how to design and plan interventions that move their programme from “exploitative”, to “accommodating” and finally to “transformative”. The ultimate goal is to design interventions that move towards gender transformative approaches, promoting gender equality and improved development outcomes.

ACTIVITIES AND TIME ALLOCATION



ACTIVITIES	AVERAGE TIME
Activity 1: Understanding and applying the Gender Equality Continuum	90 mins
Activity 2: Scenarios to pin on the Gender Equality Continuum	60 mins
Activity 3: Reviewing your programme using the Gender Equality Continuum	120 mins

GLOSSARY

Gender Blind	Programmes that overlook gender differences and dynamics, failing to consider the roles, rights, responsibilities, and power relations associated with being female or male. They operate under the assumption of a level playing field, disregarding gender disparities.
Gender Aware	Programmes that recognize and examine gender considerations, focusing on the dynamics between men and women, as well as boys and girls. While not inherently transformative, they demonstrate a greater awareness of gender issues.
Exploitative	Programmes that reinforce or exploit gender inequalities and stereotypes, perpetuating harmful norms and power imbalances.
Accommodating	These programmes acknowledge existing gender inequalities but do not actively challenge or seek to change them, merely working around the differences.
Transformative	The most progressive approach, transformative programmes promote critical examination of gender norms and dynamics. They aim to create equitable gender norms, challenge existing inequalities, and strengthen systems that support gender equality.

ACTIVITY 1:

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING THE GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Understand the difference between a “gender-blind” and “gender-aware” programme.
- Know the difference between a “gender-exploitative”, “accommodating”, and “transformative” programme.
- Understand the Gender Equality Continuum framework – why it is used and how it works.



Time: 90 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Copies of the Handout: *The Gender Equality Continuum* for each participant

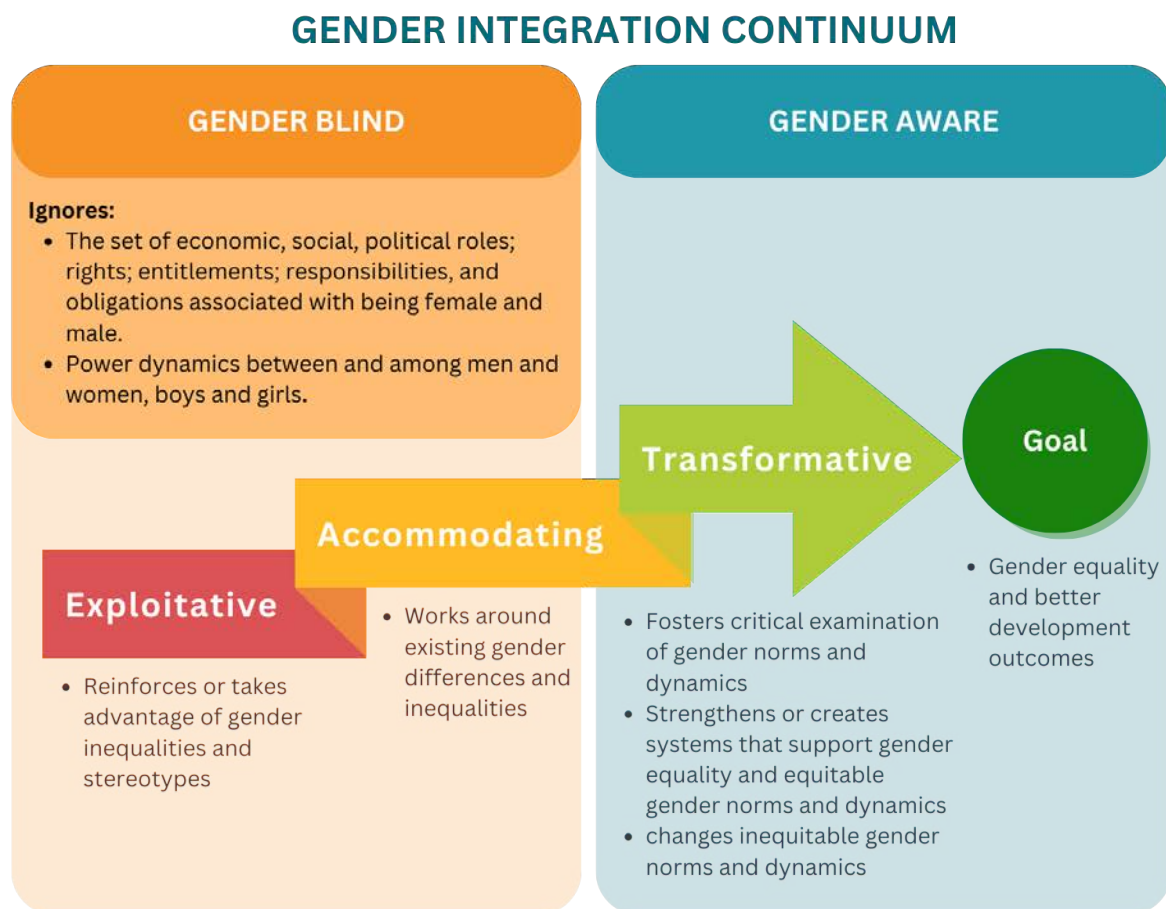


STEPS

1. **Explain the aims:** Briefly explain this activity will help participants to understand the Gender Equality Continuum and how to apply it into their programmes.
2. **Facilitator input:** Ask participants to find a partner to work with. Give each participant the Handout: The Gender Equality Continuum.
3. **Pair work:** Ask the pairs to look at all the details of the continuum carefully. They should try to:
 - Understand all the key concepts (definitions provided on handout)
 - Understand how the continuum works

- See how it can be applied to their work
4. **Facilitator input:** Ask a few pairs to share their insights. Once they have shared, explain the continuum by:
 - Providing an overview: The Gender Equality Continuum Tool is a framework used to assess and analyse gender considerations within programmes, policies, and interventions. It helps organisations and practitioners understand where their efforts fall on a spectrum from **gender-blind** to **gender-aware**, and from **exploitative** to **transformative**.
 - Clarifying the key concepts (definitions are included on the handout).
 - Explaining the continuum with relevant contextualized examples.
 5. **Wrap up:** Explain that the goal is to move along this continuum towards gender equality and better development outcomes. By understanding where an intervention lies on this spectrum, organisations can design more effective strategies for promoting gender equality.

HANDOUT: THE GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM



Gender Blind: Programmes that overlook gender differences and dynamics, failing to consider the roles, rights, responsibilities, and power relations associated with being female or male. They operate under the assumption of a level playing field, disregarding gender disparities.

Gender Aware: Programmes that recognize and examine gender considerations, focusing on the dynamics between men and women, as well as boys and girls. While not inherently transformative, they demonstrate a greater awareness of gender issues.

Exploitative: Programmes that reinforce or exploit gender inequalities and stereotypes, perpetuating harmful norms and power imbalances.

Accommodating: These programmes acknowledge existing gender inequalities but do not actively challenge or seek to change them, merely working around the differences.

Transformative: The most progressive approach, transformative programmes promote critical examination of gender norms and dynamics. They aim to create equitable gender norms, challenge existing inequalities, and strengthen systems that support gender equality.

ACTIVITY 2:

SCENARIOS TO PIN ON THE GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Develop skills to analyse programme scenarios and pictures using the Gender Equality Continuum.



Time: 60 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Print several copies of the Handout: *Scenarios and Pictures* and cut them out (each group will receive one scenario or picture).
- Copies of the Handout: *The Gender Equality Continuum* for each participant



FACILITATOR NOTE:

If possible, use scenarios and pictures that participants are using in their own programmes.



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims.**
2. **Buzz groups:** Put the participants into buzz groups of four to five people and give each group a scenario or picture. Ask them to analyse the picture or scenario based on their

understanding of the Gender Equality Continuum and agree on where it fits on continuum with their justification.

3. **Presentations:** Ask each group to present their scenario / picture, their explanation of where it fits on the continuum and their justification for their choice. Allow feedback questions or contributions from the other participants.

During the discussion, participants be reminded of examples from their own programmes which are “exploitative”, “accommodating” or “transformative”. Encourage them to bring as many of these examples into the discussion as possible and explore them together.

After all groups have presented, make sure the scenarios and pictures are in the correct places where they belong on the continuum. If a group has placed a scenario/picture incorrectly on the continuum, ask guiding questions so that participants themselves can find the error and locate it correctly.

4. **Debrief:** Ask participants if they feel more confident about:
 - Using the Gender Equality Continuum
 - Assessing whether a piece of media (written or visual) is “gender blind” or “gender aware”
 - Evaluating whether a piece of media (written or visual) is “exploitative”, “accommodating” or “transformative”
5. **Wrap up:** When we use tools like the Gender Equality Framework, it changes how we think about our existing programmes, as well as new programmes we develop. The “gender-aware” light is switched on within us, and we become part of making the change towards integrating gender awareness into all of our development work.

HANDOUT: SCENARIOS AND PICTURES

Scenario 1:

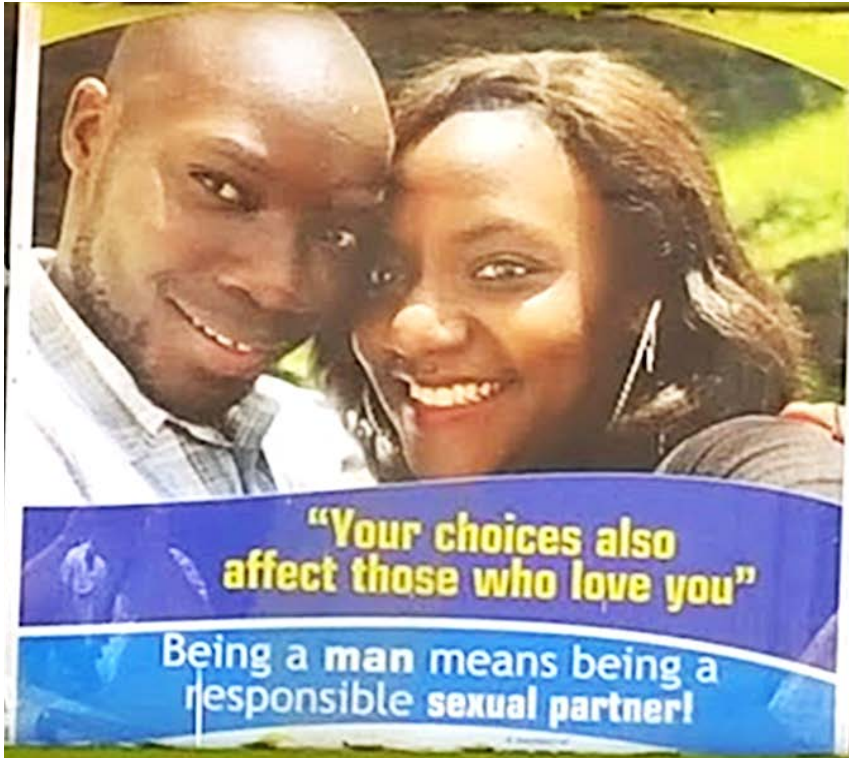
The goal of a social marketing campaign in an African country was to increase condom sales. The campaign capitalised on social and cultural values that focus on male virility, sexual conquest, and control in order to sell condoms. It depicted macho men having multiple female partners and using different coloured condoms with them.

Scenario 2:

The goal of a project in Ethiopia had an objective of providing mobile phones and mobile reproductive health services to women who had limited mobility in their communities. These women had to have their husband's permission to leave their compound. The project helped women access services without leaving the compound.

Scenario 3:

In Ghana, a municipal strategic planning process was proceeding with no participation from women. Before continuing with the planning process, project staff decided to conduct gender workshops for women and men in target municipalities to create a public space for women's voices and to challenge norms about women's participation in public policy.



ACTIVITY 3:

REVIEWING YOUR PROGRAMME USING THE GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Use a checklist to locate their own programme along the Gender Equality Continuum.
- Explore key strategies and steps needed to move the programme along the continuum toward a gender transformative approach.



Time: 120 minutes

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION



- Programme documents (ask participants to bring these)
- Handout: Checklist: Locating your programme on the Gender Equality Continuum – for each participant
- Handout: *The Gender Equality Continuum* --. for each participant (at end of Activity 1).

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Ask participants in advance to the following programme documents: current strategy or plan; quarterly and annual reports; work plans; and monitoring and evaluation results.



STEPS

1. **Explain the aims.** Begin by explaining the purpose of the activity – to locate their own programmes on the Gender Equality Continuum.

2. **Individuals / small groups:** Distribute the Gender Equality Continuum handout. Ask participants to take a few minutes to review the continuum, recapping on the differences between gender blind, gender aware, exploitative, accommodating, and transformative programmes.

Then, ask them to think about their current programmes in relation to the continuum, using the programme documents they brought with them.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

Participants from the same organisation can work together in a small group.

3. **Applying the checklist:** Give each participant a copy of the Handout: *Checklist: Locating your programme on the Gender Equality Continuum*. Explain that the checklist contains questions that will help them assess their programmes concerning gender issues.
 - Ask them to work through the questions based on their understanding of their programme to check if it is “gender blind” or “gender aware” and to decide on where it falls on the continuum.
 - Encourage discussion within small groups about where they believe their programmes fall—whether they are gender blind, gender aware, exploitative, accommodating, or transformative.
 - If their programme is classified as “gender-blind”, and classified as “exploitative” or “accommodating”, what steps or strategies could they use to move the programme along the continuum toward a gender transformative approach?
4. **Plenary discussion:** Invite participants to:
 - Share their findings and classifications, discussing any insights or challenges they experienced.
 - If their programme is classified as “gender-blind” and classified as “exploitative” or “accommodating”, what steps or strategies could they use to move the programme along the continuum toward a gender transformative approach.
5. **Wrap-up:** Summarise key points from the discussions and encourage participants to put into action any practical steps they can take to move their programmes further along the Gender Equality Continuum.

HANDOUT: CHECKLIST – LOCATING YOUR PROGRAMME ON THE GENDER EQUALITY CONTINUUM

	Questions	Tick what is appropriate		
		Yes	No	Unsure
1	The project defined a set of economic, social, and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements, and obligations associated with being female and male			
2	Does the project activities address power dynamics between and among women and men, girls, and boys?			
If you answered NO to any of the questions above, or are unsure, your program may be gender blind. (Refer to explanations in activity one on gender blind and Gender Aware.) It is recommended that you go through each step in your project development to thoroughly assess how to make your program gender aware.				
Once you decide if your program is gender blind or gender aware, now it's time to consider where the project sits along the gender continuum: exploitative, accommodating, or transformative.				
	Questions	Yes	No	Unsure
1	Does the current program or activities reinforce or take advantage of unbalanced gender norms, roles, and relations?			
2	Does the current program or activities provide privilege to men over women, boys over girls?			
3	Does the current program or activities work to change inequitable gender norms and dynamics?			

If you answered YES to any of the above questions, your program, and most likely your strategy, messages, and activities, are gender exploitative and doing more harm than good. A program that is gender exploitative can intentionally or unintentionally reinforce or take advantage of gender inequalities and stereotypes in pursuit of a project outcome, or whose approach exacerbates inequalities.

	Questions	Yes	No	Unsure
1	Does the current program or activities acknowledge the role of gender norms and differences in the uptake of health services, working around or trying to adjust the plan to compensate for these norms and inequalities?			
2	Does the current program or activities try to limit harmful impact on gender relations but does not seek to change the underlying structures and norms that perpetuate inequalities?			

If you answered YES to any of the above questions, your program, and most likely your activities, are gender accommodating.

A program that is gender accommodating may recognize gender and its importance but rather than addressing the gender differences and inequalities, activities are designed to work around them. Your program is supporting a gradual shift toward challenging rigid gender norms and inequalities.

	Questions	Yes	No	Unsure
1	Does the current program or activities allow for critical examination of gender norms and dynamics?			
2	Does the current program or activities strengthen or create systems that support gender equality?			
3	Does the current program or activities work to change inequitable gender norms and dynamics?			

If you answered YES to any of the above questions, your program, and most likely your activities, are gender transformative. It is recommended that you go through the program to identify if there are parts that you can strengthen.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Co-Facilitation

Annex 2: Holding Safe Spaces and Creating a Container for Powerful Emotions

Annex 3: Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) Activity Guide

ANNEX 1: CO-FACILITATION

The role of a facilitator is to be a "guide on the side"— facilitating learning and providing resources rather than simply conveying knowledge and information; facilitating the experiential process, not delivering; leading the discussion, not directing it. The facilitator is a leader, midwife, shepherd – scaffolding the process for learners. The facilitator emphasises what participants themselves bring, drawing out their ideas and life experiences, to enrich and enliven the learning process.

Co-facilitation, on the other hand, involves a dynamic collaboration between two or more facilitators working together and with a group to enable and boost group and individual learning outcomes.

MODELS OF CO-FACILITATION

Alternate Leading (also called Tandem): Each facilitator takes turns to lead part of the session. The alternating roles are decided during the planning meeting(s). Those not facilitating sit and communicate using pre-arranged signals.

Shared Leading (also called Seamless): Facilitators can chip in and flow in and out as per the need of the session with lead roles changing back and forth between/among them. When one facilitator is leading the session, the other facilitator(s) come in to add to the point(s) made or give an example at the prompting of the lead facilitator.

Asymmetrical Leading (also called Role-differentiated or Unequal): Facilitators have different levels of responsibilities and roles that are not necessarily equal but that are collaboratively agreed upon during planning.

WHY CO-FACILITATE?

Co-facilitation is practical and effective when dealing with a large group (of adult learners)

- It eases handling of sensitivities around certain topics.
- Two or more heads are better than one, and co-facilitation enables the sharing of responsibility and promotes diversity of perspectives, energies, experiences, skills, and styles.
- Co-facilitation lessens the burden for a sole facilitator, and ensures a more thorough, stimulating, and in-depth training for the group.

- Co-facilitating with individuals of different genders supports gender equality and fosters a more inclusive environment.

CO-FACILITATION: DOS AND DON'TS

Before Delivery

DO: Build a cohesive team: Create a friendly and professional relationship within your team. Establish open lines of communication with your co-facilitator to align on goals, roles, and expectations.

DO: Plan together: During planning meetings, ensure that you draw on and plan around the best of the team's experience, expertise and facilitation skills and styles to match the needs of the group. Agree on a running order of the session and clarify roles and tasks. The team should plan clearly how to work together. Who will facilitate first? What tasks will the others perform when not facilitating? How often will you exchange roles? What discreet signals will you use to communicate to each other during delivery? How will you handle differences of opinion or conflict?

DON'T: Don't assume roles: Avoid presuming responsibilities based on previous experiences; instead, discuss and agree on each person's role beforehand to ensure clarity and avoid confusion.

During Delivery

DO: Follow the plan: Follow the agreed upon running order during delivery and use agreed communication signals.

DO: Support each other: Stay present and focused when the other person is facilitating by communicating/ backing each other up during the facilitation process.

DON'T: Don't take over: Resist the temptation to contradict, take over, and speak over your co-facilitator. Follow the pre-arranged signals and harmonize any differences during breaks.

DON'T: Avoid public disputes: Publicly criticize or argue with your co-facilitator during sessions. This will only damage your relationship and make your team members lose trust in the team. If necessary, talk during the break or quietly ask them to take a break so you can discuss and resolve issue(s)

After Delivery

DO: Reflect together: After the session, hold a debrief to discuss what worked well, what could be improved, tips the next session

DON'T: Don't neglect follow-up: Avoid skipping the follow-up process; ensure that you both review the session's outcomes and plan for future improvements together.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid in Facilitation

- Pretend you understand when you don't—acknowledge confusion and ask for clarification.
- Dominate the discussion or allow unproductive dialogues—facilitate balanced participation.
- Give direct advice instead of presenting a range of options—encourage decision-making.
- Use your organizational position or activism to assert authority—facilitation is about equality.
- Use the group as therapy for your personal issues—keep the focus on participants.
- Be judgmental—maintain an open, non-biased environment.
- Talk too much—let participants voice their thoughts and ideas.

ANNEX 2: HOLDING SAFE SPACES AND CREATING A CONTAINER FOR POWERFUL EMOTIONS

When participants share their own personal stories or memories – especially around issues like human rights violations, misuse of power, gender discrimination and abuse, difficult relationships with parents or partners – they may experience powerful, overwhelming feelings of fear, anger, pain, sadness. It is very important to create a safe space container for the participants during these types of activities. In this container, we prepare the safe space with care, allow the participants to express their feelings fully, and then debrief or close the container.

Here are some suggestions on how to do this:

- Form an intimate circle with participants in which they feel safer to share their experiences.
- Create an atmosphere in which participants are validated for sharing personal emotional and intimate details.
- Listen respectfully, without judgement or pressure. If there is no pressure, only those who are ready to share will do so.
- For those who share traumatic experiences, acknowledge that they were able to press on and continue with their lives despite facing such adversity.
- If a participant breaks down and cries in the group, allow him/her space to express that emotion. Consider saying something like, “Thank you for being brave and trusting us with that story. I’m sure many of the people in this room have had similar experiences and feel like you do now.”
- Others in the group may also feel the need to support this person. Encourage them to do so if it feels appropriate. Often, these moments are what bind a group together.
- Explain that you are available and willing to have a private conversation after the session.
- Link anyone who may need it to professional counselling services, especially if they need to talk more about their experience, do deeper healing work and find a place of integration within themselves.
- Remember to acknowledge, affirm and be genuine.
- Repeat the confidentiality commitment.
- If a participant spends too much time with a story, find an opening and gently say: “It sounds like you have a lot of experiences to share with the group. Thanks for sharing with us. Do others have any experiences they would also like to share?”

- Recommend to all that they take care of themselves (especially immediately following the session), take time to rest, take a shower and drink enough water. Tell them it is completely normal to feel sad, tearful, or emotional after remembering difficult experiences.

ANNEX 3: GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH (GTA) ACTIVITY GUIDE

Why the GTA activity guide?

A Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) is one of the core strategies that Sonke Gender Justice uses to cause change and transform society. GTA is about analysing and addressing harmful gender and social norms and underlying power relationships and structures that serve to reinforce gendered inequalities (and privileges). The approach goes beyond addressing the symptoms of gender inequality, and rather addresses the social norms, attitudes, behaviours, and social systems that underlie these symptoms and how they obstruct or facilitate access to SRHR information, education, and services, and sustain harmful practices. GTA addresses all genders as we contribute to a level playing field where everyone's rights are respected, and they can be free to enjoy their health and rights without feeling restricted by gender norms, stereotypes and other expectations that are holding them back from achieving their goals and living their lives.

Gender-transformative approaches have proven highly promising in addressing the root causes of gender inequality and Gender Based Violence and as such, Sonke partners and other different stakeholders have continued to express the need for support in the integration of GTA into their work and programming. The main concern was "How do I know that an activity has components of gender transformation?" Based on this need, as part of Sonke support to its partners, we embarked on the development of the Gender Transformative Approach -GTA activity guide. The guide is intended to.

- i. Support partners and other different stakeholder to have a GTA lens right from the onset of planning for an intervention.
- ii. Support partners to develop the practice of documenting the process of integration of GTA into interventions.
- iii. Enhance the follow-up and monitoring of GTA interventions in communities.

This GTA activity Guide was developed and tested with partners implementing gender transformative programming in Uganda, Kenya, Senegal, and Malawi under the Power to Youth program which led to this final draft. The pre-test proved that it is a tool that partners can use to support in the integration of GTA in their work. Before the finalization of this activity guide, it was reviewed by the Sonke GTA lab so that it is ready for use.

WHO CAN USE THE GUIDE AND HOW TO USE IT?

The GTA guide can be used by all partners and stakeholders that have interventions that seek to promote gender equality and cause change in society at all levels of the socio-ecological Model. The socio-ecological model has five interrelated and interdependent levels including individual, interpersonal, organizational, community and public policy. Therefore, this checklist can be used at all these levels of intervention.

The GTA Checklist can be used as a preparation tool or mechanism for an activity that seeks to cause transformation in society. This checklist is not static, rather, partners and stakeholders using it can adapt it to fit within their context of intervention.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Harmful practices are persistent actions/ behaviours/traditions that are founded/ grounded on discrimination based on one's age, sex, gender among others (National Female Genital Mutilation Centre). For example, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM), gender-based violence (GBV), child marriages, femicide, wife inheritance, etc. These practices often cause health, physical and / or psychological harm and suffering to the person affected and the entire community. These harmful practices are a violation of human rights (UNICEF).

Norms are rules and/or expectations/standards that are socially enforced in society and are usually acceptable by a group with shared values. These norms can either be positive or negative. What people or community judge to be important in their lives, then they value it, and it becomes the accepted principles then they standardize it.

Target Audience refers to the people (or the different stakeholders) that the planned activity is intending to reach. The target can be direct (immediate group that the activity intends to reach) or indirect (secondary group that will be reached by the planned activity) These can also be gatekeepers and individuals with power who have influence to make change. These may include youth, men, women, adolescent girls, political leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders, teachers, police, judiciary, people living with disabilities, non-binary, etc.

Human Rights are the freedoms that everyone is entitled to by the mere fact that they are human beings. These include political and civil rights as well as economic, social, and cultural rights. Human rights are universal, and it protects everyone equally without discrimination based on gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, race, ethnicity, or any other status in society (Human Rights Watch).

Rights Holders are everyone that has the fundamental freedom and right to claim their legitimate entitlements from the duty bearers.

Duty Bearers are the ones who are responsible to protect and ensure the realization of human rights. Respective governments are the primary duty bearers under the human rights framework. Governments have obligations to put in place equitable laws and systems that enable individuals to enjoy their rights, and to seek judicial recourse under the rule of law when rights have been violated. Each level of the socio-ecological model has duty bearers e.g. at family level, parents (fathers, mothers, custodians) are duty bearers to ensure that the rights of the family members are protected.

Power is the ability to influence actions/ behaviours/ change/transformation in society. This power can be expressed as power over, power with, power to, and power within.

GTA ACTIVITY GUIDE OUTLINE

Note: Select an activity that you intend to implement and subject it to the following guiding questions.

Identified Activity:

1. What is the harmful practice that your activity is going to address?
 - (a) What norms are being addressed in this activity?
 - (b) What are the changing trends in the harmful practice?
2. Who are the intended participants for the activity?
 - (a) Why them (the target identified in Question 2)?
 - (b) What kind of power do they have (the target identified in Question 2)?
3. In relation to the harmful practice and norms mentioned in Question 1, which human rights are being violated?
 - (a) Who are the right holders? and
 - (b) Who are the duty bearers?
4. How is the activity addressing power dynamics? (*Consider the age, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, etc. of the identified target for the activity*).
5. How are men and boys being involved in the activity if necessary? (*Could be directly or indirectly*) *Note that men and boys are also affected by these harmful norms, and they need to be engaged so that they can support each other to address these norms.*
6. How is the activity empowering Women and Girls? (*Consider components of amplifying their voices, enhancing their choices, and agency*)
7. How have you responded to intersectionality? (How does gender intersect with other identities i.e., race, social class, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age, mental or physical disability, etc. and
 - (a) How these intersections contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege.
8. What exercises/ strategy/ tools are you going to use to create critical awareness i.e., ensuring that you support the target audience to examine, analyse, challenge the harmful practice, and negative gender norms as you are implementing the activity.
9. What is the desired change you anticipate?
 - (a) Is the desired change easy to achieve? Give reasons for your answer.
10. What is the follow-up plan after the execution of the activity?

