



A2 ACTIVITIES TO REVEAL HIDDEN ISSUES

Men and women - listening to one another



Why use this activity?

To create an opportunity for participants to listen to each other, particularly for men to listen to women, and for women to listen to men, and to learn about each other's experiences, expectations and hopes.



A brief description

Women and men take it in turns to answer questions and discuss while the other group listens.



You will need

- Chairs arranged in two circles, with one circle inside the other.
- A small team of people to run this activity. A female facilitator, a male facilitator and a small group of people to look after young children who may be with their parents.



Timeline

Approximately 1 hour

This activity seeks to create a safe space for women and men to share. It is important that what is said is not hurtful or harmful to anyone, but truth spoken in love so that men and women together can work towards communities where both men and women are valued and able to participate. In communities where most women don't have a voice, or aren't listened to, it is important that a space is created for them to speak out and be heard.

If it is unacceptable within your culture for men and women to carry out this activity together, the discussions could take place separately with the main points shared back to the other group. However, it is important to encourage the community of the benefits of hearing from each other directly.

Awareness-raising

Children & youth

Climate & environment

Conflict & peace-building

Corruption & governance

Disaster risk management

Discrimination & inclusion

Food & livelihoods

Gender & sexual violence

Health & HIV

Influencing decision-makers

Migration & trafficking

Water, sanitation & hygiene



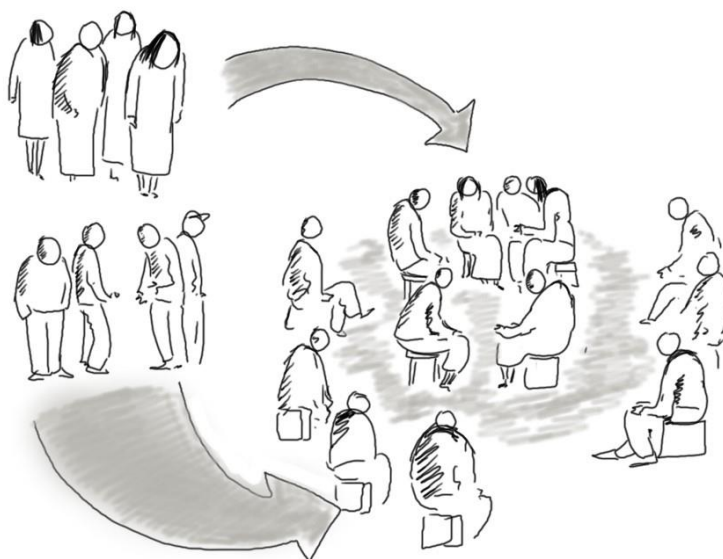
What to do

Divide the participants into two groups – one of men, one of women. Invite the women to come to the inner circle and to sit down. Ensure there are enough chairs for the women. Invite the men to sit down on the outer circle of chairs. You may want to keep the groups quite small so that everyone is able to take part and contribute.

Explain that only the inner group can talk. The outer group must sit and listen, without interrupting. Reassure the men that they will have an opportunity later on to sit in the inner circle and talk!

Facilitate a discussion for 20 minutes with the women. It is important that a woman facilitates the women's discussion. Here are some suggested questions:

- What is the best thing about being a woman/girl in ...? (insert your country or community name here)
- What is the most difficult thing about being a woman/girl here?
- What do you want to tell men that will help them better understand women?
- What do you find difficult to understand about men?
- How could men better support women so that you are valued and appreciated?
- How could men treat women in a way that values you as equal?
- What do you remember about growing up as a girl in this community/country?
- What did you like about being a girl?
- What did you not like?
- What do you hope will be different for young girls in our community today?
- Who are some positive male influences in your life? Why are they positive?
- Who are some positive female influences in your life? Why are they positive?



Once the women's discussion is over, ask the men and women to swap seats so that men are sat in the inner circle and women in the outer circle. Facilitate a second discussion for 20 minutes with the men. It is important that a man facilitates the men's discussion. Here are some suggested questions:

- What is the best thing about being a man/boy in ...? (insert your country or community name here)
- What is the most difficult thing about being a man/boy here?
- What do you want to tell women that will help them better understand men?
- What do you find difficult to understand about women?
- How could you as men better support women so that they are valued and appreciated?
- How could you treat women in a way that values them as equal?
- What do you remember about growing up as a boy in this community/country?
- What did you like about being a boy? What did you not like?
- What do you hope will be different for young boys in our community today?
- Who are some positive female influences in your life? Why are they positive?
- Who are some positive male influences in your life? Why are they positive?

After both groups have finished their discussions, ask the following questions to facilitate a discussion between both groups.

- What surprised you about this activity?
- How did you feel about talking when others were listening? Did you feel you were heard?
- What did you learn?

To end this activity, explain that most of what we know and understand about the opposite sex is shaped and influenced by what we have we learnt and been told in our culture. This activity has helped us to understand each other better. Listening to one another helps us work towards a society that is free from inequality and violence against women and girls.

Explain any next steps you have planned in terms of other activities or studies on this issue. It is important that you have thought about and planned what you will do next so you can explain to the community how things will be taken forward.

You could also try this activity by dividing the group into pairs of men and women, so that one man and one woman talk to each other (rather than a group of men listening to a group of women). You can ask the woman and man to take turns holding an object. Whoever is holding the object is the one who is able to speak. The woman says what she has to say, then hands the object to the man and he has to say what he heard her say. She can interrupt him and say "that's not what I said" and can explain it again. This is about learning to listen. It's the same the other way around. The man talks, while the woman listens. He hands her the object and has to say what she heard him say, he can interrupt and say it again. This helps people learn to genuinely listen.



Notes

This tool is adapted from an activity written by Prabu Deepan and first published in Tearfund (2016) *Transforming Masculinities: a training manual for gender champions (draft)*



Finding out more

- *Restored*, and international Christian alliance to transform relationships and end violence against women - www.restoredrelationships.org
- Tearfund (2015) *Hand in hand: Bible studies to transform our response to sexual violence* http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/themes/sexual_violence/resources_and_publications/
- Tearfund (2007) *Footsteps: Family life* http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/footsteps/footsteps_71-80/footsteps_72/

Related tools:

- A1 – Revealing violence against women and girls – information for facilitators [A1: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- A1 – Revealing inequality between men and women – information for facilitators [A1: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- A2 – Why should we address VAWG? [A2: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- A2 – What are the root causes of VAWG? [A2: Gender & sexual violence-4]
- A2 – Exploring gender roles and power [A2: Gender & sexual violence-5]
- B – Gender and restoring relationships (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-1]
- B – Wonderfully made (FGM/C) [B: Gender & sexual violence-2]
- B – God's view of women (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-3]
- B – God's view of men (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-4]
- B – Men, women and God (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-5]
- B – Men, women, love and submission (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-6]
- B – Protecting those vulnerable to sexual violence (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-7]
- B – Sexual violence in the Bible – the story of Tamar (Bible study) [B: Gender & sexual violence-8]

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