

# GENDER MODEL FAMILY MANUAL

*for Community Workers*



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## *for community workers*



Jeneba



Lasanah



Sarah



Baby Miriama



Abu

*Follow the pictures to see a day in the life of the Braimah Family*

## Acknowledgements

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**6:00 a.m.** See Jeneba cooking, while Lasanah is pounding. Abu is washing some clothes, while Sarah is sweeping the compound. Everyone is helping to get ready for the day

# Preface

In 2003, within the context of the Eastern Corridor Livelihood Security Promotion Program (ECLSPP), SEND established a revolving loan scheme to support women involved in petty trading activities. Even though all the women agreed to repay the loan, the default rate was more than 80%. The reasons women gave for defaulting were taking care of family needs such as paying school fees or hospital bills, and husbands borrowing from them and refusing to repay. When husbands were interviewed, the majority of the men said that they were poor and did not understand why SEND gave loans to only women.

That response inspired me to develop the Gender Model Family as a training program to enable husbands and wives to live in an equitable and just manner. Gender Model Families challenge traditional ways in which husbands and wives live together in Northern Ghana. When there is equity between men and women, the society can see the economic and social benefits.

As this manual shows, the Gender Model Family program sensitized and mobilized husbands to live equitably with their wives and to ensure that their boys and girls are given the same opportunities to develop their potential. Through training and follow-up support, men and women are equipped with knowledge and skills to make the transition from a traditional family to a Gender Model Family.

Besides SEND Ghana, other development organisations in West Africa, such as SEND Sierra Leone, RADA Sierra Leone and Oxfam Ghana are promoting the Gender Model Family. The impact of GMF on the participating families and their communities include: fair division of labour, strong family bonds between wife, husband and children, better access to family resources by women and children, and more consultative and joint decision making.

With this manual, SEND and its partners are responding to the growing interest in the Gender Model Family by development organisations. This manual is a resource for the many organisations that have approached SEND West Africa for support to replicate and mainstream GMF in their programs.

Siapha Kamara  
CEO, SEND WestAfrica



# Introduction

This step-by-step implementation manual is for organizations that want to introduce the Gender Model Family program to their communities. The communities should be places where there are existing development programs, and those who volunteer to be GMFs should be participants in them. They should benefit from being involved in development programs in different ways.

This is what men and women in Sierra Leone say about their expectations of being a Gender Model Family.

- "      fostering "unity" and "harmony" in their family and community
- "      joining the path to "development" and starting a "modern life"
- "      being better parents and "training children together"
- "      engaging in business opportunities in which they "both trust each other"
- "      being "happy together" and enjoy "better relationships."

The concept of the Gender Model Family is "motivating" because it means that "life has to change completely."

Gender relations of power and control are changed when men and women become models for gender equality, recognizing that men and women should enjoy the same rights and opportunities.

When couples were asked about what it means to be a "model," they said that they:

- "      must "watch themselves" because the community is "watching them"
- "      are "special" and "unique" because they are "doing something different"
- "      are an "example," doing "something good;" "doing the right thing"
- "      are a "light" for the community and need to "keep shining"
- "      are "agents of change."

**This manual takes you through the 7 steps of realising a Gender Model Family program:**

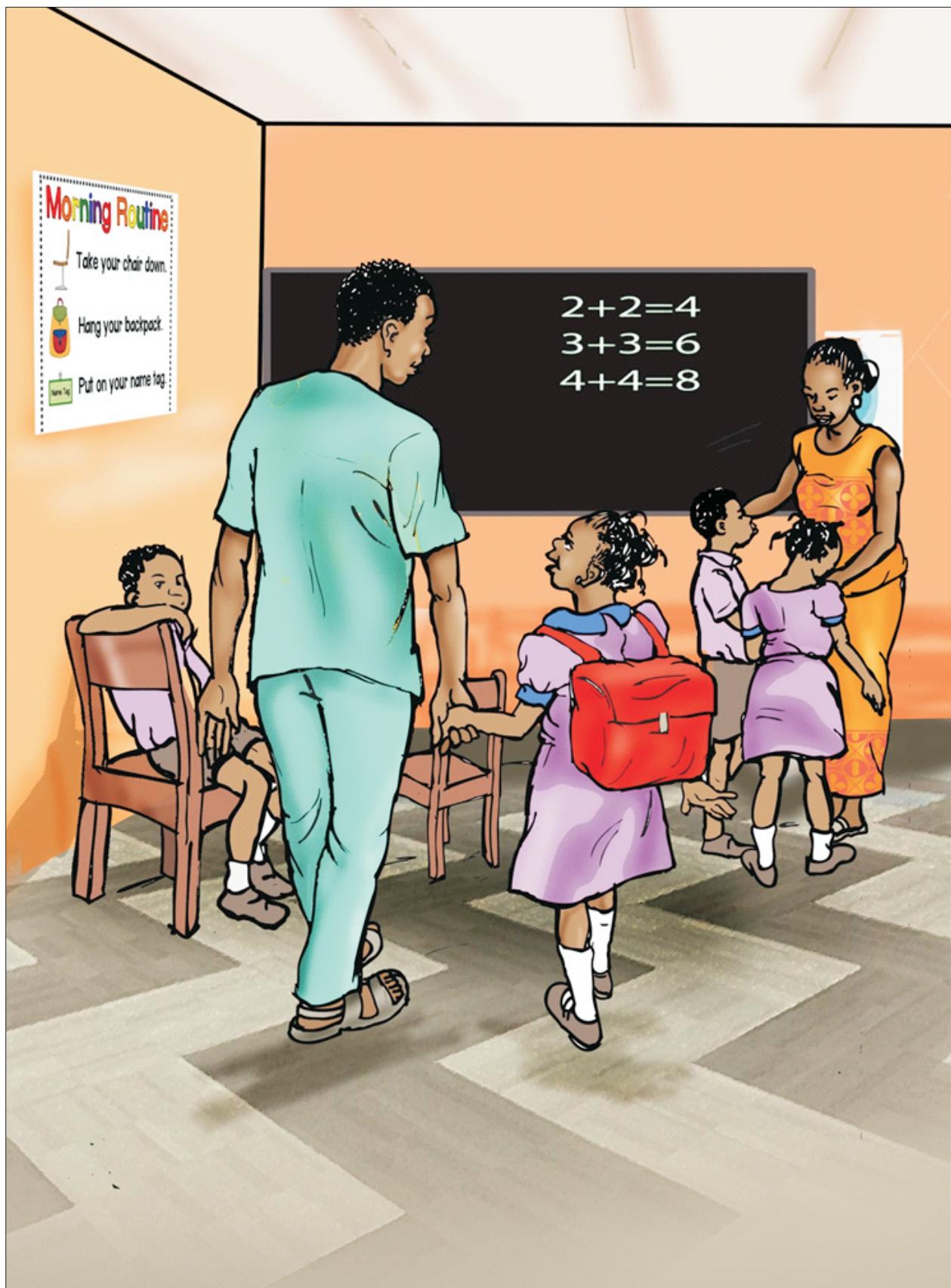
Step 1	Community Sensitization
Step 2	Recruitment and Registration
Step 3	First Training
Step 4	Second Training
Step 5	Monitoring
Step 6	Monthly Meetings
Step 7	Experience Sharing

Use the manual's illustrations, which are also available in a poster, as visual aids. If you have "before" pictures or photos, you can use them to show the contrast before and after the Action Plan.

The schedule below shows how an organization would plan to carry out a Gender Model Family program step by step.

## Step-by-Step Implementation Calendar

Activity	Resources Required	Location	Responsible Person	Timeline	Remark
1. Community Gender Sensitization Meeting	Fuel	Community	Facilitator	Beginning	Meeting conducted
2. Recruitment Meeting for existing program target groups Registration of volunteers– interested members (20-25 families in one area)	Fuel, Stationery	Community	Facilitator	Two days later	Meeting conducted
Meeting with registered members to verify the list and agree on date of training	Fuel, Stationery	Community	Facilitator	Two days later	Registration completed and the list filed
3. First Training of GMF and preparation of action plans (2 days)	Fuel, flip chart, market, exercise books, pen	Training site	Facilitator	A week later	Verification conducted and the date of training agreed upon
4. Second Training: Follow-up Refresher Training (1 or 2 days)	Fuel, flip chart, market, exercise books, pen	Training site	Facilitator	After six month	Training done and GMFs prepared their action plans
5. Monthly Monitoring and reporting	Fuel, flip chart, markets	Community	Facilitator	Monthly	6 training topics to choose from
6. Monthly meetings held by GMFs themselves	None	Community	Community GMF focal person	Monthly	With or without staff, focal person coordinates
7. Quarterly Experience Sharing	Fuel, flip chart, markets	Community	Facilitator	Quarterly	Challenges and how to overcome them; 10-12 families together, same as those who did their training and action planning together



**7:00 a.m.** See Lasanah bring Sarah to the classroom. Both girls and boys go to school.

# **What Do We Mean By Gender Model Family?**

**A Gender Model Family** is made up of a husband, wife and their children who want to be a model for change and transformation in society by challenging traditional notions of gender roles and responsibilities.

## **Gender Model Families believe that:**

- Each member of the family has equal rights and thus is entitled to opportunities for empowerment. Empowerment means that both men and women together can take control and improve their lives. It means that neither the man nor the woman exerts power over the other, but that they make decisions together, and share resources and their benefits.
- Anyone in the family can help out with cooking and cleaning, running a business or making financial decisions.
- Everyone in the family should have access to and control of resources, including education, which will help them to improve how they make decisions and direct their lives.

Having a number of Gender Model Families in one place transforms the community. More women and men question some of the reasons for their actions and want to make changes.

## **What are the major changes related to work and decision-making that happen after a family becomes a Gender Model Family?**

- Household tasks are done, but not according to whether you are a woman or girl. Everyone helps out with all tasks.
- Men, women and children make joint decisions about the family.
- Women have more opportunities to become involved in community management and leadership.
- Children's new work patterns influence other children tasks in their homes.
- Men and women experience a renewed commitment and love for each other

## **What are the major benefits that Gender Model Families experience after making these changes?**

- The burden of work for women and girls is reduced because men and boys are sharing tasks
- Men and women experience a greater capacity to earn money because they have pooled their resources and are sharing the work. GMFs are better off financially
- Peaceful co-existence – family tensions are reduced because of a new and positive start
- Women's self-esteem has increased because women and their roles are valued in the family and community

- GMFs are admired and respected by community members because they have proven that families can experience peace and unity
- Better parenting for all children; both girls and boys are in school

## **Gender Model Families' Statement of Commitment**

In September 2013, Gender Model Families from Kailahun and Pujehun Districts in Sierra Leone came together to discuss how their lives had changed since they adopted new gender equitable behaviours in their families. This is their statement of commitment:

*"We the participants of the experience sharing workshop in Gender Model Family held in Kenema, Sierra Leone believe that the Gender Model Family has changed our life situation for the following reasons:*

*The GMF has enabled husbands and wives, boys and girls to share tasks and activities in the home, on the farm and in business. Because we organize the work to share the benefits within the family, we have become successful in whatever we do. As a result, our neighbors have regard and respect for us.*

*Now together we make decisions about all aspects of our lives, planning with our families for a better future. We decide together to invest our resources in ventures that will benefit all family members. All our children go to school. As a result, our leaders look up to us and ask our advice on how to copy what we do.*

*Our new future starts with good relationships, peace and freedom for all members of our family especially our children. As a result, our leaders ask us to spread the message of the GMF because it is a source of new hope and development."*

## **Who Can Be Gender Model Family Facilitators? Who Can Use This Manual?**

This manual is written for community leaders and field staff, who want to guide processes for gender equity in their communities.

Facilitators say that they must be Gender Models and their families, Gender Model Families. "We cannot isolate the Gender Model Family from our personal lives." In short, facilitators believe they should "walk the talk." Ideally, two facilitators, a man and a woman, should be involved. Community members appreciate the personal experiences of the facilitators and are convinced it will work if they put in the effort.

## **What attitudes, values and behaviours should GMF Facilitators have?**

- Should be models themselves
- Gender-sensitive
- Respectful and respected
- Approachable and patient

## **What knowledge and skills should GMF Facilitators have?**

- Understand gender concepts and issues within community
- Good communicators and listeners
- Good facilitation skills
- Able to manage and resolve conflict
- Know the community dynamics, culture and language of the area



## **Step #1: Preparing Communities for Gender Model Families**

When choosing communities in which to start the Gender Model Family program, select places where you have a good working relationship within the context of other projects. Communities should be adjacent to each other to support the growing movement of Gender Model Families. These communities should know your organization and trust your intentions toward them.

You should know the existing community structures and work through them to promote the Gender Model Family program.

1. For example, as per protocol, you may have to speak to the chief and elders at the beginning.
2. Then you may work through village development structures, such as the VDC or a WATSAN committee. You want to work with committees that include your key stakeholders. Have a meeting with them to explain the Gender Model Family concept and ask them to organize a community sensitization meeting to generate interest.
3. Hold a community sensitization meeting. In order to introduce the idea of the Gender Model Family, you may have to start with basic gender sensitization. You could include gender analysis exercises such as:
  - a. Men's and Women's Daily Activity Schedule
  - b. Who benefits from the activities on the men's schedule, the women's schedule?
  - c. Who has access to family resources?
4. Through doing these gender analysis exercises, men and women should come to the following conclusions:
  - a. each day women do more activities in the family than men
  - b. women's activities, more than men's, benefit men, children and elderly
  - c. women have less access to the family resources than men.
5. Divide the group into men and women to discuss:
  - a. actions that women and men could undertake to reduce women's work load
  - b. how to spread the benefits of men's activities to other members of the family
  - c. how to increase women's access to family resources to assist her in her daily activities
6. Discuss the group report in plenary and conclude with definition and benefits of gender model family. Men and women become aware that through the Gender Model Family it is possible to be fair and strengthen equality between men and women.

Gender model family involves a man and a woman who agree to live together in an equitable and fair manner: share domestic chores; make decisions together, commit to providing the same opportunities to their boys and girls. Finally, they are willing to tell their experiences to their neighbors and community.

7. End the session by asking whether any family wants to enroll and be trained as Gender Model Family. Ask what challenges they think that Gender Model Families will encounter in their community. How will they work together to enlighten others and to have the freedom to perform their new roles? After the discussion, list all those who are interested. Thank the group for participating in the meeting. Ask interested members of the community to come to a recruitment meeting in a few days' time. Ensure that they understand that husbands and wives need to attend the next meeting together.

**Here are some Frequently Asked Questions about how to start a Gender Model Family program in your community:**

How do you know that the community is ready to become involved with the Gender Model Family program?

- The community has already been involved in a number of development projects; for example, health, water and sanitation, agriculture.
- These projects have had a gender equity component; for example, women's groups, literacy, village savings and loans.
- Men and women in the community have had gender sensitization and awareness.
- The community seems interested in new opportunities for gender equity.
- There are families in the community who you have already identified as potential gender models.

Which types of leaders are required to be involved in decisions about which programs enter into the community?

- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities
- Religious Leaders
- Women's Leaders, Youth Leaders

What types of leaders are most supportive of the idea of GMF?

- Women's Leaders, Youth Leaders

What types of leaders are most sceptical of the idea of GMF?

- Traditional Authorities and Religious Leaders, particularly if they are not literate

Who do you approach first about bringing the idea of Gender Model Families into the community? How do you know that they will support the idea?

- Chiefs must be approached first, if only for the sake of protocol.
- Then existing project stakeholders (community leaders, group leaders, project champions) because they will know who will support the idea or not. They will also identify the "trouble makers" so you know from whom to expect resistance.

How do you introduce the entire community to the idea of GMF?

- Some call a general community meeting called by the Chief.
- Others introduce Gender Model Families within existing groups; for example, the credit union or the farmers' group.

How do you explain the idea of GMF to the group?

- Start off with Gender Education, especially by doing exercises such as the Daily Activity or Access and Control Profiles. If men and women participate in identifying the differences, they will see the inequities clearly.
- Explain that the Gender Model Family addresses gender inequities at the family level, but by starting with the family, the entire community will be influenced.
- Give examples of how society will benefit:
  - Men, women, boys and girls will share in the labour of the household, allowing more opportunities for business ventures and rest
  - Men and women will share resources and decision-making
  - Boys and girls will go to school
  - Better communication and relationships in the family promotes a peaceful household.

What questions does the group ask?

- “Will the women remain respectful and submissive to men?”
- “Will men be working for women?”
- “Are men going to enter into 'power-sharing' with men?”
- “Will our customs and Traditional Authorities be eroded?”

What is usually the initial reaction to the idea of Gender Model Families?

Women are happy, but men are not because they are afraid to be controlled by women. However, the training clears up that perception. Men are skeptical until after training. Generally, it is a welcome relief to women. “Men hardly identify themselves with their wives.”

What incentives have been given to GMFs to encourage them?

- No incentives are given.
- Men and women participate because they want another way of life; their reward comes in the benefits of being a Gender Model Family.



## **Step #2: Recruitment and Registration of Gender Model Families**

At the recruitment meeting, depending on size of community your aim is to get 5-10 families to volunteer. This means that you don't choose the families to participate – they self-select.

Families can only self-select if they meet the criteria. Emphasize that it is a family decision, not just one person's choice. Say that you do not want those who are not qualified.

These are the criteria for selecting GMFs:

- Married
- Resident in community
- Either the man or the woman, or both, should be a participant in a development project
- Either the man or the woman, or both, should have been a participant in a gender sensitization training
- Husband and wife both agree that they will jointly volunteer
- Husband and wife are both willing to undergo training together
- Committed; ready to learn and change

Also, explain to potential recruits that they need to recruit new Gender Model Families in their community. In fact, they are expected to recruit 3 GMFs after the first year. These new families will attend monthly GMF meetings with them.

Recruiting GMFs is a challenge for staff. Families need to volunteer, without any promise of rewards, apart from their own expectation of the benefits. Thus, it takes time for potential recruits to think about it.

**The types of people who volunteer to be Gender Model Families vary:**

Head man / woman, chief, elder
Religious leader
Farmer
Tailor
Blacksmith
Miller
Carpenter
Mason
Trader
Nurse
School teacher
Traditional Birth Attendant
Literacy leader
Community committee executives and members
Community committee members

1. After the general community meeting and the meeting with interested families about GMF criteria, families have two days to think about whether they would like to participate in the program.
2. The next step is registration of volunteers. You should expect to register 20-25 families in one area (2-3 communities).
3. Afterward, have a meeting with registered members to verify the list and agree on the dates for GMF training.

## **Step #3: First Training of Gender Model Families**

The main purpose of the first training is to have couples draw up their Action Plans for being Gender Model Families.

Husbands and wives should come to the training session together. Ensure that they sit together. Husbands should introduce their wives, and wives their husbands by telling about some of their favourite things, such as foods. This helps couples reflect on how well they know and love each other.

**This is the schedule for the first training of gender model families:**

<b>Day 1:</b> Registration, Prayers, Introductions Benefits of Gender Model Families	<b>Day 2:</b> Registration, Prayers, Review of previous day
Training Topic #1 Daily Activity Profile	Training Topic #3 Access and Control Profile
Training Topic #2 Triple Roles of Women	Training Topic #4 Action Planning

Follow the instructions for each training topic



## **Training Topic #1 – Daily Activity Profile**

The Daily Activity Schedule is a gender analysis tool. The schedule shows the amount of time that men and women spend on their various tasks and responsibilities. It can show the differences between women's and men's tasks, indicating their “division of labour.”

By comparing women's and men's workload, the types of activities in which they engage, and the time that they have available, Gender Model Families can decide how they will share tasks to be more fair to all members of the family.

### **Instructions**

1. Divide participants in same-sex groups of women and men.
2. Ask groups to fill out the Daily Activity Schedule. Men fill in their schedule according to their common experience. Women fill in theirs, according to their common experience.
3. Women and men come together to present their Activity Schedules.

### **Daily Activity Schedule**

TIME	ACTIVITY
5:00am	
6:00am	
7:00am	
8:00am	
9:00am	
10:00am	
11:00am	
12:00pm	
1:00pm	
2:00pm	
3:00pm	
4:00pm	
5:00pm	
6:00pm	
7:00pm	
8:00pm	
9:00pm	
10:00pm	
11:00pm	

### **Questions to ask Gender Model Families**

1. Separately examine the schedules for men and women, and then compare the following:
  - times of the day with the most/heaviest work
  - tasks that take the most time
  - tasks that are the most physically demanding
  - times in the day when there is less work
2. What are the differences between the men's and women's responses?
3. What aspects of men's and women's schedules do they have in common?
4. Is this situation fair to all members of the family?
5. What could be done to make the situation fair for all members of the family?



**12: p.m** Abu is too young to go to school, so he helps his mother and father. Lasanah and Jeneba are coming back from the farm with heavy loads. They help each other. Baby Miriama is on her mother's back.

## Training Topic #2 – Triple Roles of Women

When men and women understand the Triple Roles, they are able to see the differences between women's and men's roles and responsibilities. By comparing women's and men's roles and responsibilities, Gender Model Families can decide how they will share them to be fair to all members of the family.

Here are the definitions of the triple roles:

- **Reproductive role** - involves caring for and maintaining the household and its members including bearing and caring of children, food preparation, water and fuel collection, shopping, housekeeping and family health care
- **Productive role** - involves producing goods and services, e.g. in the agricultural and informal sectors
- **Community management role** - involves organizing social events and services for the well-being of the community, e.g. volunteering, participation in groups, ceremonies, celebrations and community improvement activities.

### Instructions

1. Define the triple roles of women: Reproduction role, Production role, and Community management role.
2. Divide the participants into same-sex groups of men and women to fill in the roles identification table. Men fill in their table according to their common experience. Women fill in theirs, according to their common experience.
3. Women and men come together to present their roles identification tables.

**Roles Identification Table**

Roles	Women	Men
<b>Reproductive Roles</b>		
Care of the household		
Maintenance of the household		
Bearing children		
Caring for children		
Preparing food		
Care of the household		
Maintenance of the household		
Bearing children		
Caring for children		
Preparing food		
Collecting water		
Collecting firewood		
Marketing		
Housekeeping		
Family health care		
Others (specify)		

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
<b>Productive Roles</b>		
Farming		
Making products for sale		
Providing services for sale		
Trading (buying and selling)		
Other (specify)		
<b>Community Management Roles</b>		
Ceremonies		
Social events		
Local politics		
Development work (environment, roads)		
Volunteer work (charitable causes)		
Taking care of the sick		
School management committee		
WATSAN committee		
Others (specify)		

## **Questions to ask Gender Model Families**

1. Separately examine the tables for men and women, and then compare the following:
    - Who has reproductive roles?
    - Who has productive roles?
    - Who has community roles?
  2. What aspects of men's and women's tables do they have in common?
  3. What are the differences between the men's and women's tables?
  4. Is this situation fair to all members of the family?
  5. What could be done to make the situation fair for all members of the family?

## Notes

## Training Topic #3 – Access and Control

Access and Control Profile is a gender analysis tool. It is used to show how family assets and resources are used by men and women.

**Access** is the ability to use a resource but not necessarily to have control over it.

**Control** is the ability to make ultimate decisions about the use of resources. Control means you can take independent decisions about how to use a resource, even to sell it.

The Access and Control Profile builds on the analysis of the Daily Activity Schedule and the Triple Roles Identification Table by going a step further. The profile shows who has access to and control of resources.

### Instructions

1. Divide participants into same-sex groups and provide them with a copy of the Access and Control Profile.
2. Ask participants to indicate who has access and control over each resource and benefit.
3. Where both men and women have access and/or control, indicate who has more with a plus sign (+).
4. Women and men come together to present their access and control profiles.

**Access and Control Profile**

Resource / Assets	Access		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Land				
Equipment (Tractor, Machines, Ploughs)				
Tools and Small Farm Implements				
Farming Inputs (Seed, Fertilizer)				
Small Livestock (Goats, Sheep, Pigs)				
Large Livestock (Cattle, Oxen)				
Fowl (Chicken, Guinea Fowl)				
Other Animals (Specify)				
Labour				
Cash				
Credit				
Savings				
Outside Sources Of Income				
Financial Independence				
Education				
Primary Education				
Secondary Education				
Extension Services				
Appropriate Technologies				
Asset Ownership (Machines, Equipment, Bicycle, Radio, Furnishings Etc.)				
Political Power, Prestige				
Ability/Freedom To Pursue Personal Interests				
Leisure				

## Questions to ask Gender Model Families

1. What resources do women have access to and control over which men do not?
2. What resources do men have access to and control over which women do not?
3. Do women and men have equal access and control over resources or does one group have an advantage over the other? Which group? Why?
4. Is this situation fair to all members of the family?
5. What could be done to make the situation fair for all members of the family?
6. Also analyse assets of boys' and girls' in the family, and who is advantaged.

## Training Topic #4 – Development of Family Action Plans

After the new GMF recruits have completed the Daily Activity Schedule, Roles Identification Table and Access and Control Profile, they have a good idea of how tasks and roles are divided between men and women. They also see that those patterns are unfair. The Family Action Plan allows men and women to decide how to share tasks to be fair.

**Here are some examples to show how families decided to share tasks:**

<b>Bendu and Foday's Action Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• last person up has to make the bed</li><li>• split the job of sweeping inside and outside the compound</li><li>• share the job of caring for the children</li></ul>	<b>Kadiatu and Suleman's Action Plan</b> <b>Suleman will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• help pound cassava leaf and rice</li><li>• fetch water</li><li>• bathe the baby every night</li></ul>
<b>Musu and Lahai's Action Plan</b> <b>Lahai promised to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• take time for quality time with Musu</li><li>• stop "roaming"</li><li>• plan and discuss family matters</li></ul>	<b>Mamanya and Mauri's Action Plan</b> <b>Mauri changed his life by:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fetch wood</li><li>• go to the market</li><li>• cook</li></ul>

The Family Action Plan can also be used as a monitoring tool, so that field officers can check to see whether the family is doing what they planned.

### Instructions

1. This is not a group exercise. Each family (man and woman) has a copy of the Family Action Plan.
2. Ask each family to list all the tasks involved in the daily activity schedule.
3. Ask each family to discuss how they will share the tasks from now on. The man checks off what he will do to help his wife. They both decide how the boys and girls will assist.
4. Once the family has discussed the plan for sharing tasks, they should write it down.

### Family Action Plan

Man	Woman	Boys	Girls

**Example:**

<b>Man</b>	<b>Woman</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
Call the family to sensitize them (girls and boys) Assist in cooking Assist in fetching water Assist in laundry Assist in ironing Assist in sweeping	Call the family to sensitize them (girls and boys) Redistribute work plan in the home	Assist in cooking Assist in fetching water Assist in laundry Assist in ironing Assist in sweeping Play with smaller children	Assist in cooking Assist in fetching water Assist in laundry Assist in sweeping Bathe smaller children

**Questions to ask Gender Model Families**

1. The family action plan helped you to plan how to share tasks among family members. What changes did you make from how the family used to do its tasks? What are the changes for the:
  - Man
  - Woman
  - Boys
  - Girls?
2. When you go home and discuss this plan with your children, how do you think they will respond to their new tasks?
3. Is the Family Action Plan fair to all members of the family?
4. How do you think the Family Action Plan will change your family?





**2: p.m** Jeneba and Lasanah are sharing how much money they made from their businesses. They are going to put their money into their credit union accounts. They want to save to get a loan to build their own house.

## **Step #4: Second Training of Gender Model Families**

**The main purpose of the second training is to follow up on the Action Plan and to discuss any problems and challenges they are having in meeting their commitment.**

Husbands and wives should come to the training session together.

**This is the schedule for the first training of gender model families:**

<b>Day 1:</b>	<b>Day 2:</b>
Registration, Prayers	Registration, Prayers
Discussion Topic #1 Sharing Household Work	Discussion Topic #4 Sharing in Control of Resources and Decision Making
Discussion Topic #2 Sharing in Family Planning	Discussion Topic #5 Sharing Parenting Roles and Care for Children
Discussion Topic #3 Sharing Working in Farming and Business	Discussion Topic #6 Sharing Community Management and Leadership Positions

Depending on the time you have available, you could reduce the number of topics covered, saving them for monthly meetings.

To help you facilitate, use the questions in **green** to have a discussion with new GMFs. The answers are in **blue**. Facilitate to assist participants with their answers.

### **Discussion Topic #1 -- Sharing Household Work**

Sharing household tasks is one of the most important aspects of being a Gender Model Family. It is the basis for all other changes.

#### **1. What is household work?**

Household work is done mainly in and around the home.

#### **2. What types of tasks are involved?**

These are some of the types of tasks involved.

- Cooking
- Taking care of children
- Fetching water
- Laundry
- Sweeping

Can you mention other tasks?

#### **3. Who does household work in most homes? Women? Girls? Men? Boys?**

Typically, most of the household work is done by women and girls. Sometimes, men help with heavier work like house repairs. Some men even use their bicycles or carts to fetch firewood and water from far off places. Sometimes, boys help around the house with brushing and sweeping.

4. What are the main questions we need to ask about whether that situation is fair to all members of the family?
  - Is it fair for women and girls to perform most of the household tasks? Are men and boys not part of the family?
  - Do women and girls have time to do things other than housework? For example, do women have leisure time or time to rest during the day? What happens when women are overworked?
  - Do girls have time to go to school, and if they do, do they have enough time to do their homework in the afternoon and evening?
  - Do men spend enough time bonding with their small children? They love their children – shouldn't they also play with them and care for them?
5. What are the things that could be changed to make the situation fair?  
Men and boys could start to help women and girls with household chores.
6. What attitudes and behaviours should a GMF have toward household work?
  - Everyone in the family should know what is involved in performing household tasks. That is, how much time they take, how many times they need to be done during the day, how heavy and hard they are to do.
  - Men and boys should share household tasks.
  - Men and boys should respect and value the contributions of women and girls.
  - Men and women together should discuss the tasks and how they should be shared.
  - Women and men should have a free-flow of communication, listening to and consulting each other, settling minor family disputes and making decisions together.

## 7. Tell a story about a GMF who has successfully shared household tasks.

There was a lady named Hawa who was active in her community. She was a member of the Rural Commercial Women's Association and the local credit union. She also joined the Women in Government Network in her area. The other members nominated Hawa as the secretary because she had completed secondary school and could write and speak English. She loved her husband, John, very much – they had been married for 25 years and had three children. The children were mostly grown up, but one was still in school. Her husband was a farmer and quite successful. He was not as educated as his wife, but this didn't bother him. John loved and admired his Hawa. They were very happy together. They volunteered to be a Gender Model Family.

The district elections were coming up and members of the network were encouraging Hawa to run for a position in the Council. She and John discussed whether this was a good idea and how it would change their family life. She was afraid that John would not agree for her to get involved in politics, but actually John believed that she was the perfect person to join the Council. John said aloud that Hawa could represent women's issues better than anyone. Hawa felt encouraged by John's confidence in her, but was concerned that John would be left with too much household work if she had to go to meetings all the time. When she shared her feelings with John, he said that she shouldn't worry. He and the children would gladly do all the household work while she was doing her civil duty. After all, they were a Gender Model Family!



**3: p.m** Later in the afternoon, Jeneba and Lasanah talk to another couple. Bintu and Alusine want to become a Gender Model Family because they see that Jeneba and Lasanah are happy living and working together with their children.

*"I want to congratulate GMF. After I became a member of the GMF, my perceptions about certain things changed and I started disseminating the information about GMF concepts. This contributed to my being elected as councilor for ward 8 in Upper Bambara chiefdom, Kailahun District." Hawa Moriba*

Now that you have heard the story, here are some questions to see whether you have understood the benefits of being a GMF.

- What characteristics of a GMF are illustrated in the story?
- Do you think that the changes that Mary and John have agreed to will continue?
- In the future, how will Mary feel about the changes? How will John feel?
- How do you think the children will feel about taking on more household work once their parents tell them about their plans?
- What do you think the community will feel about these changes to Mary and John's roles and responsibilities?

## **Discussion Topic #2 -- Sharing In Family Planning**

All Gender Model Families should make major decisions about the family together. One of these decisions is family planning.

### **1. What is family planning?**

Family planning is when a man and woman decide together how many children they will have and the amount of time or spacing between each child.

### **2. Who makes family planning decisions in most homes?**

In most homes, the man decides:

- When and how to have sex
- Whether or not to use a family planning method
- How many children they should have
- How many children of which sex they should have

### **3. What are the main questions we need to ask about whether that situation is fair to all members of the family?**

- What happens when the man makes all the decisions about having babies?
- For what reasons is the woman not involved in decisions about having babies?
- How do women feel when they are left out of decisions about having children?
- Is it fair to the children if there are too many babies in the family?
- Who has the most tasks related to child care in the family? Men or women?

### **4. What are the things that could be changed to make the situation fair?**

Men and women could make the decisions about when to have children together.

### **5. What new attitudes and behaviours should a GMF have toward family planning?**

- Men should understand that women have rights and their own ideas about having a family.
- Men should understand that having a family involves both the man and the woman making decisions together.
- Men and women should be open and transparent with each other about their hopes and concerns for their family.
- Men and women should educate themselves on modern forms of contraception, and not depend on traditional methods.
- Both the man and the woman should go to family planning clinics together for counselling.

6. Here is a story about a GMF who has successfully shared family planning decisions.

**This is Lucy's story:**

We already had two children, but I wanted to have more children right away because I was still young. However, my husband Morie told me we should stop for now. I disagreed because I thought that I should continue to give birth to babies as long as I could. I learned these ideas from our parents who are very traditional and have certain cultural beliefs about having children. When we started having children, they were happy, but when we stopped they were very sad. They said that it's dangerous to stop having children. I didn't want to disappoint my parents.

Morie explained to me that he had heard about family planning on the radio. Family planning methods would allow us to control the time when we want to have more children. Morie wanted to make sure that our two children had a healthy start to life. He also wanted to have enough resources before having more children. He reminded me that we had promised each other that all our children would go to school. We were able to calmly discuss these issues together, and made the decision to go to the family planning clinic the next day.

The GMF training has helped us realize that family planning was the best decision. Because we spaced our children they are growing up well. We now have four children.

Now that you have heard the story, here are some questions to see whether you have understood the benefits of being a GMF.

- What are the benefits of family planning?
- How do you think that GMFs who practice family planning feel about the future?
- What are the benefits of family planning for women, men and children?
- Do you think that family planning helps families to be better GMFs?

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## Discussion Topic #3 – Sharing Work in Farming and Business

Gender Model Families share productive work, such as farming and business. In this way both men and women can have access to and control of resources and their benefits.

1. What types of tasks are involved in farming and business?

<b>For farming:</b>	<b>For Business:</b>
• Brushing	• Prepare market grounds
• Planting	• Sell products
• Weeding	• Banking

2. In most homes, what farming and business tasks do men do? Women? Boys? Girls?

Typically for farming activities, men and boys will do the brushing because it is considered to be the heaviest work. Women and girls will do the planting and weeding. However, on women's land, women have to do all tasks, even brushing. Women have to help out on men's farms, but the men usually do not help out on women's farms.

For business activities, women and girls usually prepare the market ground and sell the products. However, when it is time to deal with the money, men do the banking.

3. What are the main questions we need to ask about whether that situation is fair to all members of the family?

- Why are some tasks performed more by men or more by women?
- Who does the greatest amount of work?
- Who does the heaviest work?
- Who benefits most from the work?
- What does this division of work mean for how we value the role of men and the role of women?

4. What are the things that could be changed to make the situation fair?

- Men and women could share the work
- Men and women could work together
- Boys and girls could exchange tasks
- Hire more labour to take off some of the load
- Time- and labour-saving devices could be introduced for women

5. What new attitudes and behaviours do we want to see in a GMF?

- Men and women collaborating in business activities
- Men and women planning expenditures, prioritizing and budgeting together
- Women participating with men in decisions about where to site a farm, what size it should be, and what crops to plant on it
- Men and women open joint bank accounts
- Men and women both join credit union to save money

6. Tell a story about a GMF you know who has successfully shared work in farming and business.

Bendu and Foday were married for fifteen years. They had three children. Every day, Bendu would go her way and Foday would go his way. They did not communicate about what they were doing. Foday did not think that it was his wife's concern where he went each day, and although Bendu did not like this situation, she had no choice but to accept it. So Bendu would take her goods to the market and do her petty trading. Foday would go to the lake and fish for the day.

One day, Foday had an opportunity to buy a bigger boat at a good price. He did not have the money to buy the boat, so asked all his friends for a loan. No one would give him the money. Someone else bought the boat.

When Foday went home that night, he was so discouraged that instead of going out to the local drinking bar, he just went home. When Bendu saw Foday looking so sad, she had to ask him what was wrong. Foday told her that he had such a great chance to buy a bigger boat, but just couldn't find the money.

Bendu said to him, "Why you foolish man! I could have given you the loan you wanted. Why didn't you ask me?" Foday was surprised, "I didn't think that you were able to save money from your petty trading. Why did you keep your profits a secret from me?" Bendu said, "We never share information about our businesses. We do everything separately." Foday responded by saying, "Maybe you could help me with my fishing business and I could help you with your petty trading business."

Bendu replied, "That's what I've been waiting to hear for a long time. We can help each other, but we also need to be open and honest with each other about money. Maybe we should open a joint bank account." Foday agreed, "Yes, let's open a joint bank account and also join the Gender Model Family program. I think that becoming a GMF will help us understand how to share our resources so that the whole family will benefit."

So on the same day, Bendu and Foday signed up to become a Gender Model Family and opened a joint bank account. That night, they gathered the children together and discussed

how they could all share in the family business. By putting their assets together and by openly sharing all the information about their business, Bendu and Foday were able to figure out how to make better profits. Bendu was good at estimating profits, whereas Foday was good at finding new customers. Before long, Foday discovered that fishing was not as profitable as trading. He gave up fishing and joined Bendu in trading. Together they took their goods to surrounding markets. Soon they had so many customers that they had to expand their business. Every weekend the children helped their parents. They even had to hire extra helpers during the week.

Now Bendu and Foday enjoy their life together as a Gender Model Family. They say that they are working harder than before, but the work is more enjoyable because they are working together. They set their goals for family life and for business together. All the children go to school and are performing well. Bendu proudly displays the new earrings and necklace she got as a present from Foday. She looks toward him with a shy smile and says, "We never knew we could love each other so much."



**6: p.m** Before supper, Jeneba rests and feeds Mariama, while Lasanah washes some clothes.

Now that you have heard the story, here are some questions to see whether you have understood the benefits of being a GMF.

- What were the changes that Bendu and Foday made to their businesses?
- Did they have more income? If so, how do you explain the increase?
- How do you make decisions about the use of your assets?
- Who makes the final decisions about money and whether to spend or save it?
- How do you expect your farm or business to change after you became a GMF?

#### **Discussion Topic #4 -- Sharing in Control of Resources and Decision Making**

Gender Model Families share in decisions about their resources, education, business and all other matters affecting their lives.

##### **1. What is decision making?**

Decision making is choosing something or taking an action among different options. It is making up your mind to do one thing or another.

##### **2. How does decision making affect how resources are controlled in the household, and in business and farming?**

The person who makes the decision is at an advantage. Everything is in favour of the person who takes the decision. If one person takes a decision and it's the wrong one, all the family members will suffer. The person who takes the decision should be accountable to the others.

##### **3. Who makes the major decisions in most homes?**

- Men make decisions related to family planning, schooling, farming, business, use of household items (radio, motorbike, TV, bicycle), health care, inheritance, festivals, and others.
- Men make major decisions because they have control of most things – they decide how and when things are used.
- Women also take decisions, but they may not be major decisions. They can use things, but they cannot control the decision of how and when things are used.

##### **4. What are the main questions we need to ask about whether that situation is fair to all members of the family?**

- If the man makes all the major decisions, what happens to the wife and children? Are they consulted at all?
- Do most decisions promote the welfare of the family?
- What resources do women and children control?

##### **5. What are the things that could be changed to make the situation fair?**

- Man and woman should share in decision-making collectively with children.
- All members of the family should make suggestions to inform the final decision.
- Encourage questions and feedback from everyone in the process of making a decision.

**6. What new attitudes and behaviours do we want to see in a GMF?**

- Men and women should both have control over resources, that is, they should both be able to make decisions about when and how resources should be used.
- All family members should be able to talk freely without fear.
- Everyone should be able to contribute ideas and get constructive feedback on them.
- When a decision is made jointly, everyone should commit to it and do their best to play their part in carrying it out.

**7. Tell a story about a GMF you know who has successfully shared in decision-making.**

Ibrahim and Hawa have four children. One day, the youngest child, Mariama, became ill with fever and diarrhea. Hawa didn't know what to do. She was afraid to ask Ibrahim for money to go to the clinic. That night, Ibrahim noticed that Mariama was crying and crying. He couldn't stand to hear his daughter crying, so he gave Hawa some money so that she could take Mariama to the clinic the next day. Hawa wondered whether the small amount of money was going to be enough.

The next day, Hawa took Mariama to the clinic. Just one look at her and the doctor said that Mariama would need malaria treatment. Hawa told the doctor that she had no money to buy the medicine. The doctor told her to ask her husband for the money and come back later on. She murmured to herself, "My husband makes all the decisions. He has all the control. All I can do is beg, and now I am desperate."

She rushed back to her village. Afraid of what Ibrahim would say if she asked for more money, she went to her neighbour, Amie. Amie and her husband Nelson had just joined a program called Gender Model Family. She thought that Amie could advise her about how to approach Ibrahim for more money.

Quickly she went to Amie. Both Hawa and Mariama were crying at this point. Amie said, "What's the matter, Sister Hawa?" Hawa cried, "Mariama is sick and Ibrahim won't give me enough money to treat her." Amie called, "Nelson, come quickly. You need to find Ibrahim and tell him that he needs to make better decisions for his family."

Nelson found Ibrahim walking home. "Ibrahim, your youngest child needs treatment. You need to make decisions that are good for your family, and most importantly, you need to make those decisions with Hawa. Why don't you become a Gender Model Family like me and Amie. You will be at peace."

So Ibrahim went to Hawa. "Hawa, is Mariama alright now?" "No," Hawa said, "she is not OK. I need to buy some malaria treatment for her." Ibrahim said, "I have the money. Let's go to buy the treatment together. Don't worry. You and I will make decisions about the family together. I want us to trust each other so that we can have peace, like Nelson and Amie. We need to become a Gender Model Family. Do you agree, Hawa? Will you make this decision with me?" Hawa said, "Yes, of course, we'll be a Gender Model Family. But now, let's go and get the treatment for Mariama."



**6: p.m.** After supper, all the children get a bath. Jeneba and Lasanah enjoy playing with the children as they prepare to end the day.

Now that you have heard the story, here are some questions to see whether you have understood the benefits of being a GMF.

- At the beginning of the story, how did Ibrahim make decisions for his family?
- Did Hawa have decision-making powers like Ibrahim?
- What are the benefits of making decisions together?
- How do women and children feel when they are involved in decision-making?
- Now that Hawa and Ibrahim have decided to become a Gender Model Family, how do you think their home has changed? How do you think they are managing their resources?

## Discussion Topic #5 – Sharing Parenting Roles and Care for Children

Gender Model Families share tasks, including the care of children. Men and women both need to be involved in caring for children, so that children can be good role models as future Gender Model Families.

### 1. What does parenting and the care of children involve?

Parenting involves raising children together as a joint responsibility between mother and father. Raising children should include showing love and caring. It also includes ensuring that children enjoy their basic rights to health and education. Children also have the right to express themselves and to be listened to.

### 2. Who does the parenting and care of children in most homes?

Women and older girls.

### 3. What are the main questions we need to ask about whether that situation is fair to all members of the family?

- Are the women the only parents in the family?
- Do children need love and care from both parents? Why?
- If fathers are not taking an active role as parents, do they miss caring for their children?
- If fathers are not involved in parenting, what are the consequences?

### 4. What are the things that could be changed to make the situation fair?

- Men could share parenting with women.
- They should have the experience of caring for and nurturing their children.
- Men should allocate quality time for both boys and girls
- Both parents should have regular “family time,” sitting with their children together, telling stories and discussing plans
- Both parents should invest in children’s future. Men, as well as women, should pay school fees, buy uniforms and shoes

### 5. What new attitudes and behaviours do we want to see in a GMF?

- Men can play with their children.
- Men should go with women when children need to be taken to the clinic. Or men can take children by themselves.
- Men should help children with their homework and keep up with their progress in school.
- Men can also participate in children’s bathing and dressing when they are very young.
- As children get older, men can discuss with children about life skills, hygiene and how to interact with other children and adults.

6. Tell a story about a GMF you know who has successfully shared in parenting and the care of children?

Pa Koroma and his wife Jebeh had four children. He was a traditional man and strict with his children. Even so, he was a faithful husband and wanted Jebeh to be happy.

One day, Jebeh became ill. Pa took her to the hospital where they did some tests and x-rays. The doctors told Pa that Jebeh would have to have a series of operations over six months and that during that time she would have to rest completely.

Pa said that he would do anything so that Jebeh could get well. He had no choice but to take on the responsibility of caring for Jebeh and the children by himself. He wanted to care for Jebeh to make sure that she would get well. But the children! He would have to learn to be a parent! Besides Jebeh, who could teach him?

The Pa thought about his neighbours Abdou and Fatmata. They had become members of a new program called Gender Model Family. He wanted to talk to Abdou and find out what it was all about.

The next afternoon, Pa saw Abdou sitting on his veranda holding his one-year old son on his lap. He thought that this was a good time to go over and talk to Adbou about being a parent. "Good evening Adbou," said Pa. Good evening, my good neighbour, Pa Koroma. How are you?" Pa sat down beside Abdou. "I'm fine, but my wife is not well. She will have to have several operations." Abdou exclaimed

"Oh sorry, Pa. "I have decided that I will take care of her and the children myself," said Pa Koroma. "Oh-ho," said Abdou, "that is a big job for you." "Yes." said Pa, "I notice that you spend a lot of time with your children. You talk to them and play with them. You even help to feed them and wash their clothes. I am not used to being close to my children, and now I think that they are afraid of me. What can I do to be a model father like you?" "Well," Abdou laughed, "relax and have fun with your children. They will soon trust you. I know that they love you. You are a good man. Would you like to sign up to be a Gender Model Family? "Yes," said Pa, "I need all the help that I can get to be able to take good care of my family. I want to plan well so that everyone feels comfortable while Jebeh is recovering."

That night, Pa Koroma and Jebeh visited Abdou and Fatmata to sign up as a Gender Model Family. Pa took a deep breath before he made the commitment, because he knew that it would change his life forever.

The next day, Jebeh went to the hospital early in the morning. When Pa came home, all four children were standing in a line in front of the house. They all had big frowns on their faces and looked like they wanted to cry. Pa said, "It's OK children. Mama will be back soon. I brought you a treat." Pa proceeded to bring out a bag of sugar cane for them to munch on. He gave little Mariatu her piece and started to tickle her until she laughed and laughed. The others were unsure, but soon they started to laugh too. Four-year old Abu climbed on his father's back, and Pa started to run like a horse. Soon all of them were running around and making noise. The children wondered, "Who is this new father?"

"Now children, we need to make some dinner. Who would like to help cook the rice?" The oldest Lasanah raised his hand. "Good," said Pa. Who will fetch water from the tap? Seven-year old Bintu and Abu raised their hands. "Good," said Pa. Everyone can help, and I'll cook the stew. After a delicious dinner, the children started to miss their mother. He started to tell a story about his childhood, when he was a boy on a hunting trip with his father. The children stopped crying and listened with attention. Soon all the children fell asleep.

The next day after the children went to school, Pa did the laundry. Then he started to cook the lunch, so that they could all eat together when the children returned from school. He had to be organized if he was to be a good father to his children. He was so busy that he did not even think about what his neighbours would say.

Later that day, after lunch, Abdou came over to see how Pa Koroma was doing as a model father. Pa said, "I never knew how much I was missing by being such a strict and distant father. Now that I see that I can be close to the children, we are all much happier. When Jebeh comes home, she will be relieved to see that all of us are working together to make sure that she gets better as soon as possible." Abdou smiled and said, "Pa, enjoy the freedom and peace that comes from being a Gender Model Family."

Now that you have heard the story, here are some questions to see whether you have understood the benefits of being a GMF.

- Why do you think Pa Koroma decided to change how he behaved as a father?
- How do you think Pa Koroma's four children felt about the change in their father?
- Do they feel more confident and able to express themselves?
- How do you think Pa Koroma's wife, Jebeh, felt about the change in her husband?
- How do you think Pa Koroma's friends will react to what he is doing for Jebeh and the children?

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## Discussion Topic #6 – Sharing Community Management and Leadership Positions

Gender Model Families can make many positive contributions to their communities. Both men and women can participate in community management and leadership.

### 1. What are community management and leadership positions?

Community management positions include leadership, but also involve volunteering to do unpaid work for a community project, such as building a clinic or fixing a road.

Men and women can be involved as leaders or members of many types of groups, examples of which follow:

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- Village Development Committee
  - Credit Union Board and Committees
  - Rural Commercial Women's Association
  - Occupations Association
  - Microfinance Solidarity Groups
  - Pump Management Committee
  - Community-led Total Sanitation
  - Hygiene Promotion
  - WATSAN Committee
  - STAR Circle
  - Community Cleaning
  - Committee for Community Bye-Law Reform
  - Councillor
  - Ward Development Committee
  - Chiefdom Speaker
  - Women in Governance Network
  - Women's Leader
  - School Management Committee
  - Community-based Organization
  - Gender Model Families
  - Organizing Funerals, Weddings, Naming Ceremonies
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### 2. Who in the household takes on most community management and leadership positions?

Men mostly take on the decision-making positions in the community. They have more power and control over what decisions are made than women.

Women are involved in community management, but take on more work and self-help activities, rather than decision-making roles.

### 3. What are the main questions we need to ask about whether that situation is fair to all members of the family and the community?

- Is the community using all its knowledge and skills by only having men as leaders?
- Who benefits more if only men are leaders?
- Do men always perform better than women in leadership roles?
- Don't women want to become leaders? Aren't they part of the community?
- Do women always accept leadership positions when they are offered them? Why or why not?

### 4. What are the things that could be changed to make the situation fair?

- More women in leadership positions
- Quotas for committees and executive positions that ensure women's representation, i.e. 50% women
- More men and women supporting women in leadership positions
- More women speaking in meetings
- More support for women in leadership positions, such as training.

5. What new attitudes and behaviours do we want to see in a GMF?
  - Girls in school
  - Women having access to literacy classes
  - Men and women deciding together how to contribute to their community
  - Men and women sharing together the benefits of being a Gender Model Family
  - Men supporting their wives to take on community leadership roles
6. Tell a story about a GMF you know who has successfully shared community management and leadership positions.

Morlai and Memuna were married for 17 years. Morlai was active on several community committees: the Village Development Committee, School Management Committee and the WATSAN Committee. Memuna admired her husband for being on so many committees. He was well respected in the community.

Memuna was not involved in committees, but she was part of several small groups because she and her friends came together to help each other in several ways. One day, the Village Development Committee decided to call a meeting for the whole community. Everyone was invited. As usual, men sat on one side, and women on the other. The children stood in the back.

Morlai, as the Vice-President of the Village Development Committee, stood up to introduce the topic of the meeting. “Good afternoon, everyone. Today we want to talk about where to site the new borehole in our village. We called you together because we want to hear everyone's opinions.”

One man, Allieu, stood up, “I think that the borehole should be located in the far field. We don't want it in the centre of the village because it will cause a lot of disturbance day and night.” Another man, Saffa who was an elder in the village, stood up and said, “I think that the borehole should be close to the road so that farmers can use it as they go back and forth from their plots.”

Morlai said, “Does anyone else have an idea where to site the new bore hole?” There was a lot of murmuring and whispering from both the men and women's sides. However, no one else stood up to give another idea. “If no one else has another idea, we will discuss these options within our committee, and call another meeting next week to let you know our decision,” said Morlai.

That night Morlai asked Memuna what she thought of the meeting. Memuna had to be honest when she said, “Morlai, both Allieu and Saffa's idea seem to be based on what is convenient for the men and their activities. However, the women are the ones who need the water most. We do the cooking, washing, and bathing of children. You need to consider the women when you make your decision.” “But how can I do that, Memuna. The women are always quiet,” said Morlai. “The women are quiet because they are never invited to contribute their ideas. There is no woman on the Village Development Committee or the WATSAN Committee. If women were represented, you would hear a different story. You need to hear the women's opinions before you make this decision. Otherwise, the women may not use your new borehole. You know, we discuss all these things in my osusu group and then

discuss them all over again in my weeding group. We women have lots of ideas and we should be part of the decision-making,” said Memuna.

Morlai thought a lot about what Memuna said. He went to his neighbours to ask them what to do. Momoh and Ndora had just joined the Gender Model Family program. Also, they were both active executive members on the School Management Committee with him. They might be able to advise him.

Momoh and Ndora were sitting on their veranda. "Hello, Morlai. Good evening," they said together. "Hello, good neighbours. I want to ask you if you attended the community meeting about the bore hole," said Morlai. "Yes, we did," said Momoh, "and we are just discussing the issue now." "And what are your concerns?" said Morlai. "Well," said Ndora, "we think that if you had involved the women, you would have had better ideas about where to site the borehole." "Memuna said the same thing, but how do I get the women to talk?" said Morlai.

The next day, Morlai called an emergency meeting of the Village Development Committee. He told the men about his discussion with Momoh and Ndorah. They scratched their heads and wondered why they hadn't thought of inviting the women to give their ideas before. They immediately called five women leaders and asked them to be on the committee. Those women then gathered all the women together in their groups to ask them about where to site the borehole.

At the next community meeting, presentations were made by the men, women, youth and children. After discussing all the ideas, the community unanimously agreed to site the new borehole half-way between the school and the clinic so that it could be used by all. The women jubilated with joy, not only because their idea was adopted, but also because their voices were heard. They could now participate in community decision-making. They had the power to influence changes!

Now that you have heard the story, here are some questions to see whether you have understood the benefits of being a GMF.

- Why in the first place, didn't Morlai think of asking women to advise the committee on the site of borehole?
- Why do you think women's idea of where to site the borehole was accepted by everyone?
- Are women capable of being good leaders?
- Does the community look up to GMFs as leaders? If so, how do they show that they respect GMFs?
- What benefits does the community get if there are more women leaders and decision-makers?

#### Notes

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## Step #5: Monitoring Gender Model Families

For monitoring, have copies of each GMF's Family Action Plan, so you can discuss with the family whether they were able to meet their commitment to the plan. Monitoring Tool #1 provides questions for you to ask about their adherence to the plan and other related issues.

The set of tables associated with Monitoring Tool #2 looks at how sharing has evolved in other areas: reproductive, productive, community management, decision-making and payments. By checking off who is doing what, you can see changes over time.

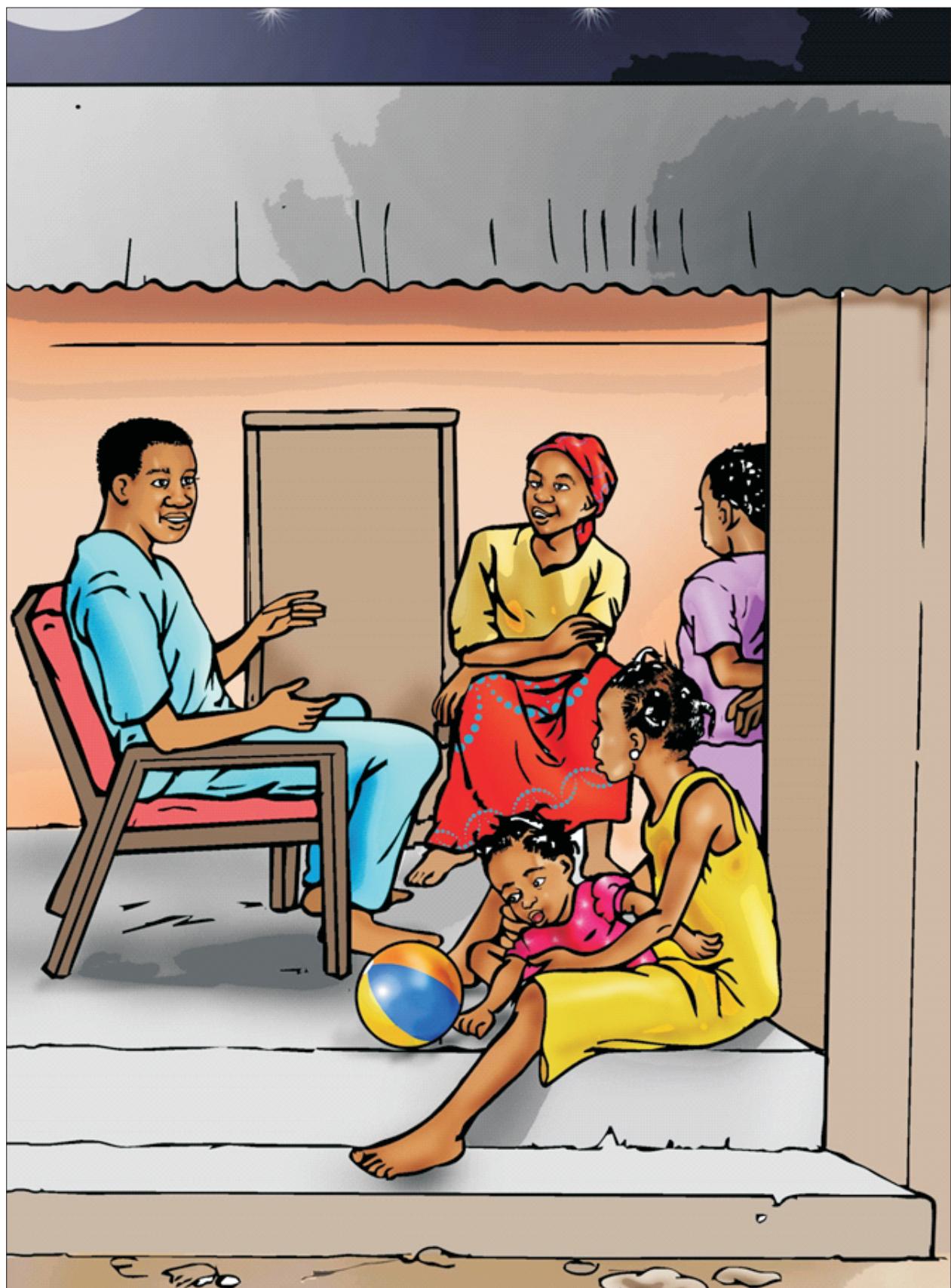
1. Don't inform community you are coming. Go early in the morning so that you can see what is really happening in the home.
2. Observe and determine whether the men and children helping early in the morning? Is the family following the action plan?
3. Interview the husband and wife separately to find out how they are assisting one another. See if their stories match up.
4. Interview the children separately to find out how they are doing with their tasks, and whether they feel that the family has changed.
5. Bring the family together to validate your findings.

At the experience sharing meeting, you will bring Gender Model Families together to validate the findings about the families.

### Monitoring Tool #1: Gender Model Family Follow-up Interview

**This monitoring tool can be used frequently, because it allows GMFs to share their progress and challenges.**

Field Officer:			
Interviewee			
Date of Interview			
Follow up #			
1) (During First Follow up): What did you learn in the Gender Model Family Training? (During Subsequent Follow-ups): What have you learned so far from participating as a Gender Model Family?			
2) Review Family Action Plan with Interviewees			
a. Are you/your husband helping with the tasks you/he promised? (list each task and indicate the response)			
b. What problems or difficulties have you had in meeting the commitments you made in your action plan?			
3) Which family members, friends or associates have you told about your participating as a Gender Model Family and what have you told each of them? What was their reaction (list each person (by relation, not name) and what the participant told them, as about positive and negative reactions)			
Person (listed by relation)	Sex	What was said	Reaction



7: p.m

*Before bed, the whole family gathers on the veranda to discuss the day and make plans*

## Monitoring Tool #2: Activity, Decision-Making and Payment Matrices

This monitoring tool can be used as a baseline or at the beginning of a family's involvement as a GMF. Afterwards, the tools should be used at six month intervals, so that changes can be tracked.

### Instructions

1. On each table, indicate who does what.
2. If the Woman and the Man both do the same, indicate who does more with a + sign. Do the same for Girls and Boys.
3. Follow the Best Gender Model Families over a period of a year to determine how roles and responsibilities are changing. Repeat the exercise several times, and compare the results.

### Reproductive Activities

Reproductive Activities	Woman	Man	Girls	Boys
Sweeping				
Laundry				
Cooking				
Washing Dishes				
Fetching Water				
Fetching Firewood				
Bathing				
Bed Making				
Cleaning around compound				
Brushing and scraping around compound				
Construction of plate racks; clothing lines; compost fence				
Child care / babysitting				
Feeding of Baby				
Bathing Children				
Heating water for bathing				
Caring for the sick, i.e. elderly				
Household maintenance and repairs				
Flower gardening				
Going to the market for food & cooking ingredients				
Ironing				
Cleaning latrine				
Entertaining visitors				

## Productive Activities

<b>Productive Activities</b>	<b>Woman</b>	<b>Man</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>
<b>Farming</b>				
Brushing				
Felling of Trees				
Fencing				
Setting of traps				
Construction of farmhut				
Burning				
Cleaning of Farm Site				
Ploughing				
Planting				
First Bird Scaring				
Weeding				
Second Bird Scaring				
Harvesting				
Transporting to the Barn				
<b>Processing of Rice</b>				
Threshing				
Boiling				
Drying				
Pounding/Milling of Rice				
Winnowing				
Grading				
Storing				
<b>Processing of Cassava</b>				
Peeling				
Washing				
Grating				
Draining water from cassava				
Pounding				
Patching				
Packing				
Transporting to Market				
Selling				
<b>Income Generating Activities</b>				
Petty Trading				
Weaving				
Tailoring				
Cooked food selling				
Welding				
Hair Dressing				
Masonry				
Charcoal Burning				
Blacksmithing				
Soap making				
Milling				
Membership in revolving loans club				

## Community Management Activities

<b>Community Management Activities</b>	<b>Man</b>	<b>Woman</b>
General membership of VDC		
Executive membership of VDC		
Membership of Pump Management Committee		
Membership of Contract Awards Committees		
Membership of CLTS		
Membership of Hygiene Promotion		
Membership of WATSAN Management Committee		
Membership of STAR Circle		
Membership of STAR Management Committee		
Membership of Kids Hygiene Club		
Volunteering for Community Cleaning		
Brushing of Roads		
Construction		
Cooking for Construction Workers		
Fetching of Water and Sand		
Plastering		
Organizing Funerals		
Organizing Weddings		
Organizing Naming Ceremonies for Children		
Committee for Community Bye-law reform		
Councillor		
Membership of Ward Development Committee		
Executive member of political party		
Chiefdom Speaker		
Member of Women's Network		
Member on Credit Union Board or Committee		
Member or leader of Rural Commercial Women's Association		
Member or leader of Occupational Association		
Member of Solidarity Group		
Member or executive of School Management Committee		
Member or leader of Community-based Organization		
Member of leader of Gender Model Family program		
Other		

## Decision Making

Decision Making	Man	Woman
Family Planning / Adoption		
Education / Schooling		
Use of household items (radio, motorbike, TV, bicycle)		
Farming (location; type (upland, rice, veg gardening, animal husbandry		
Choice of religion / place of worship		
Provision of Food		
Marriage, Birth Registration		
Asset Creation		
Construction of house		
Income Generation		
Osusu		
Petty Trading		
Loan Scheme		
Political party allegiance		
Pledging of Property		
Naming Ceremonies		
Other festivals		
Burial Rites		
Inheritance of Property		
Medication		
Wearings: Clothing, Shoes		
Sexual Relations		

## Payment

Payments	Man	Woman
School Fees		
Bride Price		
Initiation Fees		
Local Taxes		
Levies / Fines		
Capital to Start Business		
Medical Bills		
Transport		
Payment of Contractors		
Casual Labour		
Community Contributions		
Charging of Phones		
Purchases		
Building Materials		
Clothes		
Foodstuffs		
Furniture		
Radio		
Bicycles		
Phone		
School Uniforms and other school supplies		
Accessories (jewelry, shoes, bags)		
Generator and electrical equipment		
Kerosene, fuel		
Batteries		
Chinese lights		
Cooking utensils		
Chamber pots		
Toiletries (soap, toothpaste, disinfectant		

## **Step #6: Monthly and Quarterly Meetings**

Depending on project resources and staff time, you can hold both monthly meetings and quarterly experience sharing meetings.

Monthly meetings are aimed at bringing Gender Model Families from the same community together to understand their successes and challenges. Quarterly meetings bring Gender Model Families from different communities together to share experiences.

A staff member may be present, but the GMFs may also elect their own leadership and hold the meetings on their own.

1. Materials needed
  - a. Flip charts
  - b. Markers
  - c. Light refreshments (sachet water, biscuits), if possible
2. Notification of GMFs
  - a. Venue
  - b. Day for meeting
  - c. Time for meeting
3. Agenda

### **Monthly Meeting Agenda**

1. Prayers (Christians and Moslems)
2. Purpose of meeting
3. Updates from GMFs
4. Each family will tell the forum the following:
  - What has been done (# of targeted families)
    - Sharing of household responsibilities (work done in their individual homes (sweeping, fetching of water, etc)
    - Whether men and boys are involved in the work at home
    - Whether men have involved their women and children in decision making
  - What are the challenges faced in their homes and communities and how were they coped with
    - Discuss solutions
    - The way forward (how to address issues around the challenges)
5. Develop a list of emerging issues and challenges for future actions
6. AOB
7. Time/Date for next meeting and venue
8. Closing



**8: p.m** Together, Jeneba and Lasanah put Abu and Sarah to bed. The children are happy and healthy – time to get a good rest.

## **Step #7: Annual Gender Model Family Assembly**

The annual Gender Model Family Assembly brings together GMFs and other stakeholders. The media is expected to popularize the program by highlighting its benefits. New GMFs and communities are identified for follow-up meetings and recruitment. The best GMFs are also identified for recognition.

Here is a list of expected participants:

- Gender Model Families, including children
- Chiefs and heads
- Teachers, health workers
- Community leaders
- Religious leaders
- Media

By demonstrating the benefits of being a Gender Model Family, others will join.

1. Materials needed
  - a. Flip charts
  - b. Markers
  - c. Light refreshments (sachet water, biscuits), if possible
2. Notification of GMFs
  - a. Venue
  - b. Day for meeting
3. Agenda

### **Experience Sharing Meeting Agenda**

1. Prayers (Christians and Moslems)
2. Purpose of meeting
3. Updates from GMFs
4. List of action plans (from . . . to . . . )
5. List of those done, not done
6. How did you do those you were able to complete?
7. For each action completed, explain your experience with <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Your in-laws</li><li>b. Neighbours</li><li>c. Community</li><li>d. Elders</li></ol>
8. Which actions did you complete successfully?
9. What were your challenges? How did you overcome them?
10. How will you improve your actions next?
11. List the activities you did not do in step 3 and set a date to complete and report of them during the next meeting scheduled
12. Develop a list of emerging issues and challenges for future actions
13. AOB
14. Time/Date for next meeting and venue
15. Closing

## **Here are some Frequently Asked Questions about reactions of communities to Gender Model Families:**

Who in the extended family was against GMF?

Some community members, both men and women, particularly those who are not married, have made fun of Gender Model Families. Also, older people and traditional authorities insist on traditional ideas which identify women as “slaves” to men. This is the opposite of what the Gender Model Family is trying to promote.

Why were they against GMF? What did they say and do to show their disfavour?

Breaking with tradition and culture is difficult.

- Some people who oppose the Gender Model Family say that “their wives use charms on the men” to get them to share tasks. They can't believe that men would share roles and responsibilities with women.
- Some imams and chiefs do not want to see changes in societal gender relations. Change is not in their interest because they benefit when things stay the same.
- Some people in communities are isolated – not exposed, educated or involved with development activities. They are at a disadvantage when it comes to adopting the ideas promoted by Gender Model Families.

### **What has been the reaction of the extended family to GMFs?**

Jealousy crops on the man's side, from his mother and sisters. They see the wife as depriving them of the man's love. Before the Gender Model Family was introduced, relatives had the opportunity to get everything they needed without any inference because the man did not consult with his wife. Now, within the GMF, couples consult each other and make decisions based on how the immediate family will benefit.

Extended family members had to get used to this new development in their family, but now have started to practice being Gender Model Families themselves. “Earlier they had a problem, but now noticed that it's good to help your wife.” An uncle who lives with the family said, “What has gone wrong with you?” But it did not take much time for him to understand and approve, given his first-hand observations. Previously, the family was “always fighting and quarrelling.” Now they are living in harmony, giving Uncle peace of mind too. Also, mothers of the women who have experience the old lifestyle are relieved that their daughters will not suffer as they did. They see that the Gender Model Family brings respect to women.

Who in the community are the major detractors to GMF?

- People who do not understand gender issues, nor the benefits of gender equity for community development.

Why are they against GMF? What did they say about it?

- They think that women should always work for men.

Who in the community are the major champions of GMF? Why are they in favour of GMF?

- Women, because they benefit in practical ways
- Youth, because they want to show love to each other

Does the community look up to GMFs? If so, how do they show that they respect GMFs?

Previously, couples with problems in their marriages would go to the chiefs to solve their cases. They would have to pay for this service. Now, couples go to Gender Model Families for advice, and they do not have to pay any money to them. Some Model wives and husbands are trying to reconcile couples who have separated. One chief said that he was relieved not to have the responsibility to settle marital disputes anymore. Gender Model Families are also consulted by chiefs about community issues.



## Conclusion

Some people have a difficult time believing that Gender Model Families are sustainable, that they can continue practicing equity in traditional, rural settings. However, even though there are lots of factors going against the Gender Model Family, there are more reasons going for it. Here are the Pros and Cons given by GMFs in Sierra Leone.

PROs	CONs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Families experience better health and well-being</li><li>• Men and women share power and control</li><li>• Men and women make joint decisions</li><li>• Men and women jointly manage finances</li><li>• Men and women jointly manage household resources</li><li>• Team work in the family makes introduces more opportunities and benefits</li><li>• Family members can talk freely with each other</li><li>• Families enjoy love and harmony</li><li>• Children have a better and more disciplined up-bringing</li><li>• Children have freedom to meet their potential</li><li>• Improved communication in the home</li><li>• Improved peace and stability in the home</li><li>• Improved trust in the home</li><li>• For those already sharing roles and responsibilities in their homes, GFM legitimizes their efforts</li><li>• Reduction in extra-marital affairs which cause conflict in the home</li><li>• The government is in favor of gender equality</li><li>• On-going sensitization on Human Rights from some organizations promotes GMFs</li><li>• Local NGOs support the idea of GMF because they promote equity and inclusion</li><li>• GMF training inspires all members of the family to get a better education</li><li>• Gender-based violence is reduced</li><li>• GMFs get respect and recognition in their communities</li><li>• GMF has a positive effect on communities because people want to be models for the benefits.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most traditional beliefs, culture and religion dictate that women have less rights than men</li><li>• Traditional Authorities support male dominance</li><li>• Too much pressure from extended family members to remain the same</li><li>• Peer pressure</li><li>• For many men, it is shameful to yield to their wife's decisions</li><li>• Women are too submissive</li><li>• Neither men or women have good skills in family management</li><li>• Men and women lack the educational background and understanding to make changes</li><li>• They are too used to practicing same lifestyle for many years</li><li>• Change depends on authority from the top and there is little support for GMF</li><li>• Few organizations are promoting GMF behaviors</li><li>• There are not enough good women and men role models:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More chiefs are men</li><li>• Women chiefs only control women</li><li>• In mosques, women still sit behind</li><li>• More men magistrates than women</li><li>• Chairman and not chairwoman</li></ul></li><li>• Insufficient benefits for GMF</li><li>• Lack of satisfaction with the new situation</li></ul>

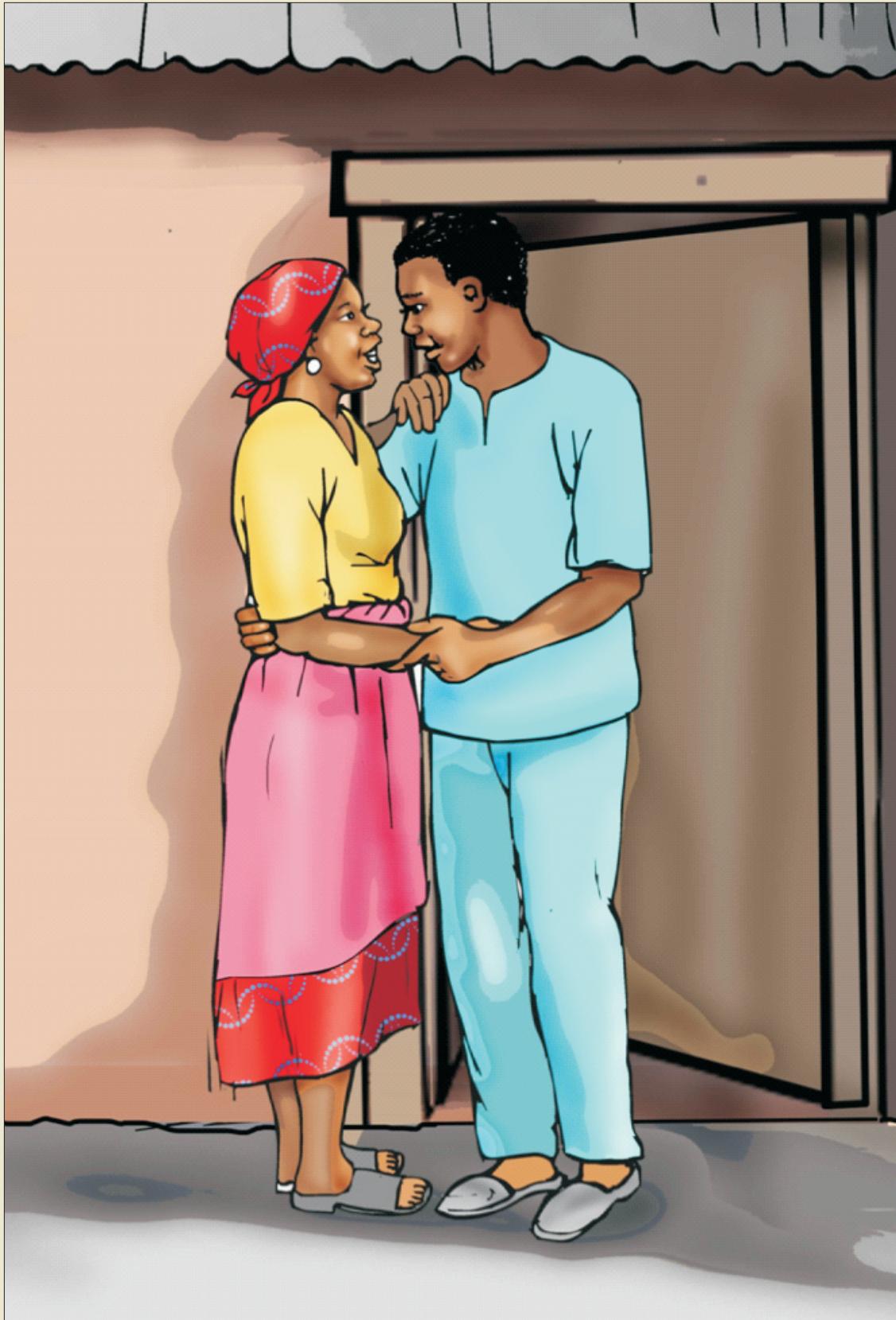
Gender Model Families will continue to model and promote gender change, especially if they are joined with other development programs that aim toward gender equality. Men and women belonging to Gender Model Families will naturally become leaders in their communities, given that they have undertaken and committed to positive and progressive changes in their family life. Because GMFs have set good examples and are trustworthy, many men and women from the community come to them for advice. This is an incentive for them to continue to promote GMFs, and to engage Traditional Authorities, religious and community leaders on the benefits of gender equity. To create further interest in GMFs, have a yearly GMF award or annual celebration called Gender Model Family Day.



## Notes

## Notes





*After all the children are sleep, Jeneba and Lasanah get to spend some quality time together. This is the end of a perfect day in the life of the Gender Model Family.*