

# FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT / RAPPORT TECHNIQUE FINAL

## ANNEX 21- NURTURING CONNECTIONS MANUAL

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IDRC Grant / Subvention du CRDI: 107982-001-Scale Up of Homestead Food Production for Improved Nutrition in Cambodia (CIFSRF Phase 2)

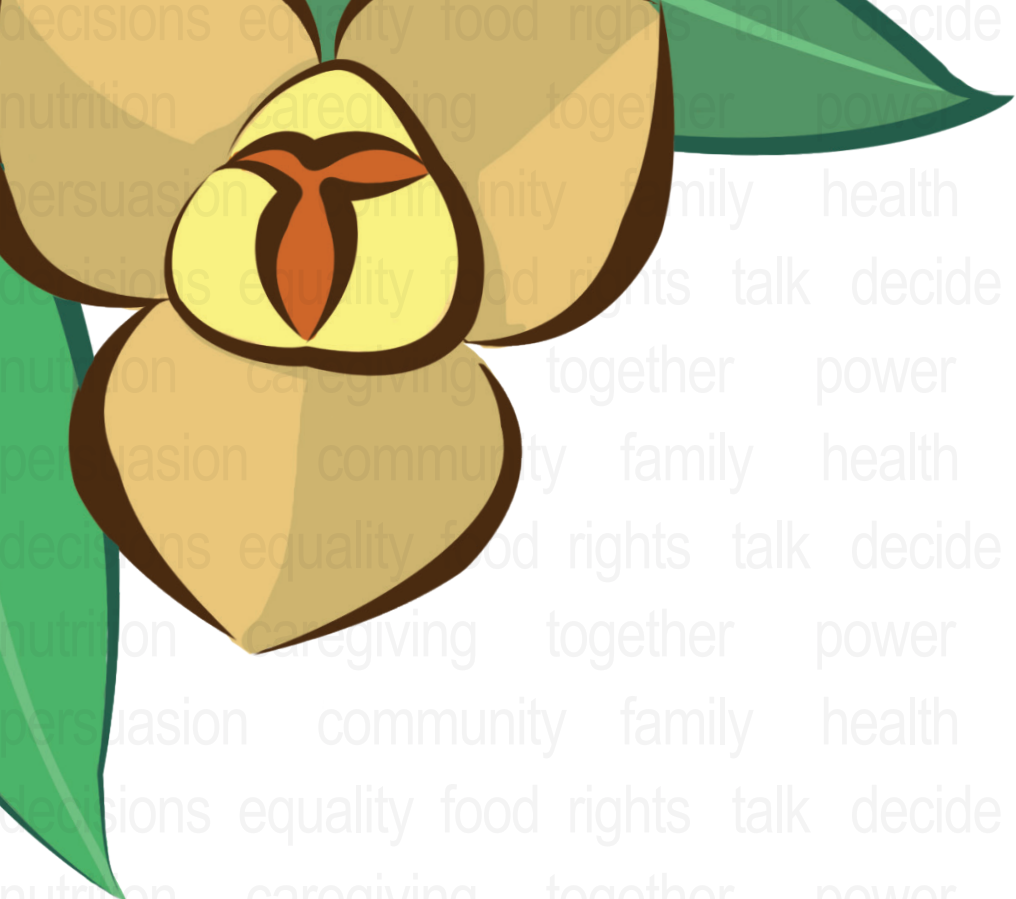


ការធ្វើឱ្យប្រសើរឡើងនូវ  
ទំនាក់ទំនងក្នុងគ្រួសារ  
**Nurturing  
Connections**



**Helen Keller**  
INTERNATIONAL





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នូវទំនាក់ទំនងក្នុងគ្រួសារ

**Nurturing Connections©**



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This manual is the result of the adaptation of HKI’s existing Nurturing Connections© approach, to make this resource relevant and appropriate for the context of rural Cambodia. The adaptation was a one-year process, involving the design and pilot-testing of new activities in the field, and adapting content and messages of existing exercises during several stages of revision.

The pilot-test of Nurturing Connections© – **ការធ្វើឱ្យប្រសើរឡើងនូវទំនាក់ទំនងក្នុងគ្រួសារ** was made possible with support from International Development Research Centre (IDRC), through the Family Farms for the Future (FF4F) project. Ramona Ridolfi - Regional Gender Advisor for HKI Asia-Pacific - guided the adaptation of the manual, led in the field by Pouch Bopha and Cheng Chinneth, former HKI-Cambodia Gender Coordinators, in close collaboration with the HKI project team. The adaptation process benefited from consultations with a large group of people, and we would like to recognize the invaluable support and contribution of those listed below:

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The present edition includes activities developed in Bangladesh, with edits and additions from the following HKI Cambodia team members: Ly Sok Hoing, Sao Sovan Vannak, Tith Dollary, Noun Ty and Hak Sihun. It also includes activities and revisions from the HKI and ICRW Creating Homestead Agriculture for Nutrition and Gender Equity (CHANGE) team in West Africa, where Nurturing Connections© was adapted for use in Senegal and Ivory Coast.

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# INTRODUCTION

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## ***A Gender-Transformative Approach to Agriculture and Nutrition Programming***

Gender equity is essential for fostering agricultural development and improving family nutrition and health. Enabling women with the same access to productive resources as men would contribute to increased production and has the ability to lift millions out of food insecurity.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, a vast body of research shows that when women have access to and power to make decisions over income, they tend to spend a larger proportion on food, medical care, and education for their children and other family members than men.<sup>2</sup>

In Cambodia, social and economic discrimination against women is reinforced by deeply ingrained cultural traditions and social practices. Two ancient Khmer prose poems, *Chbab Proh* and *Chbab Srey*, that instruct women to be subservient to men, are widely accepted as codes of conduct and are still taught in public schools.<sup>3</sup> In the household, Cambodian women do not have adequate influence over decision making on expenditures and other important matters, such as allocation of food, with men consuming the most energy and nutrient dense food. Men tend to make decisions on household expenditures without considering women's opinions and priorities, and without a full understanding of the financial and nutrition trade-offs resulting from the purchase of alcohol and other leisure items.<sup>4</sup>

This contributes to women's low status and limited decision-making power in the household, which often results in women being constrained to domestic work and low-productivity agriculture. Furthermore, in some cases, women's disempowerment leads to domestic violence. Approximately one in six women in Cambodia has been a victim of some form of domestic violence (physical, emotional, or sexual), and of these, half sustain physical injuries.<sup>5</sup> This is reportedly acceptable among most women within society, with almost half of the married women interviewed during the CDHS 2014 agreeing that a husband has the right to beat his wife.<sup>6</sup>

Inequality and inadequate voice for women also results in slow performance in addressing key development issues, especially the nutritional status of women and children. Cambodia continues to have high levels of young child malnutrition with only modest improvements seen in recent years. Nationally, 25% of female and 23% of male children aged 0-59 months

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1 FAO (2013). Policy on Gender Equality. Attaining Food Security Goals in Agriculture and Rural Development. Rome : FAO.

2 FAO. (2011). Women in Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap. The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11. Rome: FAO.

3 Grace K and Eng S. There Is No Place for 'Chbab Srey' in Cambodian Schools, Cambodia Daily, June 9, 2015.

4 Gender Analysis Report, Fish on Farms Project, HKI and UBC, Cambodia 2012

5 A Fair Share for Women: Cambodia Gender Assessment, 2010, Ministry of Women Affairs, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

6 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey, 2010, Ministry of Planning.





## INTRODUCTION

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are underweight. 32% of female and 33% of male children are stunted, while 9% of female and 10% of male children are wasted.<sup>7</sup>

Interventions focused on women's empowerment — for instance, by improving women's access to agricultural inputs and income-generating opportunities — can be short-lived if they do not address the socio-economic drivers of inequality. As a consequence, HKI has developed Nurturing Connections© as a way to promote women's empowerment through a participatory process of structural transformation. HKI's experience implementing nutrition and food security programs over more than 30 years has led to the understanding that achieving sustainable intervention outcomes requires fostering gender equality in a transformative manner.

This means going beyond reaching women through targeted interventions. Instead, such an approach requires engagement and challenging of the gender power relations and norms that shape behaviors within households and communities, often in an unequal, discriminatory way. Nurturing Connections© is an integrated gender-themed behavior change curriculum that sets out to transform community norms through a participatory approach that engages with diverse decision-makers and influential people at the household and community levels. The approach recognizes that behavior change is a gradual and iterative process, and that adults learn best through action and experience. Thus, a range of participatory activities enables participants to critically reflect on and question socially-discriminatory practices that are often a cause of women's disempowerment and ultimately, food insecurity and malnutrition.

Nurturing Connections© was initially developed by HKI in Bangladesh in 2013 using the model of the Stepping Stones curriculum developed by Dr. Alice Welbourn to address HIV/AIDS and sexual health in Africa.<sup>8</sup> When first implemented within HKI Bangladesh's Building Equity in Agriculture and Markets project, it was shown to increase women's confidence in obtaining men's support for household tasks and women's ability to influence decisions related to child healthcare. Nurturing Connections© is thus one of the few interventions that have been validated as being effective at challenging intra-household and intra-community power relations. Since 2013, the curriculum has received considerable interest internationally and was cited in a global technical resource guide as a recommended tool for addressing gender equality in nutrition and food security initiatives.<sup>9</sup>

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7 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey, 2014, Ministry of Planning

8 USAID, "Stepping Stones – Adapted for South African Youth", in Integrating Multiple Gender Strategies to Improve HIV and AIDS Interventions: A Compendium of Programs in Africa, May 2009, available at: [http://www.aidstar-one.com/sites/default/files/ZA\\_SteppingStones.pdf](http://www.aidstar-one.com/sites/default/files/ZA_SteppingStones.pdf).

9 Ivankovich, M.B., & Faramand, T. (2015). Enhancing Nutrition and Food Security during the First 1,000 Days through Gender-sensitive Social and Behavior Change: A Technical Resource Guide. Washington, DC: CORE Group.





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In Bangladesh, HKI has worked with multiple organizations to revise the manual to be applicable across diverse programs.

Under the 2013–2016 Creating Homestead Agriculture for Nutrition and Gender Equity (CHANGE) project, an integrated nutrition-sensitive agriculture project implemented in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Tanzania and funded by the Canadian Government, HKI partnered with the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) to adapt Nurturing Connections© to two diverse contexts: Guédiawaye, an urban area of Dakar, Senegal, and rural northern Côte d'Ivoire (Korhogo and Boundoukou regions). Endline results show that the curriculum contributed to improved spousal communications, joint-decision making within couples, and more gender equitable viewpoints.

In Cambodia, HKI undertook extensive contextual and content adaptation of the curriculum, focusing on local gender issues such as income expenditure by women and domestic violence related to alcohol consumption. The adaptation process took place within the Family Farms for the Future project (2015-2018), implemented in partnership with the University of British Columbia, and supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

### **Adaptation Process and Contributions of this Edition**

The present edition draws from the original version of Nurturing Connections© developed in Bangladesh. Given the wide differences in culture, environment, and language between Bangladesh and Cambodia, extensive contextual adaptation of the approach, in close collaboration with program and field staff, was essential for successful implementation. For example, in the socially conservative context of Bangladesh participants felt more comfortable to share their experiences within their own peer groups first, and then exchange perspectives more broadly through mediated mixed groups. However, in Cambodia, mixed group settings were seen as appropriate for the discussions. This required a revision of the structure of the manual - originally divided in Blocks (with activities for peer groups) and Mixed-Sessions (for mixed groups) - selecting activities with discussions better focused on exchanging perspectives among genders and eliminating the Mixed Session discussions. Additionally, from a methodological standpoint, activities including role-plays and other highly interactive dynamics seen as entertaining in Bangladesh were perceived as childish in Cambodia, and replaced with other exercises, involving drawing and writing.

The adapted curriculum was validated after a closely monitored pilot implementation conducted in 2016 and 2017, with feedback from participants and facilitators being incorporated into the





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final manual. The present edition retains the same themes of equitable adequate nutrition and more equitable power relations that figured prominently in the initial Bangladesh curriculum, but adapts these to the Cambodian context, including greater recognition of the negative effects of domestic violence on the health of women and children and the need for women to play a more influencing role in household decision-making processes.

Early interviews with the pilot implementation participants have cited changes resulting from their involvement in Nurturing Connections®, including increased engagement of men in household chores and improved spousal communication. Results from the project endline will be available after June 2018.

The experience of adapting and validating Nurturing Connections® to multiple contexts has shown the approach to be malleable and applicable to diverse settings within which unequal power relations between genders circumscribe women's empowerment. This curriculum should be viewed as a living document, with continued room for well-documented experimentation, adaptation, and testing. We look forward to participating in this process and seeing the approach evolve in tandem with women's changing roles in society.





# GUIDELINES

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## *On the scope of the manual and how it should be used*

Behavior change requires a long process of transforming local perceptions, norms and practices. The most common approach to transforming behaviors is to engage people in critical discussions about harmful practices, in an effort to understand their origins and how they can be changed for a healthier future. These guidelines are designed to help program staff and field facilitators implement the activities of the Nurturing Connections© manual.

### **Intended Audience**

These materials were primarily developed for building the capacity of program and field agents working on gender-related issues with rural communities. For the most effective implementation, it is recommended that program and field agents be experienced facilitators who believe in and are committed to a participatory way of working with communities. Planners and designers of behavior change and communication approaches will also find the manual useful.

The activities have been widely tested and build on both international and local experience, knowledge, and skills. While the exercises were originally developed in (rural) Bangladesh, they have been adapted for use in (rural) Côte d'Ivoire, (urban) Senegal, and now (rural) Cambodia, and are applicable for further adaptation in other cultures and environments with modifications to the dynamic of the activities and the discussion questions. Moreover, the participatory, interactive pedagogy of Nurturing Connections© can be transferrable to other domains of field agents' work, such as agricultural extension and nutrition officers.

### **Participatory Approach**

Just as people exchange knowledge and skills to find answers to everyday questions and problems, this manual is based on a 'horizontal' approach. It facilitates collaborative joint learning in which every participant is potentially both a learner and facilitator. Indeed, the gender-transformative impact is not limited to participants alone; because the content challenges power relations and cultural conventions, especially as they relate to gender norms, program and field agents may find themselves questioning their own conceptions and beliefs.

This curriculum aims to motivate and support participants to effect change in their own communities. Getting to greater gender equality and achieving change is understood as being dependent on acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to individually and jointly make decisions that promote collective wellbeing, as well as confidence to assert one's right to make such choices. Change happens at the individual and collective levels and happens over time. Multiple activities therefore address questions about cultural practices, social beliefs,





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power relations, norms, and rules, particularly as they relate to gender; these are meant to spark internal reflection as well as interpersonal discussion.

### Key Considerations for Implementation

- It is assumed that not all participants will be literate or confident with reading and writing, or even drawing. Therefore, activities rely on oral processes such as storytelling and physical activities such as games.
- Facilitators should see this manual as offering ideas and suggestions that can be adapted to the local context. Facilitators must be flexible and responsive to participants' existing knowledge, skills, and needs. For example, adapting activities for those with limited mobility, or offering more examples to spark the discussion.
- The approach to implementation should model the practices aimed for in daily life, including respect and gender sensitivity. All participants must feel respected, included, and valued.
- Learning is an active process: the integration of thinking, feeling, and acting is crucial. As such, it is essential that the active and participatory nature of the curriculum be respected and include as many participants as possible.
- If people and communities understand the long-term benefits of the discussions, they will be more likely to continue participating in the sessions.
- People learn best when they enjoy learning. Humor and laughter creates energy and encourages continued engagement—embrace it!

### Role of Facilitators

Facilitation is the process of assisting, guiding, and supporting learning. To do this, facilitators must first listen attentively to participants to understand their existing knowledge and the conditions governing their everyday lives. This will help determine what new information to provide and how to create a space for critical reflection, dialogue, and decision making.

Facilitators have important roles to play in:

- Drawing out existing knowledge and know-how, by encouraging people to speak instead of providing the solution
- Making potentially detrimental beliefs and practices, such as gender power relations, visible
- Questioning and challenging these beliefs
- Identifying obstacles to changing potentially harmful practices
- Identifying obstacles to equitable intra-household decision making
- Motivating individuals to reflect on topics discussed





## GUIDELINES

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- Introducing new information in accessible and enjoyable ways that are locally relevant
- Guiding meaningful and respectful dialogue, welcoming everyone's ideas and thoughts
- Creating conditions that foster the testing of new ideas and gender-sensitive approaches
- Encouraging the emergence of new leaders, particularly women
- Promoting the development of a culture of sharing and critical engagement
- Fostering peer support and cooperation
- Reinforcing values that build collective responsibility for wellbeing
- Monitoring learning and behavior change
- Ensuring the process is enjoyable
- Relaying information on implementation and localization to curriculum designers
- Synthesizing and confirming experiences and lessons learned
- Where appropriate and relevant, linking the discussion and reflection points to the learning from the nutrition and homestead food production sessions.
- Avoiding and mitigating conflict, should this arise.
- Keeping the discussion focused on the topic of the session

### Implementation Design

The curriculum is designed to simultaneously engage the main decision-makers in the household: (1) women, (2) their husbands/partners, and (3) elders and key community members. 'Key community members' should be interpreted as including those with influence within the community, such as traditional leaders, religious leaders, and modern leaders (e.g., the cooperative president or chair of the water board. For proper rollout of the activities, the ideal group size is from 10 to 25 participants.

The manual is divided in four "Blocks", or thematic areas: (1) Let's Communicate, (2) Understanding Perceptions and Gender, (3) Negotiating Power and (4) Acting for Change. Each of the four Blocks consists of one or more sessions, with one session typically delivered per month.<sup>10</sup>

The Bangladesh and West Africa editions of Nurturing Connections© were designed to engage the household members in separate peer-groups for the activities of the Blocks, and then in mixed-group settings at the end of each Block. This approach was drawn from HKI's experience in socially conservative spaces, where it was observed that people are more comfortable to open up with their own peer first, and are willing to discuss with other members of the community once certain issues have been questioned and challenged.

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<sup>10</sup> The frequency of the sessions is not fixed and can vary from project to project to fit within the implementation schedule. Based on HKI's experience, the sessions should have a minimum interval of one per week, to allow participants time to reflect on and practice the learning points.





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However, in Cambodia the approach has been reviewed to engage family members only in a mixed-group setting, as HKI's experience over 25 years in the country indicate that women (across age ranges) are more comfortable to engage on equal terms in discussions within the family, though they might not be entitled to make the final decision.

The revised edition for Cambodia presents seven sessions: 1-6 are part of the Blocks, while session 7 is a re-cap of the path toward greater gender equality undertaken with the sessions. Each session is designed to take approximately one hour and a half, though some sessions may take longer, depending on the level of discussion. It is important that facilitators do not rush participants when discussing sensitive and controversial topics. The date, time, and location of sessions must be chosen in consultation with the local community. Meeting locations should be sufficiently large to allow active movement and in neutral spaces that make all feel welcome. It is essential that the curriculum and its aims be explained clearly to participants and the community.

Female and male facilitators are needed. Typically, one man and one woman facilitate together, to bring both gendered perspectives to the activities. However, if resources are limited, one facilitator per group is also acceptable. Where there are young or less experienced facilitators, it is recommended that they be paired with older, experienced facilitators. Facilitators must have considerable experience with participatory learning processes and extensive understanding of the local context. Agricultural extension agents, nutrition outreach trainers, community health workers, and teachers are all potential facilitators. Facilitators must be fluent in the local vernacular and should take care to plan and prepare for each session ahead of time, ensuring they will be able to conduct the session in the local language with the appropriate translations of key terms, before implementing. They should keep records of their sessions, and sessions should be monitored regularly by supervising staff to ensure fidelity to the curriculum and to the participatory approach.<sup>11</sup>

### Activity Design

Every session is composed of multiple activities. In line with the horizontal approach of the manual, activities have a structure that allows participants to lead the learning process.

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<sup>11</sup> See Monitoring Form and Facilitators' Reporting Form for more details.







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Different types of activities include different actions:

- Declarations build participants' self-confidence and spark critical self-reflection by requiring them to share information or opinions verbally;
- Games create energy, serve as ice-breakers, and regain participants' attention, sometimes while also offering lessons;
- Photos provide a visual presentation or explanation of an idea;
- Discussions draw out knowledge and shared experiences and build understanding.

The activities in each session follow a sequence of steps:

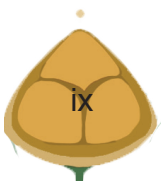
1. First there is an action (e.g., a game, activity, or a request to recall a past experience).
2. This is followed by personal and collective reflection on the topic in question, often sparked and guided by a facilitator's questions.
3. Based on this discussion and experimentation with ideas, a lesson or some of learning is identified and named. Often this involves the facilitator pointing out a broader theme (communication, trust, assertiveness etc.) or explaining new information.
4. This learning leads to planning: insights are translated into key points and proposed actions in which the new learning can be applied into practice.

The facilitator plays an important role in 'unpacking' the information generated. This process reflects an action-learning cycle and may be guided by three questions:

- What happened? (What?): This question prompts participants to reflect on the action/ experience that was just completed.
- What does it mean? (So what?): This question prompts participants to dig deeper and reflect on the meaning behind the action and what has been learned in the process of making this norm "visible."
- What will we do about it? (Now what?): Once the lesson has been comprehended by the group, the facilitator must guide the conversation into the planning phase.

In the manual, each activity description actualizes this approach in the following structure:

- Purpose indicates the session's learning objectives. Facilitators may choose to mention these (without detail) with participants at the beginning of the session to help them focus on the topic.
- Materials lists the physical resources needed to run the sessions, some of which are optional. Facilitators should assemble (and test!) all materials before a session.





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- Action describes the various steps of the activity, as explained above.
- Key points summarize the main points of a session. In most cases, participants should be led to collectively summarize these points, reinforcing learning. The key points can also inform monitoring and evaluation tools.

Every session includes an estimate of the time required to complete each activity. However, this may vary depending on the level of understanding and participation of both facilitators and participants.

### **Structure of Sessions**

Each session should always include the following parts:

#### 1. Welcome/Introduction

When participants arrive, they should first welcome each other and the facilitator; this can be facilitated through ice-breaker questions, such as asking each participant to share something good that happened to them since the last session.

#### 2. Review and Preview

Briefly, facilitators should ask participants to reconstruct the previous session: “What happened? What was learned? How have participants been able to use things they learned in the course in their everyday lives?”

The review should end with a preview: an outline of the focus and purpose of the current session.

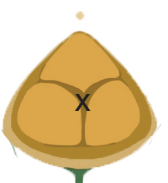
#### 3. Activities

The activities indicated for the session are led by the facilitators.

#### 4. Game or ‘energizer’ (optional)

If at any point in the session the facilitators feel that the discussion needs to be revived and encouraged (for instance, because participants are tired), a short game or energizer can be used. As participants interact physically or verbally, they should regain focus and become more alert.

Some energizers are suggested in the final section of this manual, but traditional local games, songs, dances, and stories are also strong options that help foster local ownership of the approach as well as cross-cultural learning.





## GUIDELINES

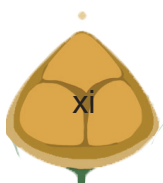
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### 5. Closing

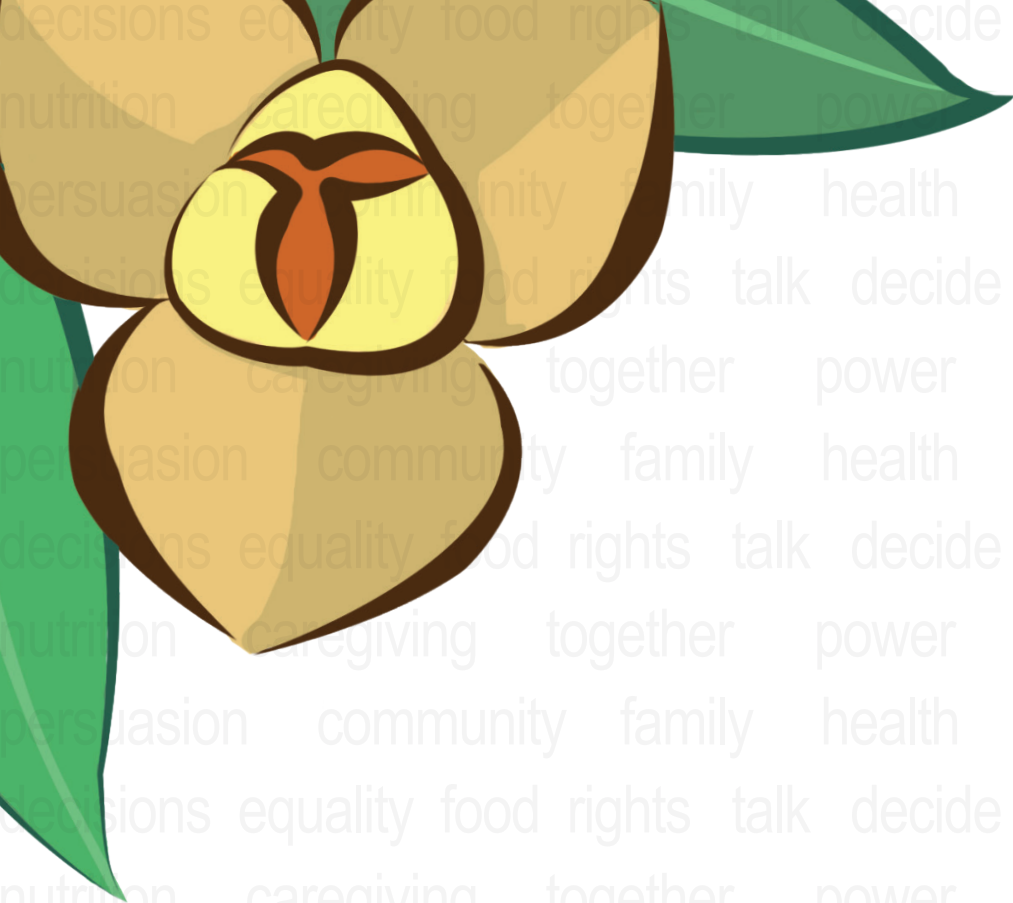
At the end of each session, there should be a brief review of the session and an acknowledgement of participants' efforts and contributions. The facilitators should encourage the group to interact before departing to build group strength and continuity; where culturally appropriate, closing the session with a song or dance works well.

### **Testing and Adapting the Curriculum in Cambodia**

HKI tested this manual in 232 rural villages Kampot, Kampong Cham, and Prey Veng Provinces, and on the rural periphery of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The content of the activities is tailored to this local context but can be adapted to other areas with suitable localization. For more information on how to test and adapt the manual, or to plan its implementation, please contact the HKI Asia Pacific Regional Office in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.







# **Block 1: LET'S COMMUNICATE**







# Block 1: LET'S COMMUNICATE

## Note to Facilitators

Block 1 is about building a learning community: making participants feel relaxed with each other and allowing them to understand the importance of their participation in discussions and activities. The first two sessions in this block are about getting to know and build trust in other group members, and developing good listening and communication skills.

In Part 1, we play games that help participants get to know each other better. In Part 2, we begin to build trust and understanding as a foundation for working together, focusing on listening and communication.

To encourage individuals to participate in learning activities, you must ensure that they trust and feel at ease with each other. Through these activities, we will find that creating a caring and open-minded environment is important for all of us to feel confident sharing our ideas and opinions. We will learn that active listening means listening with the whole body—ears, eyes, and heart.

These activities will also help us recognize that in our communities and our households, some people's voices are heard more than others. When people are ignored, they start to believe that their opinion is not important. When we routinely fail to listen to our poor people in our community meetings, or when we fail to listen attentively to our daughters, wives, and children, they start to believe that their voices are not important. Communication skills help us to be better listeners, especially towards those who are often ignored.

These sessions will show us that when we value each voice in our groups, families, and communities, we can create better relationships and find creative solutions to our problems.

Part and Topic	Activity	Duration	Page
Part 1: <b>Introductions</b>	1. Swapping Places	15-20 minutes	2
	2. Circle Game	15-20 minutes	4
	3. Hopes and Fears	30 minutes	7
	4. Ground Rules	15-20 minutes	8
Part 2: <b>Building Trust and Communication</b>	1. Defining Trust	20 minutes	10
	2. Demonstrating and Building Trust	25 minutes	11
	3. Obstacle to Listening	20 minutes	13



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

### Note to Facilitators

Explain to participants that during this course, we will be playing many games. At the same time, we will be learning valuable skills that we can use in making decisions and discussing difficult problems in our families and communities. Today, we will start by thinking about what it takes to build a good group. Later, we will learn about listening skills that can help us communicate better. We will also discuss how we make judgments about people and situations. With these skill sets, we will be able to analyze some social beliefs and practices that affect our nutrition, family lives, and community.

Explain to participants the time commitments for the course, including how often the group will meet and for how many hours at a time.

Explain that each meeting builds upon the previous one, so it is important that all group members can commit to coming to all of the sessions as much as possible.

### ACTIVITY 1: Swapping Places<sup>12</sup>

A game in which participants swap places according to specific descriptions

#### PURPOSE

- To give participants the opportunity to meet and learn about each other.
- To begin to build positive energy and motivation for learning together.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Set Up

Greet all participants, thank them for coming, and welcome them to the session. Outline the purpose and process of the session. Ask participants to form a circle.

Explain to participants that in this game, people who have something in common swap places with one another. You will call out a description. Everyone who fits the description quickly goes through the middle of the circle to find another place.

<sup>12</sup> Because sessions usually run behind schedule (due to participants coming in late), the game portion can be optional. Here, the facilitator should be flexible and consider the needs and dynamics of participants and the group when deciding whether to include the game segment.



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

Give an example: “All people wearing the color blue swap places.” Everyone with blue in their clothes should go to the middle of the circle, then move to an empty place in the circle that is different from the one they came from.

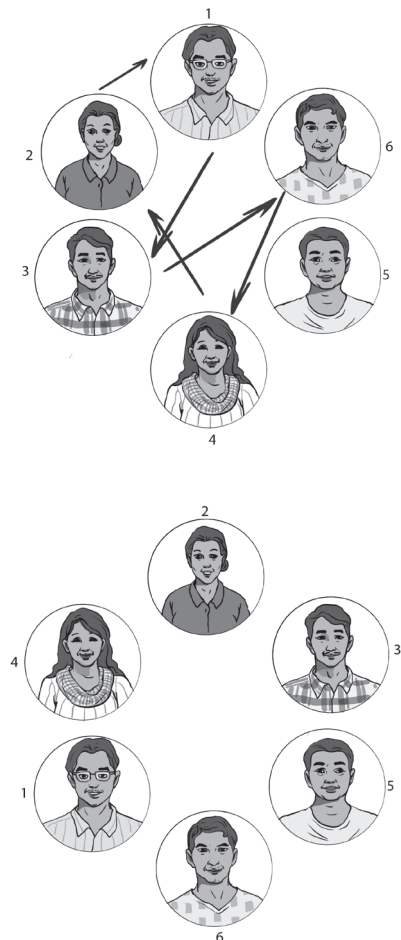
### 2. Play

Begin the game. Say “all people who raise chicken or livestock, swap places!”

Further examples of instructions are:

- All people who love to eat small fish
- All people who have two or more children
- All people who like to sing
- All people who love to eat green vegetables
- All people who produce more than 6 types of vegetables in their
- All people who know how to make compost
- All people who can cook

Continue this game for a few minutes. Vary your descriptions so that everyone participates.



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

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### 3. Review

Ask participants:

- How did the game make you feel?
- What happened in the game?
- Why do you think we played this game?
- What did you learn from the game?

### KEY POINTS

- Playing games makes us feel more relaxed and enjoy each other's company.
- If we want to make changes in our lives, we need to work together and support each other.
- Getting to know and appreciate each other is the first step towards working together!

## ACTIVITY 2: Circle Game<sup>13</sup>

An activity to help the group get to know one another

### PURPOSE

- To give participants the opportunity to meet and learn about each other.
- To build motivation for learning together.

### MATERIALS

- Materials to sing a song or play an instrument

### PROCESS

#### 1. Set Up

- Ask participants to divide into two groups by counting off: one – two – one – two – and so on. Ask the 1's to form a circle by touching each other's hands.
- Ask the 1's stand in their circle back-to-back, and 2's stand outside facing inwards, making a second circle.

#### 2. Explain

- Ask participants to sing or play a popular song (e.g. “Brochum Knea RikReay Sabay Chet...”) <sup>14</sup> while walking in circle. Group 1 will move to the right while Group 2 moves to the left, until the facilitator says “Stop!” and everyone in the group stops walking.

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<sup>13</sup> This is an optional activity to be played at the discretion of the facilitator.

<sup>14</sup> This is a Khmer popular song, danced during Khmer New Year or other celebrations.

## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

- Participants in Group 1 should find a person close to them from Group 2 and have a conversation. Group 1 should introduce themselves and start a short conversation to learn about each other's their family and what they like to do.

### 3. Play the Game

Begin by singing the rhyme. After a few moments, stop and ask participants to get into pairs and introduce themselves. After a minute, sing the rhyme again; then stop. Participants should find a new person close to them to talk to. Repeat the process five or six times, so that everyone has met.



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS



### 4. Review

Ask participants:

- How did the game make you feel?
- What happened in the game?
- Why did we play this game?
- What did you learn from the game?

### 5. Ask Participants to Summarize

“What did you learn from the two introductory games (Swapping Places and Circle Game)?”

### KEY POINTS

- Playing games makes us feel more relaxed and enjoy each other’s company.
- If we want to make changes in our lives, we need to work together and support each other.
- Getting to know and appreciate each other is the first step towards working together!



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

### ACTIVITY 3: Hopes and Fears

A group discussion

#### PURPOSE

- To provide a space for forging new relationships and strengthening existing ones.
- To give participants an opportunity to express their expectations, concerns and ask questions.
- To provide background information on the course.

#### MATERIALS

- 20 small paper cards, 10 in red and 10 in blue.<sup>15</sup>

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Introduction

Explain that the following exercise is an opportunity for all participants to ask questions about this course by listing their hopes/expectations and their fears.

##### 2. Discussion in pairs

Ask participants to split into pairs. Tell them to think about the expectations, hopes and fears they have for this course:

- What are your expectations from the course/session?
- What are you worried about?<sup>16</sup>



<sup>15</sup> The number is indicative, and can vary from project to project.

<sup>16</sup> Facilitators should guide participants to reflect on opportunities to practice what they are learning through the project, and possible constraints. Examples include opportunities to adopt good nutrition practices, sharing household work, but also being able to join the monthly sessions. Constraints may include lack of time, resources, fear of being judged by other participants.



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

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### 3. Group Discussion

Place the cards in a bag and explain to the participants that the red cards are for the fears, and the blue ones are for the hopes. The facilitator goes around the group with the bag (holding it in a way that the participants cannot see the cards inside), asking everyone to pick a card. If the card is red, the person has to express a fear; if blue, a hope.

- The facilitator can go around the group twice or more to go more in depth about participant's fears and hopes.
- Answer the fears by clarifying, reassuring the participants and advancing solutions. For example, if a participant says: "I am not sure I will be able to understand what is being discussed", a response could be: "What can we do to support each other during the activities?"

Explain to participants that this activity will help develop listening skills and communicate better as listening to people's hopes and fears can give insight into social beliefs and practices that affect our nutrition, family lives, and community. Provide an example: If we do not care for a tree properly, insects and weeds can prevent the tree from growing up and bearing fruit, therefore we need to look after it. Similarly, to ensure a healthy environment for our families and communities, we need to overcome barriers that prevent us from dropping harmful practices.

### KEY POINTS

- All hopes and fears are worth expressing and listening to.
- Most hopes for the course can be achieved, and fears can be prevented or addressed.

## ACTIVITY 4: Ground Rules

A group discussion establishing rules of engagement

### PURPOSE

- To clarify ways of relating to each other which show respect.
- To develop a set of rules that will guide the group's and facilitator's behavior.
- To commit to a process in which all feel included and able to participate.

### MATERIALS

- Flip chart
- Markers



## PART 1: INTRODUCTIONS

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### PROCESS

#### 1. Discussion

Ask participants “what can we all do to make this course a productive and enjoyable experience? What do we all need to do, so that everyone feels included and confident to participate?” Give an example: we can show respect for other people’s views by listening actively and not interrupting.

#### 2. Collect and Record Ground Rules

Have participants raise their hands and offer suggestions. Record their suggestions on the flip chart. Further examples of common ground rules may include:

- Attending sessions regularly
- Being punctual
- Asking questions if something is unclear
- Giving everyone a chance to speak
- Supporting those with babies or small children who need assistance

#### 3. Conclusion

Read the rules aloud to the group. Check for understanding and agreement. Ask for one member to take care of the rules and bring them back at the next meeting.

### KEY POINTS

- Everyone’s voice and opinion is important.
- Agreeing on ground rules early makes it easier to work together later on.



## PART 2: BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

### Note to Facilitators

Access to nutritious foods is a sensitive issue and participants need to build trust in order to confront difficult questions and choices. This session is dedicated to strengthening relationships among participants, so that they can freely and confidently share opinions and ideas.

### ACTIVITY 1: Defining Trust

Participants discuss and describe the meaning of 'trust'.

#### PURPOSE

- To build the trust necessary in order to confront difficult issues, questions, choices.
- To begin to establish supportive relationships amongst participants.

#### MATERIALS

- Flipchart and marker.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Introduction

Explain that we must be able to trust each other if we want to work together successfully. Outline the purpose of this activity.

##### 2. Group Discussion

Ask participants what TRUST means to them. Stimulate the discussion with examples.

E.g.: "Who is the person you trust the most? Why? What qualities does this person have?"

##### 3. Group Division

- Ask participants to discuss in pairs.

##### 4. Completing the Task

Explain to participants: sometimes we have problems or situations that make us feel bad, that we are not able to share with everyone. Still, it is important to talk about these things with others. When you are in such a situation, whom do you share your thoughts with? Why do you trust this person?



## PART 2: BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

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In your groups, discuss the qualities you look for in a person in whom you would confide. Do not give out names – simply describe the qualities of the person. What kind of person is she? Why would you go to her/him for advice?

Give groups 5-10 minutes to discuss, then bring them back together.

### 5. Final Group Discussion

- List all the qualities the small groups identified as promoting of trust. Explain and describe how and why each is important.
- Ask, “What can we do in this group to build trust in each other?” Encourage participants to think of suggestions; share them and ask everyone whether they agree to them. For example: keeping what is said in the group confidential!

### KEY POINTS

- We all have secrets or embarrassing problems in life. Sometimes we would like to share them with people who can reassure or help us.
- In this group, we may be discussing some things that we aren’t ready to share with just anyone. As a group, we should build trust in each other so we can all support and help each other.
- We can all learn from other people and our own experiences – but only if we think about the experiences critically and discuss them together.
- Part of building trust in our group is showing up to all the sessions. We trust our fellow group members to be here.
- We trust that no one will laugh at what we say.
- We trust that all participants will not share the discussions outside the group.

## ACTIVITY 2: Demonstrating and Building Trust

Exploring trust, teamwork, mutual support and cooperation in everyday life

### PURPOSE

- To demonstrate and experience the value of working together and taking responsibility for each other.



## PART 2: BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS



### PROCESS

#### 1. Set Up

Explain that this game is about making eye contact. This is sometimes difficult for people, as it requires a certain amount of trust and respect. Some people avoid it, others aren't good at it, and it makes some people feel uncomfortable.

#### 2. Play the Game

Get people in pairs facing one other. Participants can be either seated or standing, as they prefer. Ask them to stare in their partner's eyes for at least 1 minute. Neither should be wearing glasses. There may be some giggles at first, and some might feel awkward. But as participants get the hang of it, it should become easier for them to make eye contact for longer amounts of time.

#### Discuss what happened:

- How did you feel stare into your partner's eyes?
- Did anything change from the beginning to the end?
- How was it different?
- How does this exercise show the importance of trust and mutual support in life?

## PART 2: BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

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### KEY POINTS

- Trust, mutual support and cooperation are important in everyday life to help us cope with responsibilities.
- When we have trust within a group, we feel more comfortable about sharing personal experiences and broaden our learning.

### ACTIVITY 3: Obstacles to Listening

A brief group discussion

### PURPOSE

- To analyze and understand daily obstacles to our active listening and clear communication skills.

### PROCESS

#### 1. Group Discussion

**Step 1:** The facilitator asks participants to share their own experiences of how they felt when they tried to explain something to someone but that person did not listen.

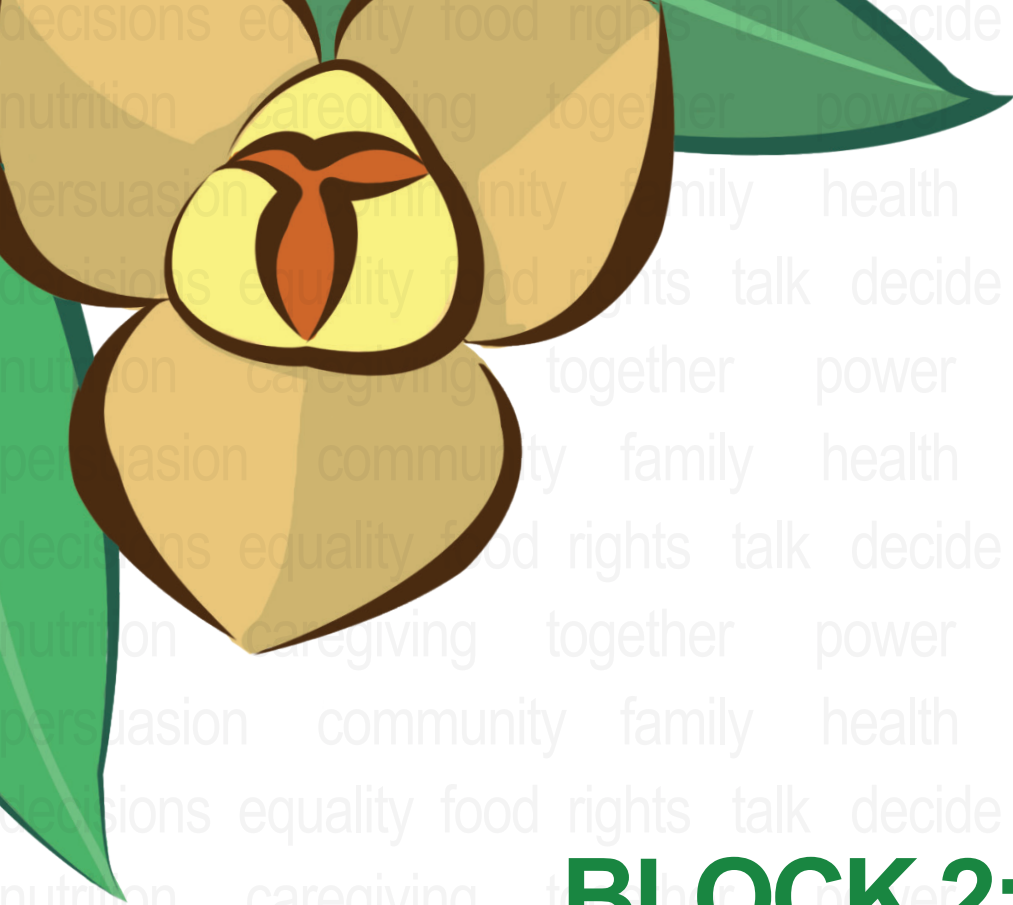
**Step 2:** The facilitator probes participants further with the following questions:

- Why do you think that they did not listen or pay attention to you?
- What did you do when you realized that the other person was not listening to you?
- Do you listen better to some people? Who? Why?
- In the household, do we listen to some people more than others? Why?
- In the community, do we listen to some people more than others? Why?

### KEY POINTS

- For many people, being heard is a problem.
- Active listening requires attention and concentration. This is something we all need to practice if we want to really hear what the other person is telling us.
- Good communication begins with active listening.





# **BLOCK 2: UNDERSTANDING PERCEPTIONS AND GENDER**







## Block 2: UNDERSTANDING PERCEPTIONS AND GENDER

### Note to Facilitators

In this session, we will explore how perceptions and traditional beliefs influence the way we see others and ourselves. We will practice viewing situations from the perspectives of others and not judging others until we have tried to understand their point of view.

We will also understand how some traditional beliefs can be harmful for our families and societies, even if we think everyone agrees with them. We will understand that ideas about how we should behave are not natural but created. As a society, we create beliefs and traditions. Because we create them, we can also change them.

Part and Topic	Activity	Duration	Page
Part 1: <b>Understanding Gendered Perspectives</b>	1. Partial Viewpoints	25 minutes	16
	2. Exploring Gendered Behavior	40 minutes	19
Part 2: <b>Nutrition and Valuing People</b>	1. Access to Nutrition	30 minutes	22



## PART 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

### Note to Facilitators

The following activities are designed to explore existing common behaviors in our societies. Depending on the roles we perform (e.g. woman or man, mother, father, mother-in-law, etc.), we are expected to behave accordingly, in accordance with our traditions and beliefs. However, we are often unaware that certain behaviors encourage discriminating actions against some people, or result in harmful consequences to their health and wellbeing. For example, a common belief in Cambodia is that “a woman’s place is in the home.” This is often a reason for parents to take their girls out of school early, or for men to ban their wives from participating in village group meetings or joining in other activities that are far from their village. A girl who is notable to obtain an education is less likely to earn an independent income in the future or be able to be an active decision-maker in her household. This can negatively impact the wellbeing and economy of both the family and the society she lives in.

With regard to nutrition, eating rice and dried food is very common among families in rural Cambodia. Feeding children this limited diet can have harmful consequences for their long and short-term health, so it is important to emphasize that providing children with an adequate and diverse diet is essential to their good health.

### ACTIVITY 1: Partial Viewpoints

Demonstrates that different people have different viewpoints

#### PURPOSE

- To recognize that our perceptions are based on who we are and on our experiences.
- To encourage people to be less judgmental about the actions of others.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Set Up

Form a circle and have one participant stand in the middle. S/he will maintain the same still position throughout the activity. Ask four or more people to stand in front, behind, and to the left and right of him/her.



## PART 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Explain to the participants in the middle of the circle that you are going to ask some questions. Each participant should answer every question according to what s/he can actually see, NOT what s/he knows is there.

### 2. Process

Ask participants the following questions:

- Ask someone standing in front of the person in the middle, “How many eyes has s/he got?”
- Ask someone standing behind the person, “How many eyes has s/he got?”
- Ask the people standing directly to either side of the person, “How many eyes has s/he got?”

Place another participant in the middle of the circle, and other people around him/her. This time ask different questions, choosing, for example, the arms or the nose.



## PART 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

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### 3. Discuss

Briefly discuss the different answers. Point out that all the answers are 'right', because depending on where we stand, we see different things. Explain that if we stand in an open field we see the sky touching the ground. If we go little farther, we see the sky touching the ground in another place. In reality, the sky never touches the ground – this is our partial viewpoint. We often reach a conclusion or decision on the basis of our own perspectives, without knowing or analyzing the actual situation. We need to be aware of our partial viewpoints, which can lead to misunderstandings and unhappiness in our families.

### 4. Changing our Viewpoint

Ask participants “How can we get a full picture of the person?” Ask one participant to walk all the way around the person in the middle, perceiving her/him from all angles. Discuss:

- How does this exercise relate to our everyday experiences?
- How does our perspective of a situation affect our understanding of it?
- How can we give ourselves a more complete picture of a situation?
- What can we learn from this exercise?

### 5. More Examples

Ask for three volunteers to act out the following situation:

- A pregnant woman is holding her baby while cooking. Her face shows that she is feeling very ill.
- Her elder son is watching her.
- Her husband comes from the fields and shouts: “Is the food not ready yet? What do you do all day? You can’t do anything properly!”
- The more the husband shouts, the more the wife and son feel afraid.
- The son leaves.

### 6. Discuss

Ask participants to talk about the scene.

- Imagine you are the wife, the son, the husband. What are you thinking about each other?
- How would a neighbor perceive the situation? Why?
- Do you think these family members are treating one another with respect? How so? Why not?
- How can we improve the situation and treat each other with more respect?

## PART 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

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### KEY POINTS

- In any situation different people view things differently.
- It is helpful to consider situations from many different points of view and get a full picture before judging them, particularly on the basis of gender.

### ACTIVITY 2: Exploring Gendered Behavior

Pictures and discussion

### PURPOSE

- To demonstrate everyday gendered actions that appear “natural.”
- To explore these gendered actions critically through discussion.
- To show the potential negative consequences of these actions.

### MATERIALS

Laminated pictures representing the scenarios described below:

- A husband and his wife are coming home from the field. The husband sits and relaxes while the wife starts cooking.
- A mother worries about her daughter’s safety. She has been accepted to go to university far away from home.
- A husband and his wife discuss about buying a motorbike. The wife points out that they do not have sufficient savings and should wait until they have the right amount. Without consulting his wife, he borrows the amount from a relative and purchases the motorbike.

### PROCESS

#### 1. Introduction

Re-iterate that sometimes common beliefs and actions only seem normal and right because we are used to them, and may have harmful consequences for our health and wellbeing. For example, giving water to babies who are breastfed under the age of six months can cause health problems, and children who are fed only rice will not grow up healthy. Similarly, if we treat children only in traditional ways, they will never question these traditions or wonder about a better life, and will have limited options later in life.

**PART 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDERED PERSPECTIVES**



**2. Set Up**

Explain that now the group will look at some pictures based on everyday behavior and actions that seem normal and right, and then discuss them.

**3. Process**

The facilitator describes a picture representing the following scenarios:<sup>17</sup>

- 1) A man and a woman return from a day working in the field. The man rests while the woman does household chores.
- 2) A mother is worried about her daughter's safety. She is hesitant about sending her daughter to the city to pursue higher education (university) because it is too far from home.
- 3) A married couple wants to buy a new motorbike to travel to the market, health center and other facilities. One day the husband proceeds to buy a new motorbike, which is quite expensive. As the couple does not have enough savings, the husband borrows additional money from his sister-in-law.

<sup>17</sup> The facilitator is free to show one or more scenarios, depending on the participants' level of engagement and time availability.

# PART 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

## Note to Facilitators

**Scene 1** shows the persistence of some stereotypes in our society. Women contribute to the household wealth like their husbands, however once home, the domestic duties are mainly their responsibility.

**Scene 2** demonstrates that lack of safety in public spaces mostly affects women, resulting sometimes in women being deprived of access to education and other services or facilities.

**Scene 3** represents a common decision-making process in our community, where the husband has the ultimate (and sole) decision when it comes to big/important assets.

## 4. Discuss

Review the message from the scenario observed. For each picture, ask the group, “What do these scenes represent?”

Then, relate the discussion to the context and ask the group:

- Have you ever seen any of these scenes happen in your community?
- What do you think about them?
- Should we change them and how? Have participants put forwards suggestions for change.

## KEY POINTS

- We get used to the way people behave every day, even if our actions are not fair or right.
- Girls and boys’ behavior is not something they are born with. Parents, societies and families teach our children to become boys/girls and men/women.
- Girls and young women grow up experiencing that they are not equal to boys and young men. They learn to feel inferior and unimportant. This makes them think themselves as worthless. They find it hard to stand up for themselves and always obey orders from others.
- Boys grow up believing they are more important than girls, which make them treat girls and women as less important or even worthless.
- Our expectations and social norms guide our actions and behaviors.  
For example, if girls and women are always expected to be in the kitchen they start to believe that they belong there.
- We need to rethink and question our everyday actions to start changing norms.
- As parents, we have a responsibility to raise our children in more equal way and undo gender norms.

## PART 2: NUTRITION, SELF-WORTH AND VALUING PEOPLE

### Note to Facilitators

In many societies, it is hard for girls to develop a strong sense of self-worth. Often, boys have greater access to education, food, time to play, and attention and affection from others. This results in girls feeling less valued, especially when they are criticized or not recognized or praised for their hard work.

As girls grow up to be women they may not believe that they deserve to be treated well by their husbands. They may not believe they are entitled to get as much food as others, to access healthcare when they are sick, or to have the opportunity to develop their skills and abilities. They may feel their lack of importance is natural and right.

This makes it hard for women to challenge the power dynamics that prevent them from participating in household decision-making and taking their fair share of food, negatively affecting their nutrition.

### ACTIVITY 1: Access to Nutrition

A reflection on adequate nutrition practices

#### PURPOSE

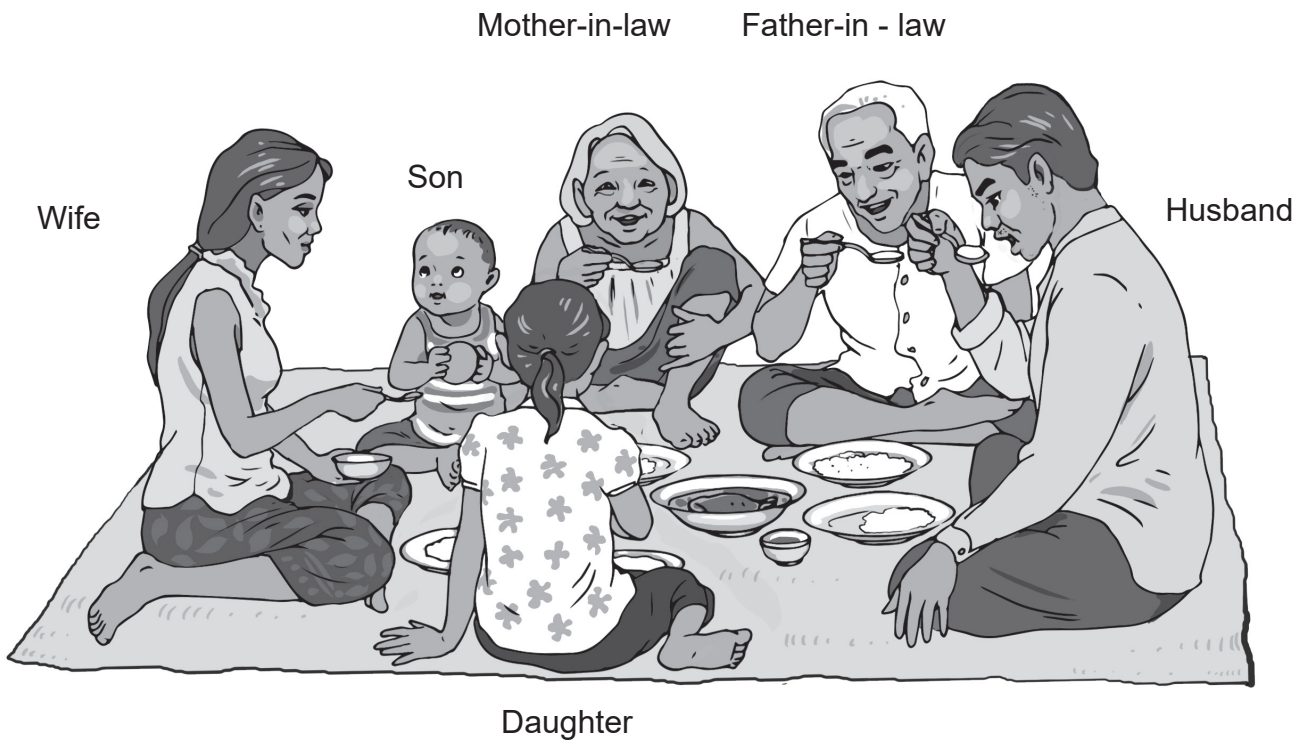
- To expose and explore gender- and position-based inequalities within a household.
- To discuss the potential impact of such inequalities on nutritional status.
- To propose actions to address the inequalities.

#### MATERIALS

- An image representing a family (husband and wife, the husband's parents, son and daughter) having dinner.
- A picture for each of the six family members (husband and wife, the husband's parents, son and daughter).

## BLOCK 2

### PART 2: NUTRITION, SELF-WORTH AND VALUING PEOPLE



#### PROCESS

##### 1. Set Up

Explain that this session looks at who has decision-making authority in a household, and who may be disadvantaged in terms of food sharing. Describe the pictures one by one and place them on the ground next to each other, forming a strip.

##### 2. Discuss

Ask participants:

- Have you seen this kind of sharing before? Is it familiar?

**OPTION 1** [If participants respond YES - the distribution is unequal]

- Is everybody happy with what they got? Who are the winners/losers?
- Why did some people get more than others? Who got the eggs? Who got the fish? Why?
- What is the effect of this distribution of food on different members of the household?

**OPTION 2** [If participants respond NO - the distribution is equal]

- Can you recall what you learned during the nutrition (ENA) session about women's and girls' nutrition?
- Why is it important that women and girls get adequate nutrition?
- What does adequate nutrition look like? What kind of foods does it include?

## PART 2: NUTRITION, SELF-WORTH AND VALUING PEOPLE

### 3. Exercise (optional)<sup>18</sup>

Ask for four volunteers (possibly a female, a male and grandparents) to help you rank the pictures of the family members according the following questions. After each question, check for consensus from the group:

- Who is the most and least powerful in terms of access to resources such as nutrition?
- Who is the most and least powerful in terms of decision-making?
- Who is the most and least powerful in terms of their ability to raise some income from economic activities?

### Note to Facilitators:

The wife usually occupies a position further up in the line because she contributes to household income, yet when it comes to food distribution she is ranked lowest. This indicates that her economic contribution is valued even if her social status is low. Ensure you point this out if no one comments on it.

### 4. Discussion

Initiate a discussion on the unequal status of men and women and girls and boys in a household. Ask the group: “What is the effect of social status and inequalities on individual health and wellbeing? What is the effect of such inequalities in terms of children’s health and wellbeing?” Also ask them to consider pregnancy and breastfeeding.

### KEY POINTS

- When people feel that they are making valuable contribution to the household and to the community, they are known for having a good sense of self-worth.
- A person’s sense of self-worth begins to develop during childhood, based on how they are treated by their family, by community members, at school, and by religious leaders and others in position of power. Boys and girls will grow up feeling equally valued and respected if these groups treat them like valued individuals who deserve attention, and encourage them to overcome challenges they face.

<sup>18</sup> This exercise is to deepen the discussion on decision-making around nutrition, if needed.

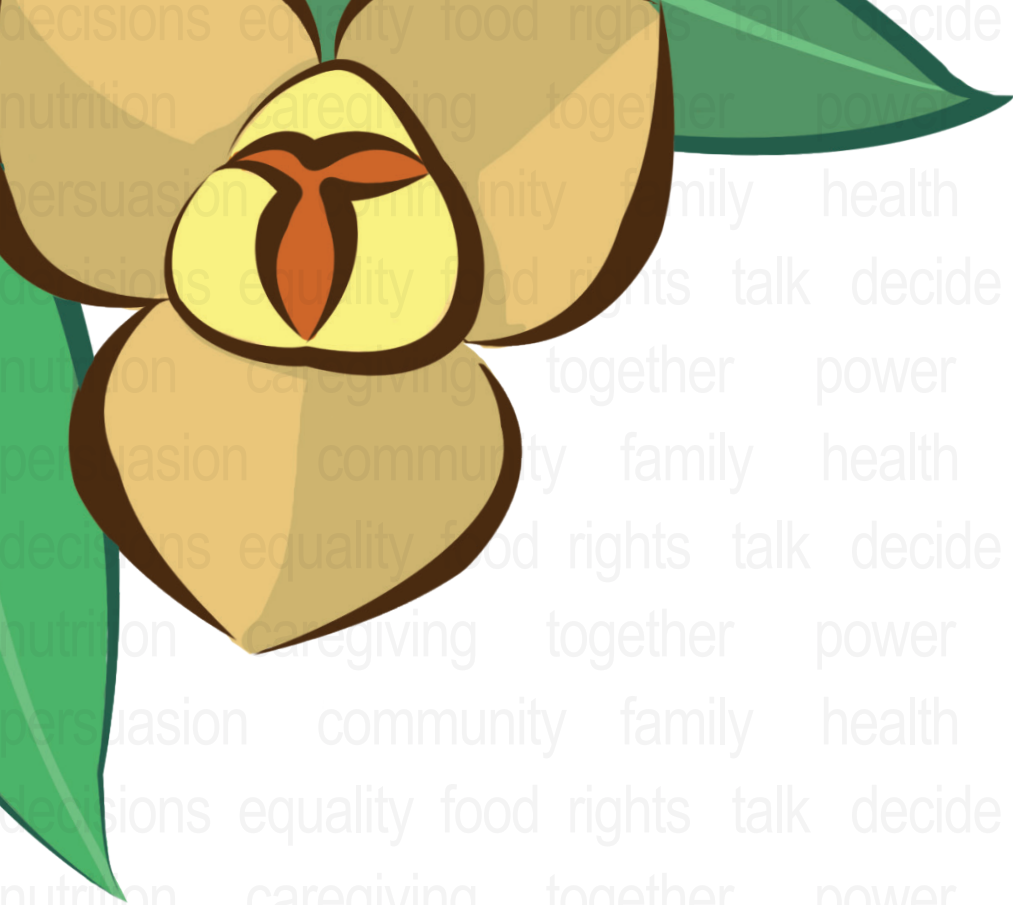


## **PART 2: NUTRITION, SELF-WORTH AND VALUING PEOPLE**

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- There is a great deal of inequality in many households and as a result some people are significantly disadvantaged compared to others. Often, discrimination happens on the basis of gender.
- Issues of social exclusion and injustice need to be identified, explored and addressed.
- Individuals, households and communities must begin to embrace practices that encourage participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability, based on the respect for human rights.
- We can assist each other by encouraging, praising, thanking, showing respect and admiration for each other and ourselves. Such experiences will change the way we see each other.





# **Block 3:** **NEGOTIATING POWER**







## Block 3: NEGOTIATING POWER

### Note to Facilitators

These sessions build on Blocks 1 and 2, which focused on communication, perceptions, and gendered relations. In the Block 3 sessions we will explore how relations among people and communication are impacted by power. Some people have more power than others just because of who they are. This reality often has direct consequences on the health and nutrition of all family members. People with the least power often have less access to food, and they have little or no say over how decisions are made.

In these sessions we will look at power. What makes some people more powerful than others? What gives them authority? How can we all use power to make ourselves, our households and our community stronger?

Part and Topic	Activity	Duration	Page
Part 1: <b>Exploring Power Relations</b>	1. Power Hierarchies	30 minutes	28
	2. Relations of Power and Domestic Violence	45 minutes	30
Part 2: <b>Exercising Power</b>	1. Story of Mom		35
	2. Asset Control and Access Mapping	45 minutes	38
	3. Managing Saving and Expenditures in the family	45 minutes	41
Session 3: <b>Assertiveness</b>	1. What is Assertiveness?	30 minutes	44
	2. Let's think about Change!	30 minutes	46



## PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

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### ACTIVITY 1: Power Hierarchies

A ranking activity

#### PURPOSE

- To explore what gives people power and to identify sources of power.
- To establish hierarchies of status and power.
- To examine how people in positions of power make us feel.

#### MATERIALS

- Pictures of family members: grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, daughter, and son.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Family Members Ask participants:

“Who are the members of our families?” While they answer, show them the pictures of every family member: grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, daughter, and son. Facilitator requests 6 participants to volunteer and gives them a picture each.

##### 2. Sort the Family by Perceived Power

Explain to participants that “Power can be defined as the degree of control over things and people. Power is held by individuals, social groups (such as men, elders, health care workers, and teachers), and institutions (such as the government). Being powerful means people are in a position to make decisions, control resources, and direct others what to do.”

##### 3. Ask participants

To sort the pictures of household members from the most powerful to the least powerful. Some people may be perceived to have the same degree of power. If that is the case, they can place their pictures next to each other.

##### 4. Discuss

Discuss the power hierarchy: What is the source of power that different people hold? What gives them power? Because not every household has the same composition of family members, you may expect different answers. Ask participants to give you an explanation of what makes one person more powerful than others. Examples are:

## BLOCK 3

### PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

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- Gender
- Position in the family/household
- Knowledge/wisdom
- Wealth
- Social status/traditional village hierarchy (e.g., chiefs)
- Physical strength
- Health
- Moral rectitude (honest behaviour)

Ask participants: Who is the most/least powerful person in a household?

How is that decided? (Tradition?) Who is the most/least powerful person in a community?

How is that decided? (Tradition?)

**From Most Powerful**



**To Least Powerful**

## PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

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Discuss how power and status influence the way we look at people. Probe the discussion with further questions such as:

- How do you behave in the presence of people who are powerful? For example, do you feel embarrassed? Uncomfortable? Do you speak less? Do you try not to be the one to make the decisions?
- How do you behave in the presence of people who you think are below you?
- How do you treat them?

### KEY POINTS

- Everyone has different degrees of power. This determines how they consider their own capacities, whether they are allowed to participate in decision-making, and to what extent they can control their lives.
- People draw on different sources to obtain power and authority.
- Often power and authority are allocated on the basis of gender, age, or position alone. This relates to culture and tradition and, since culture and tradition have been created by people, we can also change them! Power relations in the household are constantly negotiated. Good communication and peace in the home are based on a mutual understanding that everyone has important contributions to make.

### ACTIVITY 2: Relations of Power

A game based on images cut into puzzles

#### PURPOSE

- To review messages about sources of power and authority.
- To deepen understanding of power differentials and relations.
- To develop the ability to talk about and negotiate power.

#### MATERIALS

- A collection of pictures related to (sources of) power, cut or torn up into enough pieces for all participants (choose either if the two blocks below)
- A printed image of each picture that has been cut into pieces



## PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

<p><b>OPTION 1: Different Kinds of Power</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Woman/person getting beaten <b>(power over)</b></li> <li>2. A woman making pot <b>(power with)</b></li> <li>3. A man selling pots by Tuk Tuk <b>(power within)</b></li> <li>4. A group of people working in the rice field <b>(power to)</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>OPTION 2: Different Sources of Power</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Picture of a person with a book or computer <b>(information)</b></li> <li>2. Picture of an elder person counselling another <b>(wisdom)</b></li> <li>3. Picture of a person with money <b>(wealth)</b></li> <li>4. A strong and healthy person <b>(physical strength)</b></li> </ol>
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### Note for Facilitators

Pictures need to be changed according to the local context. For example, in Cambodia facilitators prefer to use scenes from Option 1, as they are more practical and relevant to the context.

### PROCESS

#### 1. Set Up

Distribute one puzzle piece to each participant. Ask them to move around the space and find others holding a piece of their picture.

When all the pictures have been put together, ask each group to discuss: What is happening in your picture? What does it mean? What is the message? What kind of power do you see in this picture?

Explain that there are four different types of power: power over, power within, power to, and power with.

#### 2. Discuss “Power Over”

This is the type of power we think of most commonly. Power over has many negative associations for people. We think of force, abuse, discrimination, and oppression. In many households the people who have the resources and make most decisions are men. They have power over the other family members, who are excluded from participating in decision-making. In the worse case scenarios, young women are also excluded from access to healthy food, healthcare, land ownership, as well as decisions related to seeds selection, household financial management, and matters related to raising children (e.g. education, marriage).

## PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

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Ask participants to name a few examples of 'power over'. If they are having trouble, refer them to the images used in the game. Ask them whether power over is always negative, or are there also good ways of exercising control?

Explain that power over and exercising control does not always have to be negative. For example, if you dig a hole to plant a fruit tree you exercise power over nature with the purpose of feeding your family. If you make rules about how to keep the toilet clean and how to use the water pump, this is also about exercising control, with the purpose of keeping your family safe and healthy. If you teach a child to eat all his vegetables you exercise power over so that he will be healthy and grow well.

Ask people to turn to their neighbours and chat briefly: What do you do when other people dominate you? When they exercise power over you?

After a few moments ask participants to share some of their responses. Point out that our responses differ depending on who exercises power, and whether their control is negative or positive.

## PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

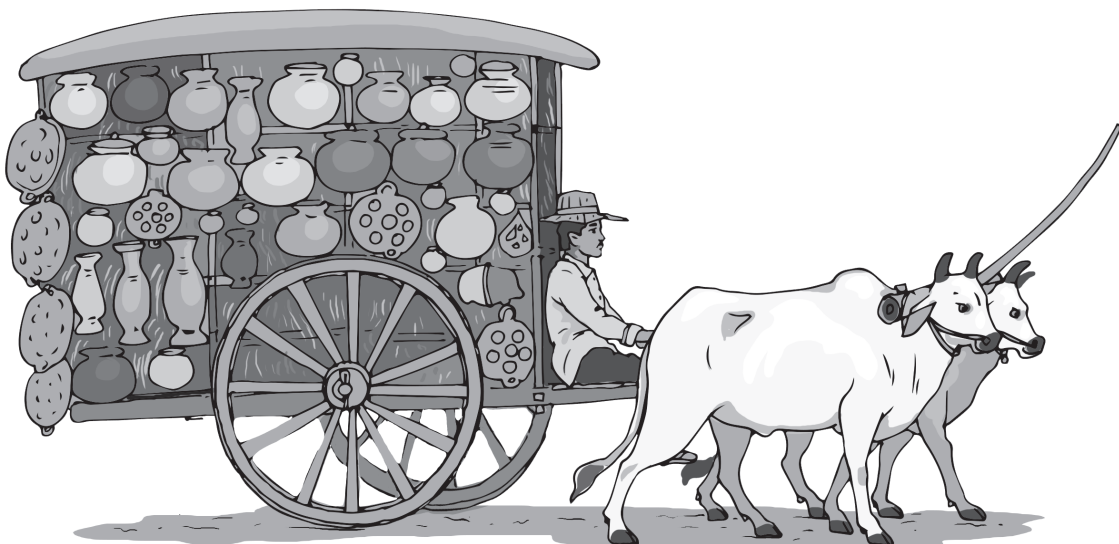
### 3. Discuss the Other Types of Power

Explain that there are three other ways of exercising power. Rather than making us feel excluded or reduced, these make us feel strong. These three powers are important if we want to change our lives, homes and communities. We need to recognize our own abilities and power within, acknowledge that we can have the power to act, and join each other in a sense of collective power with to move and shape the world. These types of power are:

- **Power Within.** This power has to do with our sense of self-worth and self-knowledge. It is the power that comes from knowing our strengths and our weaknesses, and feeling confident about what we are good at. It is the sense of dignity we have inside. This power gives us hope for the future and strength to act for change.



- **Power to.** Every person has the power to make a difference: the power to use her or his skills and knowledge to shape their life and the world in which we live. The power to comes from power within: the more we feel our own worth, the more we feel we have the power to act.



## PART 1: EXPLORING POWER RELATIONS

- **Power with.** It is hard to confront our daily struggles alone. Power with is the power that comes from collective strength. If we give each other mutual support, solidarity, and recognition we can work together. Power with is based on identifying what we have in common, despite our differences, and seeking ways to act together.



Give participants a few moments to think about the four powers you described. Then ask them to think of examples that illustrate each power. The examples will demonstrate that participants are clear about each of the powers.

### KEY POINTS

- There are different kinds of power (power over, to, within, and with).
- There are different sources of power such as gender, age, social position (status), information, wealth, and wisdom.
- Different situations call for different kinds of power. However, when people exercise power over others, they can exclude them from participating in decision-making, or impose their own decisions on others.
- It is better to make decisions together, exercising power with one another.

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

### Note to Facilitators

Understanding how power works is an important first step towards making a change in our behavior. At the beginning of this curriculum, we explored how girls and young women are often given the message that they are not as important as boys and young men. We discussed how this sense of powerlessness is about gender (the way we raise our girls and boys) and gender relations (the way boys/girls and men/women communicate, live together, have different responsibilities, and participate in decision-making). We discussed that an example of power over includes domestic violence, and we will explore more examples in the coming session.

In this session we will discuss how one woman, Mom, had to learn to change her life and how she began to see herself differently. Then we will explore assertiveness, or the ability to stand up for yourself. This is sometimes also called 'exercising power'.

### ACTIVITY 1: The Story of Mom

A story to illustrate how to build self-esteem

#### PURPOSE

- To see the four different types of power (power over, power within, power to, power with) in action.
- To understand the link between power over to domestic violence and its forms.
- To show how a single person can have a significant impact on their community.
- To show how low self-worth is taught to children, especially girls, but they can be some of the biggest contributors to the health and prosperity of a community.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Tell Mom's Story

As a young girl, Mom was expected to be quiet and to listen. After school she used to help her mother prepare lunch, do the wash, and clean the homestead. Meanwhile, her older brother played soccer with his friends. At dinner, Mom was mostly served food last with her mother, as she would normally have had to feed her 3-year-old sister, while her mother had to clean up after cooking. She assumed that this was natural: she was just a young girl and expected to be helpful but never make demands or participate in family decisions.

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

She had to stop school after only six years so that her older brother could continue to the higher class. When she was 18 she learned that her parents wanted her to get married to the son of their friends whom she had never met and was five years older than her. Although she did not want to get married to him, she knew that she had to listen to her parents.

During her marriage, she was often beaten and shouted at if the food was not ready in time, or if she did not give her husband the money he asked for. Several times her neighbors and relatives suggested Mom to report the episodes of violence to the police. She knew his behavior was illegal, yet she hesitated as she was afraid that no one would support her and four children financially if she left her husband. She finally sought support and divorced her husband.

One day she was offered the opportunity to work in a programme for children at the community. She had never worked away from home and she was scared, but she decided to try. Every day that she worked she learned new skills. The children and their parents liked her and often gave her compliments. Day by day, Mom began to see herself in a new way. She realised she was a good community worker and she began to think that she had some worth after all.

Mom started to share and speak about her life experiences to local women in the community. Women felt encouraged to change their lives and started to express interest in empowerment programs.

### 2. Discuss

Ask participants:

- Who are the main actors in the story?
- What happened in the story of Mom? Why Mom's family does not value her?
- When does Mom recognise her own value?
- How is the story of Mom familiar? Have you ever experienced feelings of worthlessness? Of not being valued? Why did you feel like that? What do you think about the episode of violence that happened to Mom? Why do you think it happened? Do you think there are specific reasons? (Probe with examples if no one answers: alcohol consumption, 'tradition', wife deserved it...)
- How do you think domestic violence affects the health of the household members and that of the community? What consequences does it have for women?
- Do you think that domestic violence can be avoided? If so, what can we do as a family to prevent this? In Mom's story, how did the situation change? What led her to see herself in a new way?
- What can we all do to support changes that lead to a sense of self-worth and confidence in our own and other people's abilities?

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

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### 3. Analyze the Power Relations in Mom's Story (optional)

We saw in Mom's story that her parents wanted her to stay at home while her brother was given the opportunity to play soccer and go out. At the age of 18, she was married. She was beaten and shouted by her husband if she did not perform according to her expected role as the wife or mother. This is called "power over," that is, when someone else decides what you are allowed to do or say. When she divorced her husband and she was offered an opportunity to work, she discovered her skills and abilities. This is "power within" – knowing that you are good at doing something. Mom found her "power within" as community worker.

When Mom decided to contribute to her community by working for a program for children, she exercised her "power to" – giving her power to the community and using her skills and knowledge to shape the world in which she lives. When Mom formed an organization with other women, bringing them together to use their strengths and to support each other, we see their collective power, called "power with."

#### KEY POINTS

- Young girls often see themselves as having less worth than young boys because they are not treated the same way.
- Girls and young women are often unaware of their own feelings of worthlessness because it is 'normal' for them to see themselves and other girls/women as less important in society. As a result, they fail to see their condition as unfair and unjust.
- Once women recognize their strengths, they can develop their abilities and potential to become productive and useful members of communities.
- Domestic violence often happens in couple's relationships or among other family members, where one person tries to control another person (power over) living in the same household.
- Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, verbal, mental (including insults, threats and isolation) and economical violence.
- People often blame being drunk for violent behaviour. However, although alcohol consumption, gambling and feelings of powerlessness are factors that increase the likelihood of violence, they are not the real cause.
- Some people believe that men are allowed to control women. This can lead to violence. Certain traditional Khmer customs make people believe that men should be in charge of women and that men are of greater value than women. However, men and women are equal and have the same rights.

Anyone who has been beaten at home deserves assistance and protection. Their families, friends, community, and local NGOs and local authorities (village chiefs, commune chiefs,

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

commune councillors and the police) can support them. Police and other officers in the district or provincial department of women's affairs also have a duty to intervene.<sup>19</sup>

### ACTIVITY 2: Asset Control and Access Mapping

An activity to consider about the access and final decision over key household resources

#### PURPOSE

- To demonstrate how women and men both provide for the family but with different access to and decision-making power over household resources and assets.
- To propose changes to traditions regarding asset control and gender.

#### MATERIALS

- Flip-chart
- Pictures of family members (grandfather, grandmother, husband, wife, son and daughter).
- Pictures of key household assets (for example, the house, farming land, fish pond, garden and chickens).
- Pictures of other household assets (for example, a motorbike, hand tractor, radio, TV, water pump machine, cow, pig).<sup>20</sup>
- Markers or pens (2 different colors).

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Set Up

Ask participants to divide into two groups. Give each group a flip chart and some markers. Explain that as we have discussed in previous sessions, men may be perceived to be the providers for the family, both in terms of food and income, but women also play a big role as well. Considering that both play a part in providing for the family, we will now look at the assets and resources that women and men have to fulfill these needs. These assets are also sources of power.

Explain to participants that having “ownership of an asset” means a person controls and makes decisions about that asset. Family members might have access to, or take care of, assets that they do not “own.”

<sup>19</sup> Art. 10 Domestic Violence Law (DV Law) 2005 and the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC 2007) authorize the Ministry of Women's Affairs to employ Judicial Police to act in cases of domestic violence.

<sup>20</sup> Additional assets may be used at the discretion of the facilitator, to trigger further discussion as needed.

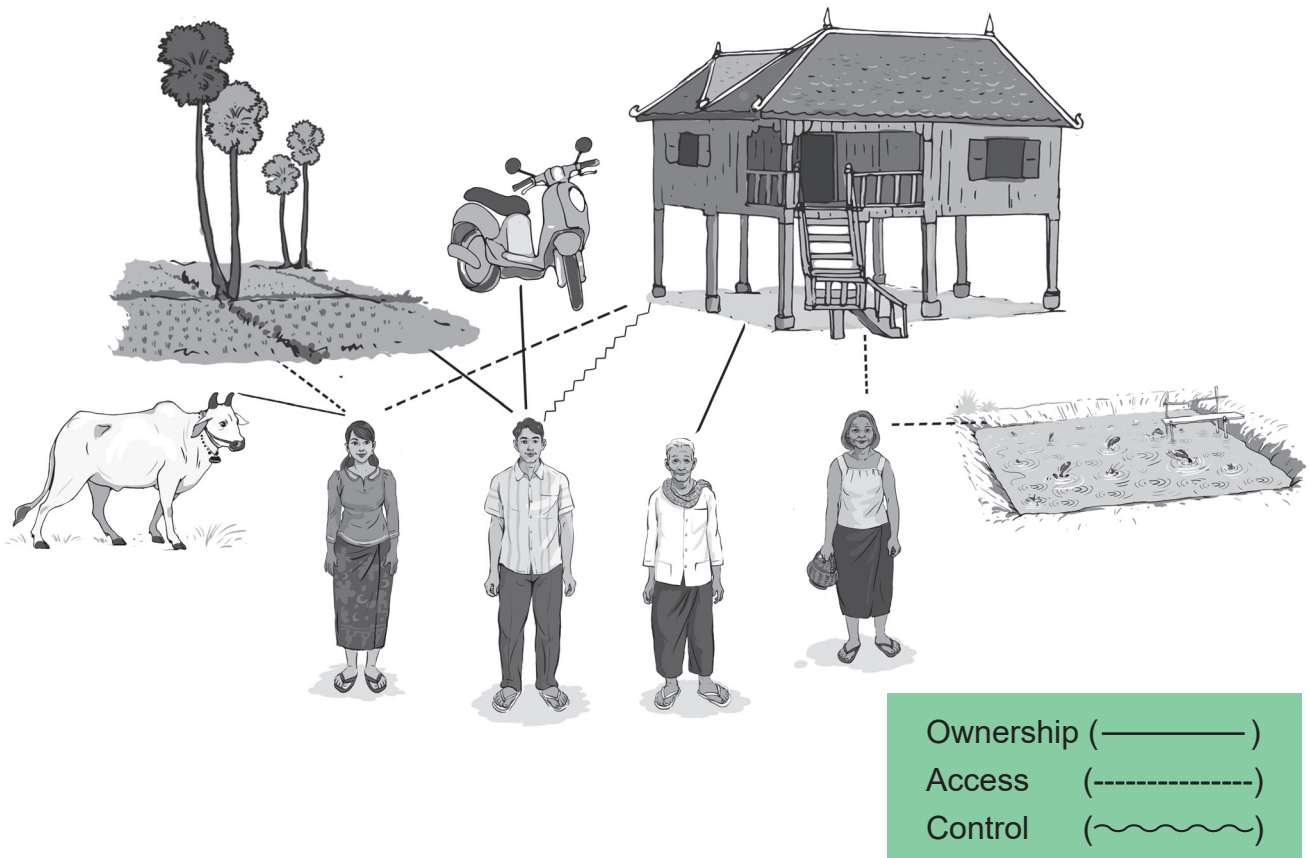


## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

### 2. Draw Diagrams

To save time, the facilitator prepares the pictures and asks: "What is the difference between having the final decision and using of the assets and resources?" Have participants draw a different type of line connecting each asset/resource to the family member who makes the final decision about and who uses each asset/resource.

- Use the red maker for the final decision
- Use the blue marker for the use of assets and/or resources.



## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

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### 3. Discuss

When the diagrams are complete, ask the group to summarize:

- Which assets are the most important for meeting daily food requirements? Why?
- Who has the final decision over the majority of these assets? Men or women? Why?
- Who has used the majority of the assets? Men or women? Why?
- Who will make the final decisions about how to use money after selling assets? Men or women? Why?

Ask probing questions to explore the patterns the groups have just diagrammed, such as:

- What type of assets do women own/control? Why?  
(Meaning: she has final decision over it)
- What type of assets do men own/control? Why?  
(Meaning: he has the final decision over it)
- Why do certain household members have final decision-making over important assets, and others don't?
- Do you think this pattern is satisfactory? Why/why not? If not, what should change?
- When it comes to making decisions about important household assets (for example, land, house, pond, or chickens), what process is followed in your household to reach a final conclusion? How do you go about making the decision?
- How does this process change during periods when family members are absent (for instance, migrating for labor)?
- Can you give an example of a time when you had one idea about what to do with an asset, but another family member had a different idea? How did the discussion take place? How was the issue addressed? Were you satisfied with the conclusion? Why or why not?
- What do you think of the idea of women owning assets? How do you think they should be managed within the household? Do you see any benefits?
- What have we learned about respecting others' feelings, opinions and interests in making family decisions?

### KEY POINTS

- Men are generally perceived as the providers for the family even though women play a big role in providing too.
- The fact that women's work in providing for the family is not acknowledged affects the status of women in the home and the community, as well as their self-esteem.

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

### ACTIVITY 3: Managing Savings and Expenditures in the Family

Two scenarios.

#### Note to Facilitators

Microfinance Institutions are increasingly more available in Cambodia, however not everyone sufficiently understands the details of such policies, such as paying back loans with interest. When people are unable to pay back their loans, they risk losing their properties, often their housing or farming lands. The negative impacts of such a scenario are many:

- 1) Males are often forced to migrate to other areas in search of income opportunities.
- 2) In the absence of male family members, women will have to take on much of the productive and reproductive (home care) activities on their own, adding considerably to their existing work burden.

In the context of Cambodia, wives are largely responsible for storing household funds, but this does not equate to having the power to making decisions around expenditure without the consent of their husbands. Typically, women are allowed to make small household purchases, such as food and school- related items for their children. All larger purchases (e.g. livestock, land, motorbike, etc.), including taking loans from microfinance institutions, are decided by men only.

This activity is designed to help participants reflect on intra-household dynamics around savings and expenditures, in an effort to create more equitable decision-making processes around this matter.

#### PURPOSE

- To discuss decision-making dynamics in the household around managing savings and expenditures.
- To understand and promote the importance of joint planning of savings and expenditures by couples.

#### PROCESS

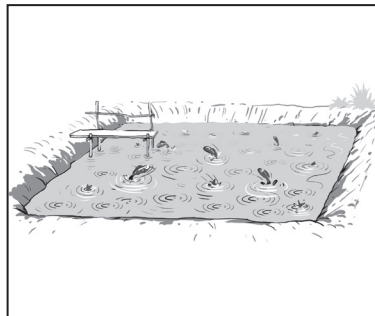
In the plenary session, the facilitator requests two volunteers to read the scenarios.

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

### 1) Scenario 1:

A husband and his wife are keen to start fish farming. Before engaging in this type of business, they discuss:

- a. **Their capital:** How much do they have? Do they need to borrow additional money and where from? If so, how much do they need to borrow?
- b. **The Expense:** How much money do they need to work on the pond? How much is required for the materials? (For example, fingerlings and feed.)
- c. **Resources:** Do they have any experience in fish farming? What is the potential contribution from within the family? Who can help? (The husband, wife, sons or daughters?) What is the seasonality of fish farming?
- d. **Market Accessibility:** Where will they be able to sell the fish and how much profit do they think that they will get?
- e. **Savings:** After selling the fishes, how much will they save?
- f. **Barriers:** What if the fingerlings die? What if they have no market access?<sup>21</sup>  
What if they encounter problems during food processing?<sup>22</sup>



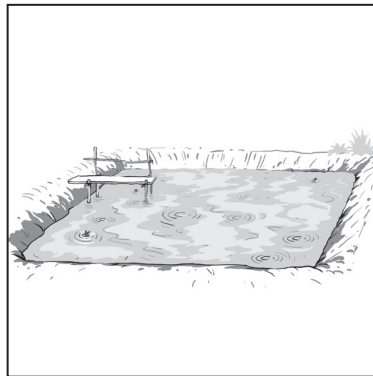
<sup>21</sup> By “market access”, we intend the ability to sell into local markets, which is determined by factors such as mobility, business relationships, time constraints and other business practices.

<sup>22</sup> Problems related to food processing include contamination and deterioration of fish, which then may affect their viability into markets and profitability.

## PART 2: EXERCISING POWER

### 2) Scenario 2:

A husband and his wife are keen to start fishing farming. They DO NOT discuss any of the issues of Case Study 1 BUT go right away to the borrow money from the microfinance. What might happen to this couple?



### DISCUSSION

- What happened in Scenario 1?
- What happened in Scenario 2?
- What did you learn from these two scenarios?
- Have you experienced a similar situation?

### KEY POINTS

- Making decisions without involving other family members might lead to tension and inadequate management of the financial resources. This, in turn, can affect the family's wellbeing.
- For these reasons, it is important that we communicate and try to make decisions together, especially when they involve significant financial commitments.

## PART 3: ASSERTIVENESS

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### ACTIVITY 1: What is Assertiveness?<sup>23</sup>

Explaining assertive communication

#### PURPOSE

- To get participants aware of “assertiveness”.
- To help participants understand that assertiveness is a right.
- To show that knowing yourself and your needs is the first step in being assertive.

#### PROCESS

**1. Set Up** Ask: “Have you ever been in a situation where somebody made you do something you did not want to do because you did not know how to say ‘no’? What happened?” Take a few examples from participants.

#### 2. Describe the Following Situation

Do you remember when you had your first baby and you were always hungry? Every time you breastfed the baby you wanted to eat and drink. Maybe you were too hesitant to ask your husband or your mother to buy or cook that food for you as soon as you wanted because it was considered rude not to wait until it was offered. So you stayed hungry and were often upset. Maybe you were worried that the baby was not getting enough milk because you were hungry. What did you do?

Ask the group: What do babies and small children do when they need or want something? (They cry! They know how to ask for what they want!) As we grow older we lose that clarity and assertiveness. We begin to behave in the way we are expected to behave as girls or boys, women or men.

Now imagine if you had been able to speak up politely and firmly and ask for what you needed. What would have been different? How could you do that in the future?

#### 3. Read out a Scenario

Read out to participants the following scenario:

- A daughter passed the grade 12 exam. She asks her mother for the possibility to pursue her education further.

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<sup>23</sup> This activity is to be played specifically with women.

## PART 3: ASSERTIVENESS

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- A mother does not allow her daughter to pursue education, because the college is far from home. She also thinks that the daughter does not need to have high education; instead, she needs to focus on house chores.
- What should be the reaction of her daughter in order to pursue her education?

### 4. Discuss Assertiveness

Explain that assertiveness means clearly and confidently communicating our needs, wants and feelings to other people in a respectful way and without threatening them. It is NOT rude or aggressive behavior. Being assertive means:

- Deciding what you want (e.g. more food while you breastfeed)
- Deciding that it is fair (e.g. not being hungry while breastfeeding)
- Not being afraid of asking/speaking up for what you want
- Being calm and relaxed
- Asking for it clearly and politely
- Expressing your feelings openly

We can only be assertive if we have a sense of our own worth. Often this comes from others who tell or show us that we are loved and respected. That is why self-respect and respect for others are so important. We also need to feel safe and to know that we can make mistakes and take risks without being punished.

#### Point out that:

- All people have the right to have an opinion, feelings, and emotions, and to express them appropriately.
- All people have the right to ask for what they want.
- All people should recognize that others have the right to say no.
- All people have the right to make their own decisions and cope with the consequences.
- All people have the right to make mistakes.
- All people have the right to change their minds and/or change themselves.

Ask participants: Do you agree? How do you see your rights/entitlements/ability to ask for and receive what you need and want?

Explain that assertiveness is about discussing and negotiating rather than suffering passively in silence, or aggressively attacking and fighting. It is about recognizing the power within and using it in order to have the power to act.

## **PART 3: ASSERTIVENESS**

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### **KEY POINTS**

- Being assertive means standing up for your rights and believing that you deserve a fair chance to live your dream.
- Being assertive means speaking up for what you believe in, politely but firmly, and earning respect as you do so.
- We need power within, a sense of self, a sense of our own worth, and consciousness of our own skills to be assertive.
- We need to be assertive because we all have the right to live in a way that makes us feel useful and happy and equal with others. Therefore, we need to be able to stand up for ourselves and our rights.

### **ACTIVITY 2: Let's think about Change!**

An activity establishing that women should be included in household financial decision-making

#### **PURPOSE**

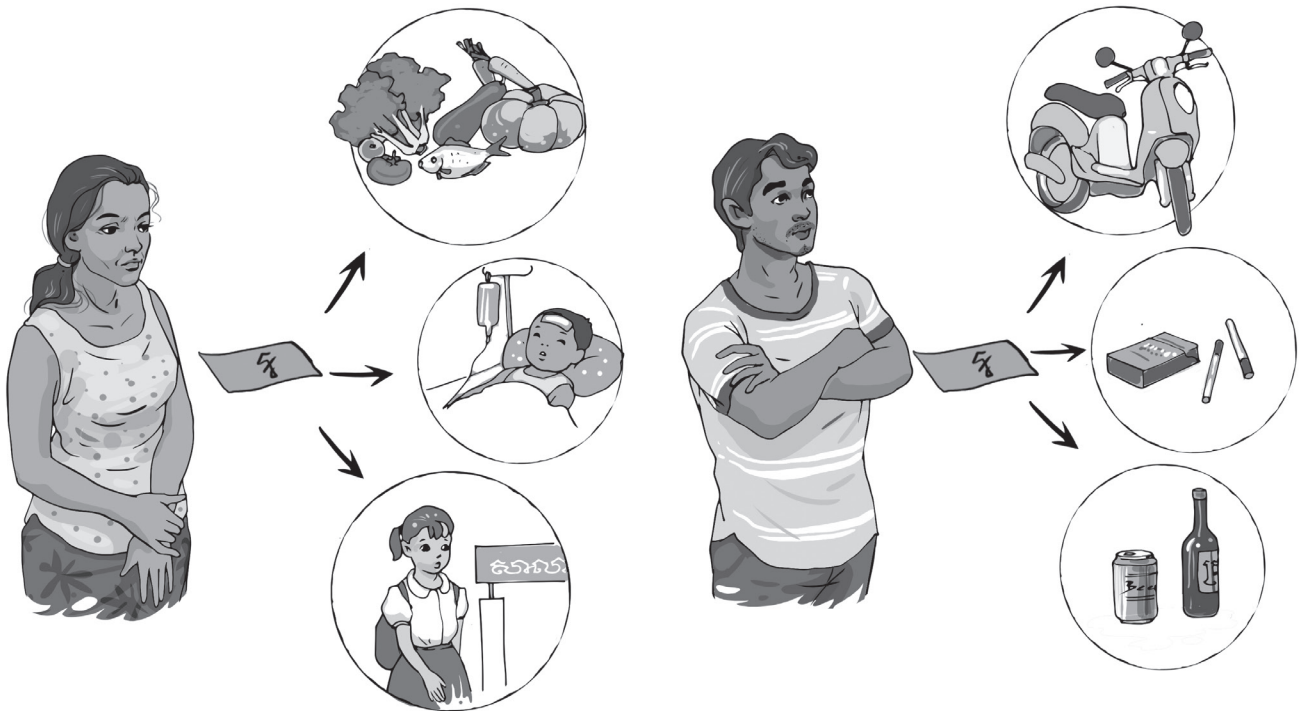
- To illustrate how women's decision-making power over expenditures benefits the whole family.
- To illustrate that to have better relationships at home, we need to reduce social discrimination.

#### **MATERIALS**

- Blue paper
- Red paper
- Pens or pencils
- Tape
- Flip chart
- Markers



## PART 3: ASSERTIVENESS



### PROCESS

#### 1. Set Up

Divide participants into two groups: husbands and wives. Distribute one red and one blue sheet of paper and a pen to each group.

Explain that each group will be asked 1 question. They should write down the answers on the sheets given to them.

**Ask Group 1:** What are the five most common things on which WOMEN spend money? Write your answers on your blue sheet of paper.

**Ask Group 2:** What are the five most common things on which MEN spend money? Write your answers on your red sheet of paper.

Collect the sheets. Tape them at the front of the room with the blue sheets in one line and the red sheets in another line. If not all participants are literate, they can contribute verbally.

## PART 3: ASSERTIVENESS

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### 2. Group Discussion

Ask the small groups to re-assemble into the large group. Read the answers aloud. Ask participants to identify as a group the five to seven items they consider to be most important for the family across all the sheets. Cross out the rest of the items.

Discuss the similarities in men's and women's priorities. If it turns out that women have mentioned more uses that the group considers best for the family, make sure to emphasize it.

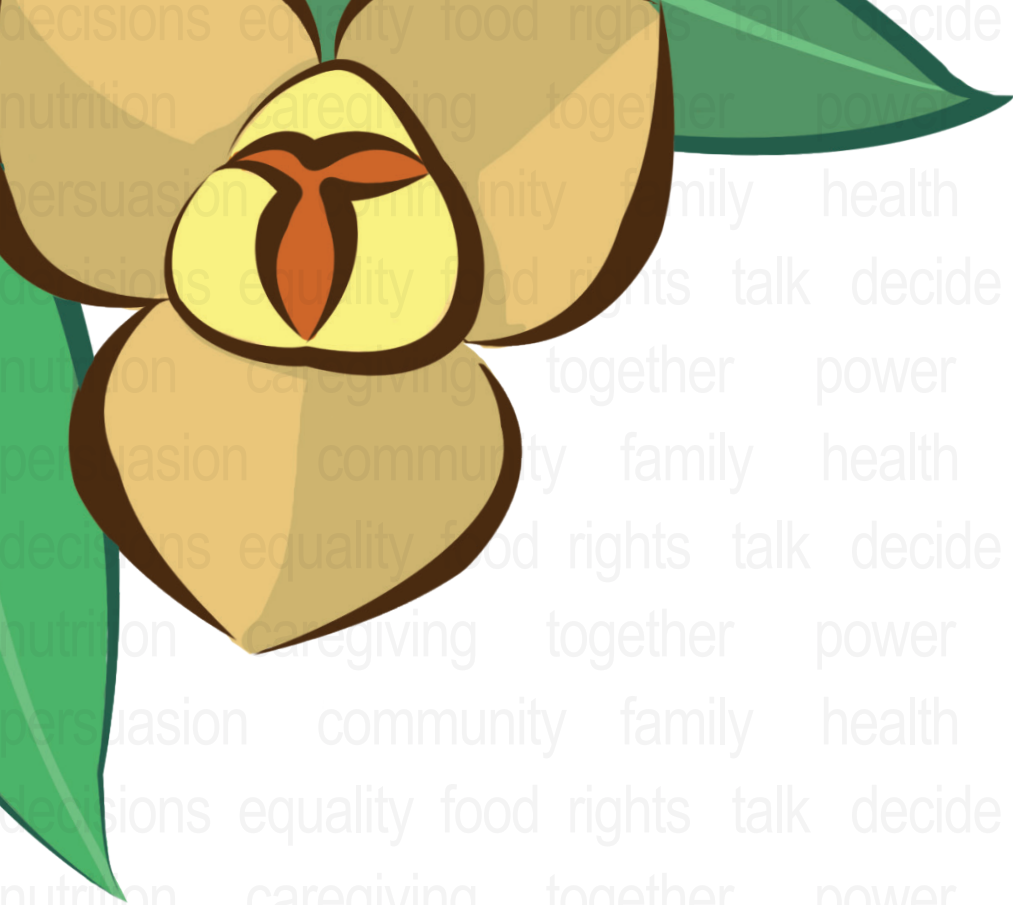
Ask the participants: "Why can't women have the equal decision-making power when it comes to spending in big amount of money? Especially the money that they earn themselves?" Write the responses on a flipchart.

Now ask, "How many of these [reasons why women can't have input] have taken place in your experience? Do you know of any real-life examples?" It will most likely turn out that most of their fears and inhibitions are not based on reality, but on tradition, fear of change, and/or fear of stigma.

Explain that if men and women both use their intelligence at the same time for the family, the family gains doubly. If the issue of social stigma/shyness takes prominence, remind the group of the assertiveness discussions. Men can also put those skills to use and be assertive when it comes to making the best decisions for the family, including making their wives a central part of decision making.

### KEY POINTS

- Women can make valuable contributions to the household when included in the decision-making process.
- Men should use the assertiveness skills we've discussed in Block 3 to politely and firmly explain to the community why they made that decision and why others should accept it.



# **Block 4:** **ACTING FOR CHANGE**







## Block 4: ACTING FOR CHANGE

### Note to Facilitators

This block is about acting on what we have learned. Access to and consumption of nutritious foods by all requires everyone working together. For a start, those who are silent must learn to speak up and stand their ground. Those who have silenced them must learn how to listen. Secondly, when we work together we explore new decision-making processes that benefit everyone. Finally, we understand and practice “making a change.”

Please ensure there is enough time at the end of the session to review the exercises and draw out the key points.

Part and Topic	Activity	Duration	Page
Part 1: <b>Asserting Ourselves and Making Decisions Together</b>	1. Say No!	15-20 minutes	50
Part 2: <b>Working for Change</b>	1. Who Decides What? 2. Looking At/For Change 3. Obstacles to Change	45 minutes 30 minutes 20 minutes	52 56 58



## BLOCK 4

# PART 1: ASSERTING OURSELVES AND MAKING DECISIONS TOGETHER

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### ACTIVITY 1: Say “No!”

A quick role-play for women about practicing assertiveness

#### PURPOSE

- To practice being assertive.
- To identify factors which help or hinder assertiveness.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Set Up

Ask for a volunteer to play the mother-in-law. Ask her to stand in the middle of the space, holding a baby. Explain that this exercise is called “Say NO.” Everyone is going to learn to say ‘no’ using their voices, bodies and faces.



## PART 1: ASSERTING OURSELVES AND MAKING DECISIONS TOGETHER

### 2. Exercise

Tell the volunteer playing the mother-in-law that she is getting ready to give the baby (age under 6 months) she is holding some rice water. All other participants are young mothers who believe in exclusive breast-feeding. Ask participants to stand up one by one, approach the mother-in-law, and firmly say “no!” They should then demand that she hand over the baby.

### Note to Facilitators

Participants may find this hard to do. They are not used to speaking up and making themselves heard. Ensure there is enough practice. Keep going until everyone’s voices and body postures communicate a clear “no!”

### 3. Discuss

Review the exercise. Ask participants to describe how they used their voices, bodies and faces to be firm. What happened to their voices?

Give them the following hints for assertiveness:

- Be calm and controlled. Do not shout or whine.
- Seek direct eye contact. Do not look down or away.
- Stand up tall and put your weight on both legs so you are balanced.
- Make your voice loud and clear.

**Ask the group:** What other situations are there in your everyday life where you need to be assertive? What can help you to be assertive? Check for examples.

### KEY POINTS

- Everyone can be assertive, even if it does not come naturally to them. They just need practice.
- Calmly and politely standing up for what you believe in can help the health and welfare of your entire family.
- Many times people don’t know they are behaving badly toward you, they just behave in the way they were taught because they don’t know you don’t agree. If you politely ask them to change their behavior, they might do it!

## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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### Note to Facilitators

Sometimes, it may seem that change is impossible. However, if we look at human history, we realize that people have made big and small changes to their world since the beginning. The first activity draws attention to such changes as a way of inspiring hope and the belief in the possibility to change our lives. The second activity asks participants to identify and explore possible obstacles and difficulties.

### ACTIVITY 1: Who Decides What?

Participants sort action statements into a pocket chart

#### PURPOSE

- To highlight gender differences in decision-making.
- To discuss how women are excluded from decisions about their children.
- To demonstrate the powerlessness of young women in the household.

#### MATERIALS

- The decision statements from this activity, photocopied onto a sheet of paper and cut into strips
- A ready cut five-pocket chart with labelled “man,” “woman,” “elder man,” “elder woman,” and “group”

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Explain Household Decision-making

Different people in the household have different responsibilities. However, they do not all have the power to make decisions. For example, women are often the ones who decide on daily spending on what to buy, including food, what the meal will consist of, and then she cooks the meal as well. However, the daily spending for the household’s nutrition is often the last priority for men in Cambodia. As women are usually the household member who takes part in nutrition education sessions and look after their children, they tend to have better knowledge of what is the most nutritious food for their children and families.



## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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However, if women have limited access to markets or are not in charge of household expenditures, they may be unable to influence men's decisions around food purchases, which may not be the best choice for the family.

This may cause conflicts and unhappiness. Sometimes, a young mother may know how to ensure that her children get the right nutrition, but she is not in a position to instruct her husband or elders in the community. When the children are undernourished and fail to thrive, she may be blamed and accused of not taking care of them.

There is incongruity between what she knows and how she is able to act on her knowledge. She may want to feed the toddler leafy vegetables and fruit, but her husband and her mother/mother-in-law only wants to feed the toddler with rice and some fish/meat.

To ensure that all people in a household are able to eat the kinds of food they need to in order to be healthy, all the adults in a household must act together to supply the resources. They must plan together for the purchase of nutritious food, and jointly support better nutrition for pregnant women and children under five years old.

### 2. Activity

Place the pocket chart in a position where all participants can see it. Explain that each pocket represents an important member of a household: husband, wife, elder man, elder woman.

Explain that we will look at who makes what decisions within a household. You will read out the decisions from the slips of paper. Participants will discuss and decide who makes that decision, and place the slip of paper in the appropriate pocket.

Read out the following decision statements. Encourage discussion if there is disagreement, and assist participants to reach consensus. Point out that this activity is not about who should make decisions, but about who actually makes them.

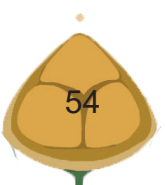


## BLOCK 4

### PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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Who decides what the main meal of the day will be?
Who decides to take a sick child to the health center?
Who decides to plant new vegetables in the home garden?
Who decides which rice variety to grow for the household?
Who decides how to spend money from cash crops that are sold?
Who decides how to spend money from other activities (non-farm related)?
Who decides whether or not to exclusively breastfeed?
Who is willing to share the domestic workload when the wife is pregnant?
Who decides to feed the baby additional food before age of 6 months?
Who decides when daughters should get married?
Who helps children with schoolwork?
Who decides what pregnant woman should eat?
Who keeps/looks after money?
Who decides what assets to acquire for the household?
Who decides how long the daughter should attend school?
Who cooks for the family?
Who goes to the market?
Who takes part at the community meetings?
Who decides to buy a new phone?
Who decides to sell rice land?
Who decides to buy a hand tractor?
Who decides to buy a motorbike?



## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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### 3. Discussion

Once all the statements have been read out and placed in the pockets, pull the statements out of the pockets and count them. Initiate a discussion:

- Who makes the most decisions? Who is left out?
- Who is involved in the big decisions about the children? Who is left out?
- Who decides on money matters? Who is left out?
- Who makes decisions about household matters? Who is left out?
- What does all this say about the position of the wife in the household?
- What if a woman has a lot of knowledge or skills about something but is not included in the decision-making? (For example, she will probably not feel valued or considered.)
- What are the potential effects on those women who want to look after the nutrition needs of their children but are not in a position to do so? (This could happen, for example, when they have less power than others in making decision on budget allocated for the household's priorities, and when other household members can influence the nutrition of the baby). (A potential answer includes that such situations can negatively affect women's own sense of self-worth and therefore they may never perceive themselves as capable of using their own knowledge and judgement to make decisions.)

Point out that in many households, decisions are not made collectively. All those involved in providing food do not make decisions together. Draw attention to the different ways of making decisions. As you describe them, ask participants to offer examples to illustrate them.

- One person decides on his or her own; this is a quick process and often does not involve much deliberating. For example, a husband earns money from land ploughing. He then spends the money to buy a new phone without asking his wife what she needs to better feed the children.
- One person makes a suggestion, another agrees, and this is taken as a decision without further discussion. For example, a husband decides to sell a piece of land and informs his wife. She says that this is a good idea, and without any further discussion with her about prices and negotiations, he proceeds to sell the land to a neighbor.
- No one speaks up and agreement is assumed. This is called silent consensus. For example, one or more household members did not feel they were allowed to disagree, so they kept silent.

## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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- The whole group discusses the issue fully and reaches a consensus/agreement. For example, a husband and wife decide together to grow non-cash crops and use them to better feed their household.

Conclude by asking: How can women be better included in decision-making in all household matters?

### KEY POINTS

- Self-image, a sense of self-worth, and confidence go along with the capacity to make decisions.
- If women are excluded from important decisions about their and their children's lives, they cannot develop their own independence, their sense of initiative, and a feeling of being capable and powerful.
- Especially in nutrition, the best decisions are not always taken, because the people making the decisions may not have the most information about how to best feed themselves or their families.

### ACTIVITY 2: Looking At /For Change

Observation and discussion

#### PURPOSE

- To demonstrate that everything is dynamic.
- To illustrate how people work to affect change.
- To convey the message that change is possible.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Ask Participants to Look at Their Surroundings

Point out that their surroundings are not as they used to be. An area might have used to be a forest, but people acted to change the landscape into somewhere more suited for farming and building houses, or people might have turned mud into bricks for buildings.

Ask the group: What do you see that has been changed through people's actions?

## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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Responses should include things like:

- Plants (vegetables, flowers) being cultivated
- Trees planted to give shade and shelter
- Sticks woven into fences
- Ground cleared of weeds and grass
- Clay turned into plaster
- Clay turned into stoves for cooking
- Trees chopped into firewood
- Boreholes drilled to bring up clean drinking water
- Silk woven and made into clothing

### 2. Explain that Humans are Capable of Change

Point out how people have used and shaped their environment into structures, tools, food, and other objects for meeting their daily needs. Explain that:

- People can affect big changes in their surroundings and their lives if they use their knowledge and skills to make things happen.
- If people can turn clay into pots, stoves and bricks, and trees into shelter, fences and firewood, surely they can change other things as well.

Point out that this course is about change: making small and bigger changes that result in improving the health of people in the community as they work with each other, respectfully, irrespective of traditions.

### KEY POINTS

- People are advocates for change. They can use their skills and knowledge to transform the environment around them, and change relationships, traditions, or the way they communicate (for example, we have now mobile phones).
- We can also change our communities for the better, by communicating better and valuing ourselves and each other more.
- We are learning about nutrition and equal household relationships so we can change and improve our communities and our health!

## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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### ACTIVITY 3: Obstacles to Change

Group discussion

#### PURPOSE

- To demonstrate competing demands on household members.
- To illustrate how competing demands may immobilize a person.
  
- To discuss how a family's roles and responsibilities may be shared in the interest of change.

#### MATERIALS

- Poster picture of “woman with a hundred hands”.

#### PROCESS

##### 1. Introduction

Look at the poster and discuss the many demands that a family has towards a wife/mother.

Probe with the following questions:

- What demands do the children make?
- What demands does the husband/wife make?
- What demands do the elderly make?
- What demands do other family members make?
- What demands do community members and neighbors make?

##### 2. Discussion

Ask participants:

- What does it feel like to be in the position of the wife/mother? Prompt the conversation if needed, by saying “Do you think she is under a lot of pressure? Stress?”
- Do husbands or mothers-in-law face similar situations where they need to fulfil many demands simultaneously?

Ask the rest of the group: What does it feel like when you ask your husband to do some chores? Do you feel that you are in a position of power? (drawing)

## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE



### 3. Application

Initiate a discussion on the multiple demands on and responsibilities of women, husbands, elders, youth and other community members in terms of family nutrition. Point out that having many demands make it difficult for mothers to feed their families the most nutritious food.

Ask:

- What happens to food preparation when a wife has many demands?
- What happens to breastfeeding and feeding small children?
- What happens to the woman's own nutritional needs?
- What did the scene tell you about the daily life of a woman? What can we do about it? (Use the pictures to prompt this discussion.)

## PART 2: WORKING FOR CHANGE

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### KEY POINTS

- Women are very busy. They need to look after the children, cook, clean, and more.
- Because of the great demands on their time, women often lack the time to cook properly, take care of themselves during pregnancy and breastfeeding, and to look after their children's nutrition. This endangers the nutritional status of the woman and her entire family.
- To protect our health, we have to change our common habits and be more supportive to each other.





**Final Session:**  
**WORKING TOGETHER**  
**FOR CHANGE**







# Final Session: WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

## Note to Facilitators

This is the final mixed session, where we consolidate learning from all four Blocks, in an effort to measure change.

In Blocks 3 and 4, participants practiced acting/behaving differently. In this session, they can apply these skills outside peer groups, that is, when working with others of a different gender, age or position. There are two main activities. Activity 1 recalls the learning points from the entire curriculum. Activity 2 focuses on committing to change within the family and the community.

Facilitators should record responses and make notes to use for evaluation reports later.

## PURPOSE

- To consolidate learning sessions about nutrition and gender.
- To assess changes in personal, relational, and communal behaviors.

Part and Topic	Activity	Duration	Page
Community Session 4: <b>Working Together for Change</b>	1. Hot Potato	15 minutes	61
	2. Working towards Change	25 minutes	64

## ACTIVITY 1: Hot Potato

A game and discussion

## PURPOSE

- To review the key points of the course.
- To demonstrate that a positive attitude is key to overcoming fears and uncertainty and to achieving your goals.





## Final Session: WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

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### MATERIALS

- A paper ball which consists of layers of paper stating all activities played with the group.
- Music in the background (if available).





# Final Session: WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

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## PROCESS

### 1. Set Up

Prior to the session, the facilitator writes down the key activities on a large piece of paper. One activity = one paper. When done, the facilitator will put them in chronological order and then squeeze them into the shape of a ball.

- a) Hopes and Fears
- b) Ground Rules
- c) Defining Trust
- d) Demonstrating and Building Trust
- e) Obstacle to Listening
- f) Partial View Point
- g) Exploring Gender Behaviour
- h) Access to Nutrition
- i) Power Hierarchies
- j) Relations of Power and Domestic Violence
- k) Asset Control Mapping
- l) Managing Cash Flow
- m) Let's Think about Change !
- n) What is Assertiveness?
- o) Say No
- p) Who Decides What?
- q) Looking at/for Change
- r) Obstacles to Change
- s) Hot Potato
- t) Working Towards Change

### 2. Play

Ask participants to stand up in a circle. The facilitator stands in the middle and explains that when someone gets the ball, he/she will open it and answer some questions. The facilitator will ask:

- 1) What do you remember of the activity?
- 2) What did you learn from the activity?
- 3) How did you practice it at home? Why or why not, and if so, how?
- 4) What are some key changes within your home related to this activity?
- 5) What are the key challenges to practicing this activity at home?





## Final Session: WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

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Once everyone has had a chance to speak<sup>24</sup>, the facilitator should conclude the activity by explaining the key points.

### KEY POINTS

- Learning to make changes, transforming relationships, deciding to do things differently– all these have to do with attitude!
- Doing them might be a little scary. But you have learned that you can do it!
- Be the change that you want to see.
- When you succeed, you will have a sense of achievement. Only then can things change.

### ACTIVITY 2: Working towards Change

Discussion around a series of statements to reflect on change

#### PURPOSE

- To identify opportunities for behavior change.

#### PROCESS

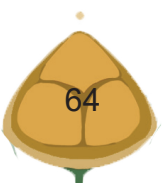
The facilitator reads out the following statements in pairs:

- [OPTION A] A good husband rarely helps with household chores, because he is too tired from his work and he is the breadwinner.
- [OPTION B] A good husband helps to take care of the children and cooks while his wife sells the vegetables at the market.<sup>25</sup>
- [OPTION A] A good husband never cares about his wife's health during pregnancy.
- [OPTION B] A good husband helps to remind his wife to take iron supplements during pregnancy and helps with household chores.

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<sup>24</sup> If there are not enough activities for all participants, involve those who are left out by asking them to name their favourite activity and pose the same questions to them.

<sup>25</sup> This statement applies especially to the VMFs and HHs in Kouk Sampov and Ta Hor.





## Final Session: WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

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After each pair of statement, ask the group:

- Which one do you think is the more common behavior in this community?
  - ▶ If the answer is A, then ask: Do you agree with this type of behavior, or do you think it should be changed?
  - ▶ If the answer is B, then ask: How do you think the husband feels? Does he think people will laugh at or criticize a man who wants to help his wife? Or do you think he might feel proud to be part of a happy and healthy family?

### 2. GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of positive change that they have experienced in their own families.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

Happiness and peace in the home for a healthy family requires the contribution of everyone. Changes can be as simple as husbands or other family members helping with small things in the house and supporting each other in order to be healthier. We can start today and serve as role models for future generations.

Thank the participants for their attendance and participation, and end the session.

### KEY POINTS

- Committing to changing ourselves for the long term is the only way our families and communities will see the full benefits of this curriculum.
- This course is an opportunity to leave behind behaviors that may be hurting our family and community, and embrace new ones.





## Final Session: WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE

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For further information on Nurturing Connections© please contact Ramona Ridolfi, Regional Gender Advisor at HKI Asia-Pacific Regional Office: [rridolfi@hki.org](mailto:rridolfi@hki.org)

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