

Session 6: Gendered relationships and Power - Norms, Practices and Behaviour



6.0: Introduction

Participants	Women and Men separately
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reflect on how gender norms can influence the lives of women and men, girls and boys. 2. To increase the awareness on gendered power differences within the family and their negative effects. 3. To encourage men to commit to positive, respectable, notions of 'being a man'.
Duration	2 hours
Preparation	Review advance information about participants; revise/expand questions accordingly and prepare questions on flipcharts.

Activity 6.1: Review of home practice

Time | 20 minutes

S T E P S

- 1 | Welcome everyone for session six.
- 2 | Review home practice by asking individuals to share their experience (*Encourage them to share the rules they developed with the adults and children in their homes according to their respective age brackets*).
- 3 | If participants had problems, ask others to suggest ways that these might be overcome.
- 4 | Encourage parents to continue doing the home practice.

Activity 6.2: Understanding gender stereotypes

Time | 1 hour

What the facilitator needs to know: (Write these key definitions on a flipchart, pin it on the wall in advances)

Gender

This refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female, the relationships between women and men, and girls and boys. These attributes, opportunities, and relationships, are socially constructed and learned through the socialization processes.

Gender norms

These are social principles that govern the behaviour of boys, girls, women and men in society. They restrict identity into what is considered to be appropriate. For example, household chores are much more likely to be performed by girls than boys.

Gender roles

These are socially determined/ constructed roles for men, women, girls and boys and can be affected by factors such as education or economics. These roles originate from culture and they are learned. They may vary widely within and between cultures and often change over time.

Gender stereotypes

These are generalized assumptions or views of society about characteristics possessed, or roles that ought to be performed by men/boys and women/girls. Often, these are negative or wrong.

Gender discrimination

Refers to a situation where an individual or group of people is treated differently because of being male or female

Sex

Sex refers to the biological differences between males and females. Sex is universal (*factors are the same around the world*). We are born male or female and this doesn't change (*with the exception of surgery*).

Sex roles

These are roles assigned to men and women by their genetic/physiological construction. Women and men are born with characteristics that make them perform these roles.

The table below gives a summary of examples of sex roles and gender roles

Sex roles

- Making a woman pregnant
- Giving birth
- Breastfeeding

Gender roles

- Caring for children
- Looking for money
- Decision making
- Fetching water

Objective


1. To reflect upon how gender norms can be harmful to both women and men, girls and boys

Materials | Flipchart, masking tape and markers

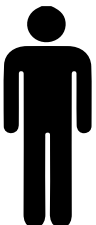
STEPS

- 1 | **Provide** an overview of the session objectives.
- 2 | **Give** an overview of the activity by explaining the objective
- 3 | Explain the key definitions that you wrote on the flipchart earlier (**Allow 5 minutes for questions**)
- 4 | **Invite** two volunteers and give each of them a flipchart to draw a large box leaving enough space to write outside the box. Then **ask** one to draw a large picture of a woman inside her/his box, and the other a large picture of a man inside her/his box.
- 5 | When everyone is seated, ask the group about what comes to mind when they hear the words “being a man”, then “being a woman.”
- 6 | Write the responses, in step 5 above, besides each picture inside the box.
 - a) Ensure some of the following words are included for men: “father”, “decision maker”, “bread winner”, “provider”, “strong”, “courageous”, “violent”, “leader”, etc. and for women: “mother”, “weak”, “carer” etc.
 - b) Also ensure some biological traits are included as well, such as “beard”, “Penis”, “breasts”, “pregnancy”, “birth” (**The boxes may look as illustrated below**)

FEMALE GENDER BOX

Physically Strong	Assertive	Confident	Hard working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being humble • Being shy • Being respectful to others • Being submissive • Being given • Being clean • Being faithful • Being soft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't insist • Being patient • Being welcoming • Being kind • Being attractive • Having breast • Produce children • Responsible for domestic chores 		
Plays Sports		Asks Questions in Class	
Takes care of the family including paying fees		Being patient	
Participates in domestic work			

MALE GENDER BOX

Caring	Gentle	Participates domestic chores
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple sexual partners • Leaders • Providers • Being strong • Being aggressive or courageous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being hard working • Being wise • Having authority • Provider • Being a protector • Don't cry • Don't have mercy 	
Clean	Faithful	Respectful
Speaks and dresses modestly		

7

Introduce the picture below to the participants and ask;

- a) What are the gender roles and sexual roles in the picture? (**Give 3-5 minutes for this**)



8

Ask participants to reflect on the responses and identify the natural/biological and social/learned characteristics in each box (**challenge participants to appreciate characteristics that are shared by men and women**)

9

Ask the questions below:

- a) What attributes can a woman take from both boxes that can make her a better wife and mother? (**Write these outside the woman's box**)
- b) What attributes can a man take from both boxes that can make him a better husband and father? (**Write these outside the man's box**)
- c) What have you learnt from this activity? (things outside the boxes that both men and women can do for the wellbeing of their families)

Emphasise: *If we are to have a happy family, it is important for women and men to move out of their boxes with the attributes that make them better men and women. They also need to learn the attributes in the opposite sex's boxes that are positive. However, care should be taken not to use this as an opportunity to exploit others.*

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Present the picture below and ask parents to discuss what they learn from the picture.



Close the activity by highlighting some of the points;

1. Men and women are born with many similarities but as they grow, their family and society define for them the behaviour and attitudes appropriate for them.
2. We need to take the good attributes of men and women that are outside the box if they make us better fathers and mothers to our children.
3. Although sex roles do not change over time, gender roles can be changed.
4. In families, where differences and similarities between men and women are appreciated, **and where gender roles are shared between male/female**, there is less stress and violence, and there is greater love and respect, especially for fathers.

Please note that there are two activities (6.2a and 6.2b) that achieve the same objective. Kindly implement one.

Activity 6.3a: The New Planet

Time | 50 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know

- a) In this activity, ensure that for a group of twenty (20) participants you have a total of 20 identity cards per "right", totaling to 80 cards.
- b) For identity cards, six (6) will be for the star, seven (7) for the sun, and seven (7) for the moon.
- c) Power is the ability to influence or control a person/group of people to perform a specific activity. Everyone can be affected by the abuse of power, however it affects mainly women, girls, and children.
- d) Abuse of power can make individuals vulnerable to gender-based violence and mistreatment thus, negatively affecting couple relationships and relationships between parents and their children.
- e) Men should be willing to change and adopt non-violent ways of 'being a man'. However, often the unquestioned norms about appropriate male and female behaviour, men's desire to assert control, and their fear to lose male respectability in the family and society, greatly undermine their efforts.
- f) Men can choose to build a culture of respect in their families. They can use their leadership role to build a positive image of being a man by showing love to their families and setting clear rules.

Objectives

1. To increase awareness on gendered power differences in the family and how they are reinforced by society
2. To encourage men to commit to positive, respectable, notions of 'being a man'

Materials

Flipchart, masking tape and markers. Ensure that you have all "rights" cards (*physical safety, respect from others, opportunity to make own decisions, and control over your sexuality*) and identity cards (sun, moon and star).


Explain that

- a) In the next 50 minutes, participants will play a game/ activity called the **New Planet**.
- b) The objective is to understand the current relationships in most of our families.
- c) This will help us discuss the benefits of committing to positive, respectable, notions of 'being a man' and 'being a woman'.

STEPS

- 1 | **Provide** an overview of the session objectives.
(**Explain the following instructions to participants before starting the exercise**)
- 2 | Let participants move to a spacious area within or outside the room
- 3 | Inform participants that they are now citizens of a new planet. They are happy and friendly people, with equal rights for everybody.
- 4 | Instruct participants to “greet each other” or “sing a song that is familiar to every one” (**Encourage them to continue singing but they should stop each time you clap your hands**).
- 5 | Let them sing for a few seconds as they greet each other, then clap your hands and inform them that as citizens of this planet, they each have the right to four things – **Physical Safety, Respect from others, Opportunity to make own decisions, and control over your sexuality**. So each participant will pick 4 cards each representing a right.

**Control Over
Your Sexuality**

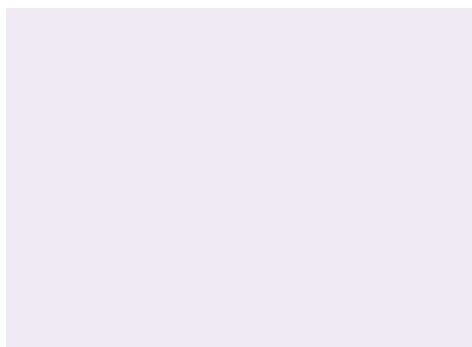
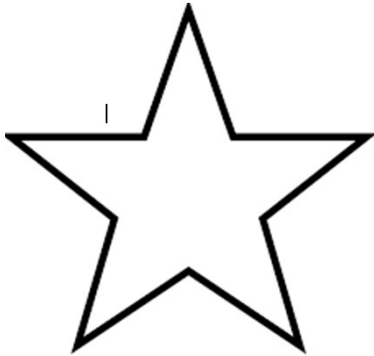


**Respect
from others**

**Opportunity to make
your own decisions**
- 6 | Let them continue singing or having fun by doing different things like greeting and introducing themselves to each other.
- 7 | After one minute, clap and announce the distribution of the "rights".

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Law 1: Tell them that they will now be divided into three groups: **The Sun, The Moon** and **The Stars**. Give out the cards to the participants and inform them that these are their “**Identity Cards.**”



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Law 2: Let them continue singing. Clap after one minute and officially declare that you are now the president of the new planet. Inform them that as the president you have officially made **the Sun** to have more power than **the Moon** and **the Star**.

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Ask them to continue moving around and greeting or singing. **Clap** and direct the Sun to **take one** by one of the “Moon’s four ‘rights’” away. Once there are no rights left, take the Identity card. *(The ‘Stars’ can continue talking to each other silently about what is happening with the ‘Moon’ and the ‘Sun’ but they should not interfere. Also the ‘Moons’ are free to pretend to fight for their rights but should later give in to the demands of the ‘Sun’).*

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When each of the “Moons” loses their identity card, they **MUST stand frozen** in place for the rest of the game.

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Finally, when the groups are back to their seats, **ask these questions** to facilitate a discussion:

- a) How did you feel as a 'Sun', 'Moon' and 'Star' before the 'Sun' was given more power? (*explore how each of them felt and write these on a flipchart*)

The 'Moons'

- a) How did you feel when the '**Suns**' were given more power?
- b) How did it affect your behaviour and relationship with the 'Sun'?
- c) How does being a moon relate to everyday life?

The 'Suns'

- a) How did you feel when given the most power?
- b) How did you feel taking away the rights of others?
- c) How does being a sun relate to everyday life?

'The Stars'

- a) How did you feel not doing anything?
- b) In our daily lives, are we silent observers of situations in which some people take away the rights of others?
- c) What are the usual barriers to intervening in those situations?
(Encourage participants to discuss real issues in their family where subordinates like children, women and men are powerless when rights like talking on phone, visiting or talking to other family members are denied!)

Activity 6.3b: Persons and Things

Objectives

1. To increase awareness on gendered power differences in the family and how they are reinforced by society
2. To encourage men to commit to positive, respectable, notions of 'being a man'

STEPS

- 1 | **Provide** an overview of the session objectives.
- 2 | Have six volunteers prepared to role-play.
- 3 | **Let** the six volunteers pair up. Let one person in each pair, offer to act as a 'Thing' and the other to act as a 'Person'.
- 4 | Let the rest of the participants be "observers."
- 5 | Read the following instructions to the group:
 - ⊙ **'THINGS'**: You cannot think, feel, or make decisions. You have to do what the "persons" tell you to do. If you want to move or do something, you have to ask the person for permission.
 - ⊙ **'PERSONS'**: You can think, feel, and make decisions. Furthermore, you can tell the 'things' to do anything to make you happy or satisfied.
 - ⊙ **'OBSERVERS'**: You just observe everything that happens in silence.
- 6 | Let each pair carry out their roles as 'Things' and 'Persons' and encourage them to exchange roles. (**Give 5 minutes for each pair**).
- 7 | Once every one has role played, use the following questions to facilitate a discussion.
 - a) How did you feel as "persons"?
 - b) How did you feel as "things"?
 - c) How did you feel as "observers"?
 - d) Ask participants to identify the "persons", "things" and "observers" in real life?
 - e) In your daily lives, do other people treat you like "things"? Who? Why?
 - f) In your daily lives, do you treat other people like "things"? Who? Why?
 - g) For the "observers": How did you feel not doing anything?

- h) What are the consequences of a relationship where one person might treat another person like a “thing?”

Close the activity by emphasising some of the following:

- a) In our families/ communities there are many unquestioned differences and inequalities between women and men, parents and children*
- b) Abuse of power can make individuals vulnerable to gender based violence and mistreatment, and this negatively affect family relationships*
- c) Both women and men can adopt non-violent means of resolving conflict without losing respect, and instead become admired role models*
- d) Men will still be respected as real men if they commit to using their power positively by protecting their family from abuse and supporting the family.*
- e) Men can choose to build a culture of respect in their families. They can use their leadership role to love, support and advise their wives and children. This can benefit them because they gain more respect at home and in the community.*