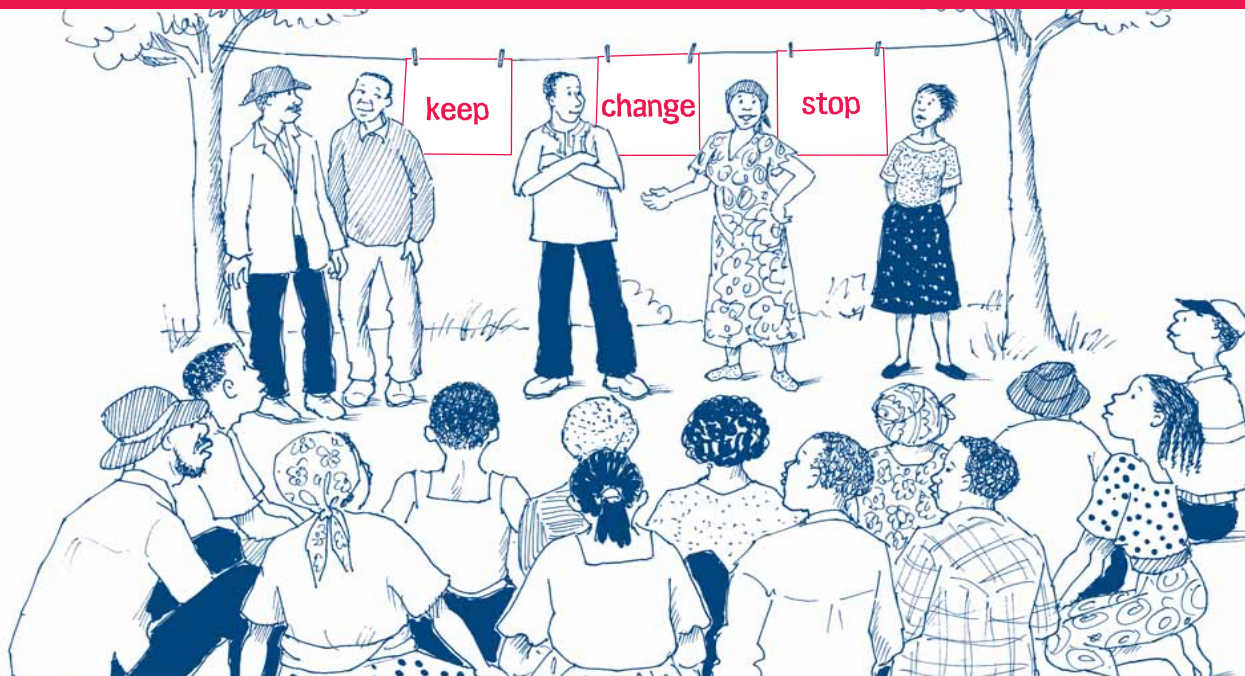


Supporting community action on AIDS in developing countries



Keep the best, change the rest

Participatory tools for working with communities on gender and sexuality

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Contents

Introduction

About this toolkit	2
Building support for your work	4
Preparing the team	5
Planning the work	8
Using the tools	11
Skills for using the tools with groups	12

Section A: Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

Introduction	20
--------------	----

Tools

A1 Cartoon strip	22
A2 Scenes from life	24
A3 But why?	26
A4 Chain of effects	28
A5 Walking in each other's shoes	30
A6 Working day	32
A7 Making decisions	34
A8 Caring for others	36
A9 Lifelines	38
A10 Gender boxes	40

Section B: Sex and relationships

Introduction	42
--------------	----

Tools

B1 Community timeline	44
B2 If I knew then what I know now	46
B3 Keep, change, stop	48
B4 Agree-disagree	50
B5 Sex and 'goods'	52
B6 Money and HIV	54
B7 Body mapping	56
B8 Turning it up, turning it down	58
B9 Condoms – safe and sexy	60
B10 Sex talk	62

Section C: Sexual violence

Introduction	66
--------------	----

Tools

C1 Sexual violence and daily life	68
C2 Taking action against violence	70

Section D: Working together

Introduction	72
--------------	----

Tools

D1 Speaking my truth	74
D2 Maintaining energy	76
D3 Creating structure	78
D4 Building leadership	80
D5 Working with allies	82

Section E: Making a plan

Introduction	84
--------------	----

Tools

E1 Deciding what to work on	86
E2 Deciding how to do the work	88
E3 Deciding when to do the work	90
E4 Deciding who will do the work	92
E5 Deciding how to monitor the work	94

2 About this toolkit

Aim of this toolkit

This toolkit aims to support community groups to work in a practical and thorough way on improving understanding and relationships between women and men. Through this, it aims to promote sexual well-being, strengthen communities and help them to prevent HIV.

Who this toolkit is for

This toolkit is aimed at individuals and organisations that support communities to address HIV and AIDS and related issues. Examples include training organisations, 'intermediary' NGOs, NGO support programmes and organisations implementing interventions in communities.



What materials are needed to use this toolkit?

This toolkit is designed to make maximum use of local resources. The majority of the tools involve community members holding discussions, doing role-plays or using the ground, sticks, stones, beans and everyday objects, such as clothes and household items. A small number of the tools, particularly those to develop an action plan in section E, benefit from the use of a blackboard and chalk or flipchart paper and marker pens.



What this toolkit contains

Introduction: Explaining what this toolkit is, who it is for and how it can be used most effectively with community groups.

Section A: Gender, sexuality and vulnerability: Providing tools to explore general, everyday issues about gender and sexuality and how they affect women's and men's vulnerability to HIV.

Section B: Sex and relationships: Providing tools to explore how gender and sexuality affects people's sexual relationships and women's and men's vulnerability to HIV.

Section C: Sexual violence: Providing tools to explore issues relating to gender-based and sexual violence and how they affect women's and men's vulnerability to HIV.

Section D: Working together: Providing tools to help community groups to work well together on issues relating to gender and sexuality.

Section E: Making a plan: Providing tools to help community groups to make an action plan for working together on issues relating to gender and sexuality.

Using this toolkit

This toolkit works best if it is used in the order that it is presented – going through sections A to E to identify and explore issues and then deciding how to work together and what action to take. It particularly suits on going work with community groups, involving regular sessions over several weeks or months.

However, it is also possible to 'dip into' this toolkit and select one or more tools for a specific purpose. As such, it can be used for one-off sessions with community members, such as awareness-raising meetings to build people's interest in gender and sexuality and assess their interest in further activities.

4 Building support for your work

Getting permission from key stakeholders

Before we start working on gender and sexuality with a community, it is important to build relations and trust and work with the community to assess and agree on how looking at gender and sexuality can help to improve the lives of different groups of people and protect them from HIV.

Getting permission from key stakeholders is an important step in this process. These are people who have a particular influence, power or decision-making role in a community. Examples include chiefs, traditional teachers on gender and sexuality, teachers, health workers, civil society organisations and religious and other local leaders.

The support of key stakeholders is particularly important for work on gender and sexuality because it involves addressing sensitive and controversial subjects. It is vital that they not only understand, but support the work.

Work with key stakeholders has to be ongoing, not 'one-off'. They need to be regularly informed of the progress of the work, for example by having community members come to talk to them about the tools and their impact. A good relationship with stakeholders will make it more likely that they will support the Action Plan that comes from the use of the tools when it is put into action in the community.



Building relationships with allies

Allies are people, groups and institutions whose support can help your work on gender and sexuality. The most obvious allies may be local service providers, such as health clinics and HIV testing and counselling centres. But, there may be others, such as the media or local businesses, that you have not considered before.

It is important to build good relationships with allies from the start. This process might involve: explaining your work to allies and identifying common interests; talking about the contribution that allies can make and identifying what they need in order to make it; and maintaining regular communication with allies and reviewing your relationship with them.

Preparing the team

Creating the right team

Work on gender and sexuality with community groups is usually best done by facilitation teams of staff and/or volunteers, rather than just one person. A team can support each other and reach more people more quickly with better activities.

If possible, balance teams in terms of gender, age, social status, etc. Members will have their own views and experience of gender and sexuality. They should also all have:

- good relationships with the community
- a basic level of literacy
- a basic understanding of HIV and AIDS
- enough time to do the work
- commitment to working together as a team
- members should be willing to reflect on their values relating to gender and sexuality and be willing to change as they learn more.

Using community volunteers

Community volunteers often play a vital role in work on gender and sexuality. This can include facilitating activities, using the community languages, visiting less visible community members to invite them to meetings, arranging a place and equipment for meetings and doing follow-up after meetings.

Engaging community volunteers in the team and the activities makes the work more credible if they are trusted and respected people. The presence of volunteers can also help the team be more accountable to the community.

It is important to find ways to value the work of volunteers – to avoid exploiting their interest and commitment. Good ways to do this include:

- project staff visiting the communities and working alongside the volunteers to emphasise the importance of their work
- providing incentives (such as food or money) for the work of the volunteers

- providing training to assist volunteers who are interested in finding paid work
- creating a team identity through badges, materials or t-shirts.



6 Preparing the team

Preparing yourself

Before working with communities, it is important for all team members to consider their own feelings about gender and sexuality, as these might affect how they do their work. It is vital that members experience the tools for themselves and are able to respond to what they learn before using them with others. If the team agrees as a group, they can support each other to change and be good role models.

One way to prepare to use the tools is to think about our own personal experiences of gender and sexuality. Some of these may have been, or may still be, physically or emotionally harmful, such as experiences of violence in personal relationships. It may be hard to talk about certain topics without being reminded of such experiences.

This toolkit is based on the principle that the process of change begins with each of us as individuals. As such, it is important for the team to become used to talking openly about personal

matters. To prepare them to do this, it can be helpful for members to:

- choose someone they trust and who can listen and offer support
- tell that person briefly about the experiences that they are concerned about, sharing as little or as much information as feels comfortable
- tell that person how they think these experiences could affect their work
- explain how they would like to be supported to deal with their experiences.

Looking at discomforts and strong views

Some team members may feel uncomfortable talking openly about certain topics, such as masturbation. Some may have strong views on certain issues, such as sex before marriage. It will be difficult for a team member to facilitate an open discussion with community members if they feel uncomfortable or have such strong views about the issues at hand.

To prepare for this, it is helpful for the team to:

- decide on issues that they may discuss with the community and identify those that some members feel uncomfortable discussing or have strong views about
- discuss situations in which discomfort or strong views might make it hard for some members to facilitate a discussion. Then make a plan for dealing with such situations
- make time to practice facilitating discussions of such issues and enable the members to get feedback on how well they handled their discomfort or strong views
- remember that it is right to have strong views against harmful behaviours such as rape, child abuse and violence and we should always challenge opinions that promote these.

Improving teamwork

An important part of preparing the team to use these tools with communities is to look at what it needs in order to work well together. This might include:

Training in the use of the tools

Training for team members should include:

- basic information about sexual health, including HIV and AIDS. This toolkit does not include such information, but there are many other resources that do and that can be used to refresh members' knowledge
- opportunities to explore their own thoughts about gender and sexuality. Experiencing the tools themselves not only enables members to explore their own feelings, but to understand what it is like to be a participant and to make any necessary adaptations to the tools
- time to practice and get feedback in their use of the tools. The best way to learn about the tools is to use them (with the same materials that will be available in the community) and to exchange feedback with peers.

Ways to give each other feedback and support

It is important to help team members to support each other, especially because working on gender and sexuality can raise painful personal issues, cause resistance among people's friends and family and make people feel overwhelmed. Ways to provide support include:

- structuring mutual support. For example, group members can regularly meet together in pairs or small groups to offer each other support
- helping members to get to know each other better – by encouraging them to share their interests and by allowing time for social activities
- having supervision sessions with staff to identify further needs for support
- making it known what support is/is not available and making clear agreements about how team members can ask for it.

Clear roles and responsibilities

Teamwork is better when everyone understands their own and each other's roles and responsibilities. It is important

to discuss these with team members as part of the preparation for their work.

This discussion can help to:

- connect roles and responsibilities to skills and experience – to make sure that the members are able to do what is being asked of them
- make clear agreements about how team members will work together
- ensure that responsibilities are distributed fairly across the team.

Helping each other to 'practise what they preach'

It is vital that the team 'practises what it is preaching' and provides a good example of the types of values that it is trying to promote, such as equal and supportive relationships between men and women. To do this, it can be useful to set clear, agreed standards of behaviour that can be used to hold team members to account for inappropriate behaviour (such as sexist jokes or sexual harassment).

8 Planning the work

Deciding what to work on

The starting point for work on gender and sexuality will usually be some sense of concern about particular aspects of relationships between women and men that are increasing the spread of HIV and/or worsening its impact on the community. An example might be many reports of husbands beating their wives. Community leaders, officials or staff of non-governmental organisations, or women and community members themselves might voice these concerns.

Your team may have identified some areas of concern as a result of working with the community to identify problems and concerns. This can help to reveal problems that would otherwise be hidden, such as rape within marriage.

The team and community can then bring relevant groups of community members together to explore the issues that underlie the concerns about an aspect of gender and sexuality and identify actions to address it.

Steps for focusing the work

Start with a general or specific concern



Form groups of relevant community members to discuss the concern



Use tools with this group to identify issues to work on and actions to take



Deciding which community members to work with

Developing these tools showed that it is better to work with specific groups of people when addressing gender and sexuality, rather than offering an open invitation to everyone. For example, if the community aims to create an environment in a local school that prevents sexual violence, then it may be important to work with Ministry of Education inspectors, teachers, students, parents and legal bodies.

Overall, it is important to work with people who have:

- most concern about the issue relating to gender and sexuality
- most involvement in the issue
- most influence over the issue.

Selecting people who are able to attend a series of meetings over time makes it easier to use the tools. It also makes it more likely that the work will be effective and long-lasting.

Making group sessions accessible

It is usually easier to work regularly with community members who either already belong to groups (such as micro credit groups) or are linked to a particular institution (such as teachers in a school).

However, the most marginalised and vulnerable members of communities are often less likely to be members of such groups or institutions. So, to target these people, the team needs to think about how to do outreach – and encourage them to participate fully in the group-work process.

The team also need to consider practical ways to make its group sessions as accessible as possible. For example, it will need to ensure that its work is carried out at a time and place that is appropriate, easy and safe for the relevant community members.

Building relationships with participants

To work on gender and sexuality, it is vital that teams build trusting relationships with the community groups. Without this, participants may be unwilling to share their own experiences and discuss what needs to change.

Project staff and volunteers need to have something to offer groups and the broader community and keep their promises.

Participants at meetings may need food or other incentives to travel to the site and spend time away from economic activities. However, before doing so, the team should check with others in the area to discuss a common approach to incentives, so that they do not harm existing agreements and relationships.

Planning how to progress the work

Planning how long the group work will last, how many sessions will be required and which tools will be used will depend on the objectives of the project and the circumstances of the participants. But, in general, it is helpful to plan group-work sessions so as to move:

- from describing problems to understanding them more deeply
- from discussing less sensitive issues to exploring more sensitive ones
- from addressing less controversial topics to dealing more controversial ones.



10 Planning the work

Planning group sessions

Usually, it is important to work with the same group of people over time. How to arrange a series of sessions will depend on local circumstances. But it can generally help to:

- work with informal peer leaders and ask them to convene meetings
- work with key stakeholders to ensure that target participants can come to the sessions
- appoint some of the participants as conveners and give them the responsibility for making sure participants come to meetings
- arrange meetings at places and times where the participants already meet
- think about offering some kind of incentives to motivate people to attend
- make any special arrangements that may be needed to enable some participants to attend, such as childcare for women with children.

Before beginning a session, it is important for the team members that are involved to meet to plan it. The team may decide to adapt particular tools in order to better suit the group with whom they are working.

**Typical group meeting**

- ✓ Welcome everyone, especially new members.
- ✓ Remind everyone about why the group is meeting, what it is working on and how it has agreed to work.
- ✓ Agree on confidentiality issues.
- ✓ Invite group to recap on the previous meeting's discussion, review actions taken since last meeting and discuss any issues.
- ✓ Agree on the issues you will discuss and use one or more tools to explore those issues.
- ✓ Agree on recommendations for action arising from the discussion. Summarise the key points from the discussion.
- ✓ Check on feelings about the meeting and how to improve it.
- ✓ Make a plan for the next session. Fill in an Activity Chart to record the session.

Using the tools

Composition of the group

The facilitation team and community will need to decide about the composition of the groups for each of the tools. For example, will they facilitate the tool with single or mixed-sex groups, married or unmarried people, or people of the same or different age groups?

In particular, experience has shown that exploring problems relating to gender and sexuality benefits from some work in single sex and age groups. So, in the 'how to use it' instructions for the tools in this toolkit, it is often suggested that the work is carried out by single-sex groups and, in some instances, that those groups are further divided according to age. After working in separate groups, the groups can share their ideas as they wish so that people understand each other's point of view.

Introductions

Some groups may know each other well, while others may not. Whatever the case, it is helpful to begin any group work with activities that help people

feel more comfortable with each other. This can involve thinking of fun ways for group members to get to know each other better, such as games.

Making working agreements

It is important to create working agreements with the participants. These are the 'ground rules' that people make about how they will work together. They

Examples of working agreements

- ✓ Listen to everyone.
- ✓ Participate fully.
- ✓ Stick to the point.
- ✓ Respect everyone's ideas.
- ✓ Challenge each other, but do it respectfully.
- ✓ Try to speak up if you are quiet.
- ✓ Try to listen more if you speak a lot.
- ✓ Be as honest as you can.
- ✓ Keep confidentiality.
- ✓ Take care of yourself and others in the group.

are important for any group process, but especially when discussing sensitive subjects, such as gender and sexuality.

Confidentiality

Making a clear working agreement on confidentiality is essential. Participants should not tell people outside the group details of what specific individuals in the group say. However, this agreement cannot be enforced and people should be careful about what they are willing to share and with whom they share it. It is safer to talk about 'people like us' rather than disclosing an event as a personal experience.

Energy and humour

Maintaining the energy of participants during group work is important. Members may feel overwhelmed by difficult issues, reducing energy levels. However, humour is a useful learning tool. People learn better when they feel more comfortable and relaxed. Ways to maintain the energy and humour of the group include using energisers and ice-breakers.

12 Skills for using the tools with groups

Key skills

A critical part of the process of using tools on gender and sexuality is helping a group of people to work together productively. To do this, Facilitator's particularly need skills in:

Active listening

This means more than just hearing what is said. It means letting people know that they are being heard and understood. Active listening encourages people to be more open in sharing their experiences, thoughts and feelings. This is crucial when it comes to encouraging groups to talk more openly about gender and sexuality.

Active listening involves:

- using body language and facial expressions to show interest and understanding
- listening not only to what is said, but also to how it is said – by paying attention to the speaker's body language
- asking questions of the person who is speaking – to show a desire to understand

- summarising the discussions to check understanding of what has been said.

Participants also need listening skills in order to gain the most benefit from this toolkit. From the start, it is important to make it clear that the purpose of the tools is to encourage discussion among participants, rather than between participants and the facilitator.

Effective questioning

Effective questioning involves:

- asking open-ended questions, for example using Why? What? When? Where? Who? and How?



- asking probing questions that follow people's answers with further questions that look deeper into the issue or problem
- asking clarifying questions by re-wording a previous question
- asking questions about personal points of view by asking about how people feel and not just about what they know.

Again, this skill is as important for participants as Facilitator's and is an important idea to introduce early in the process.

Facilitating group discussions

Facilitating discussions is another basic skill for using this toolkit. It is needed to increase the participation of people in their group discussions and to ensure that members are given the opportunity to express their range of views and interests. Good facilitation helps to improve the quality of discussions and problem-solving. It also helps groups to agree on changes that are needed and commit to taking action on them.

Introducing each tool

Facilitator's need to provide an introduction and explanation for each tool that they use. This should be clear and concise and followed by simple instructions.

It is important to check that the participants have understood what you have said and whether they have any questions. If there are specific tasks to be completed in small groups, take time at the beginning – before they have immersed themselves in the task – to go around to each group and check that they are clear about what to do.

Involving everyone

Helping all participants to take part in discussions is an important part of facilitating meetings. It involves paying attention to each member's level of participation. There may be many reasons why someone is quiet during a discussion. For example, they may be shy or ill or just thinking deeply.

In general, it is a good idea to try to bring quiet group members into the discussion, for example by asking them direct questions. If someone is very

talkative, you can ask them to allow others to take part. Encourage the group to share responsibility for group dynamics. One way to encourage full participation is to ask every member to say something in turn or else to break into pairs or very small groups. Also provide a minute or two for quiet reflection before asking people to speak as this helps people to increase their confidence.

Guiding the discussion

The key tasks of a facilitator are to open up discussion and encourage full participation by using the tools. They should also help the group to explore the issues raised in more depth by asking probing questions and encouraging the expression of different points of view. Finally, they should summarise the discussion (checking for areas of agreement and conflict) and note any action points that have arisen.

A key task for a facilitator is to help the group stay focused. If the group seems to be losing its focus, it is important to remind its members of the objectives for the activity and the issues that are being looked at. This will help to get them back on track.

Managing conflict

Talking about gender and sexuality may give rise to disagreements in the group. Facilitator's need to welcome this. But they also need to anticipate it, identifying safe ways to respond and move forward.

Often it is through disagreement with others that we come to better understand our own thoughts and feelings. But there may be situations when disagreement turns into conflict. When this is the case, people put their energy into defending their own positions rather than exploring the issues with each other. Helping the group to manage conflict is a key role for the facilitator. Examples of how to do this include:

- getting people to state clearly their concerns and the reasons for them – to reduce the danger of other people making assumptions
- getting people to listen to others carefully and, if necessary, repeating what others said to make sure they heard it correctly
- helping people identify areas of agreement and shared concern – to create common ground to come together to work out a conflict.

14 Skills for using the tools with groups

Achieving agreement

It will often not be possible or desirable to achieve agreement among group members. It is helpful to ask people to reflect on areas of 'common ground' for the group, as well as points of difference that need further discussion or people can agree to differ.

The facilitator or group should also sum up the main points of the discussion and any action points that they have agreed. Encourage people to thank each other for their contributions and to celebrate the achievements of the meeting.



Dealing with challenges

Facilitating a group meeting will almost certainly mean dealing with negative or disruptive behaviours, such as chatting between participants or domination of discussions by a few vocal individuals.

Reminding the group of its working agreements and asking everyone to be responsible for maintaining them is a good way to deal with such disruptions. It is important to try and involve the group when asking a disruptive group member to help, rather than hinder, the work that the group is trying to do. In the most extreme circumstances, when a participant continues to be disruptive, the group (or the facilitator acting on their behalf) may need to ask them to leave the group session. In this situation, it is important to arrange to talk with this person later in order to understand their position and work with both them and the other participants to reach a decision about whether they should continue to participate in the programme.

Dealing with distressed individuals

Facilitator's need to consider how they will respond to group members who become distressed. Participants can form 'support pairs' or small groups – agreeing to meet regularly throughout the programme (and perhaps in the months afterwards) to provide each other with support.

When it is not possible to support people in this way, the facilitator may need to take time after a session to talk to the individual one-to-one and either provide support or refer them to a local service.

Personal disclosure

Over the course of the sessions, participants may reveal personal information about themselves and their lives, for example disclosing their HIV status. Acknowledge those who do so for their courage in sharing such information. Remember that stigma and discrimination towards those of us living with HIV is still a problem and the costs of disclosure can be high. Remind the

group of agreements they have made about confidentiality.

Those of us who are living with HIV may decide to talk about our own personal experience when we facilitate. We may decide before the session about how disclosure could help the group to achieve its objectives or we may use an opportunity that arises naturally from the content of a discussion.

Creating the right environment and dealing with crises

The first task for any facilitator is to try to create a safe and supportive environment within the group. This will help members to decide for themselves whether and when to talk about any personal issues.

Creating such an environment begins at the point of telling people about the group and recruiting people to join it. At this point, it is important to encourage people living with HIV to participate.

The group's working agreements also play an important role in creating a safe environment. One of the tasks of the facilitator is to encourage participants

to follow these agreements, but to remind them that they cannot be enforced.

Group members may talk about personal concerns because they are in a crisis and urgently need help. In such a situation, the facilitator may need to take time during a break or, in the most serious cases, during the session itself, to deal with it. This will involve assessing the group member's situation and making a referral where relevant services exist.

Dealing with harmful points of view

Members of the group are likely to have strong views about the issues in this toolkit. It is important for the facilitator to welcome disagreement, but there may be some members whose views make the problems worse.

Everyone has a right to their opinion, but it is the role of the facilitator to see that harmful points of view are challenged - ideally by participants themselves, but, failing that, by the facilitator. The best way to do this is not only to repeat the core values and

messages of the toolkit, but also to give the person a chance to think more deeply about their point of view and the impact that it has. The facilitator should also encourage everyone to listen more closely to different points of view in the group. This can be difficult, but it is vital in helping members to work towards positive change.

A common example of a harmful point of view is blaming the victims of violence. For example, a group member might say: *"If a woman is wearing a short skirt and gets raped, it is her own fault"*. The following is one suggested way to deal with such a group member:

1. Ask for clarification. For example, say: *"I appreciate you sharing your opinion with us. Can you tell us why you feel that way?"*
2. Seek a different point of view. For example, say: *"Thank you. So at least one person feels that way. What do the rest of you think?"*
3. If another point of view is not offered, provide one. For example, say: *"I know that a lot of people disagree with that statement. Most women and men I know feel that the only person to blame for a rape is the rapist."*

Skills for using the tools with groups

4. Offer facts that support a different point of view. For example, say: *"The facts are clear. The law states that every individual has a right to say 'no' to sex. Whatever a woman wears or does, she has a right not to be raped. The rapist is the only person to be blamed."*

It is important to remember that changing deeply held views is difficult. Even after the facilitator has used these four steps, it is unlikely that the group member will openly change their opinion. But, by challenging the statement, the facilitator has provided another point of view that the member will be more likely to think about and, it is hoped, adopt later.

Using role-play

Role-play – including acting, singing and dancing – is involved in many of the tools in this toolkit. It is a good way to reveal thoughts and feelings about gender and sexuality. Playing a role demands more from people than just talking about an issue. It involves going deeper into what they think and feel. This is critical because our beliefs about gender and sexuality go very deep and

are such a key part of who we all are as people.

Dealing with HIV and AIDS calls for people to have new skills. For example, people need skills in talking to sexual partners, using condoms and preventing sexual violence. To develop these skills, people need to practice and get feedback – and role-play can be a good way to do this.

Ways to ensure that role-plays are useful and effective include:

- staying aware of not only what is happening in the scene, but how the rest of the group is reacting
- pausing a role-play when there is an opportunity to discuss a key issue. Then asking questions of the actors and the other participants about what is happening, why it is happening and the implications – and using those questions to make key learning points
- supporting humour as a way to relax people, but ensuring that it does not take over and lose the point of the role-play

- being aware that role-plays can bring up a lot of emotions for those playing the roles and those watching – and being prepared to stop the process if people appear to be upset
- ensuring that people do not get 'stuck' in the role they have been playing and 'de-role' participants. For example, after the role-play is complete, you can ask them to state their real name and some trivial personal facts – to remind themselves and the others about who they really are and to separate them from their role.



Using drawings

Drawing is also involved in many of the tools in this toolkit. Again, this is because it is a good way to encourage people to reveal their real thoughts and feelings about gender and sexuality.

Drawing can be carried out on the ground, a blackboard or paper, depending on the materials available and the preferences of the participants.

It is important for facilitator's to help participants to feel relaxed about drawing. This involves explaining that the quality of the drawing does not matter – as it is the issues that are raised that are important.



Recording and monitoring your work

One role of the facilitation team is to take responsibility for recording the work that it supports in the community. One way to do this is to fill in an Activity Record Sheet after each meeting. This provides a brief and simple way to document the key facts about a session, such as where it was held, who attended, what issues were discussed and what decisions were reached.

An example of an Activity Record Sheet is provided on the following page. Activity Record Sheets, or similar tools, are vital for monitoring the work that is being carried out – as they tell the 'story' of what it has involved and how it has progressed.

Other ways to assess the impact of your work on gender and sexuality include:

- asking for regular feedback from participants on their thoughts and feelings about the group work process and how it is affecting their lives. Ask them for their suggestions on improving the meetings. A very simple way to do this is to take 5-10

minutes at the end of every meeting to ask each participant to answer some basic feedback questions

- interviewing the friends and family of participants at the beginning and the end of the process to assess what difference the discussions have made to the members' behaviours and attitudes
- asking participants to keep a daily/weekly diary of their thoughts and feelings during the process and then asking them to use the information in these diaries to assess what difference the work has made
- holding group discussions with some or all of the group members before the beginning and after the end of the process and comparing the findings from these discussions.

Example: Activity record sheet

Activity record sheet: Group meeting on gender and sexuality

1. Details of group meeting

Date of meeting _____ Location of meeting _____

Number of participants _____

Type of participants (e.g. men/women, younger/older people) _____

2. Tools used and issues covered during the meeting

Tools used during the meeting _____

Issues covered during the meeting _____

3. Areas of agreement and disagreement among the group

Areas of agreement among the group

Areas of disagreement among the group

4. Decisions made by the group

5. Next steps for the facilitator (e.g. issues to cover in the next meeting)

Introduction to Section A: Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

Overview

This section of 'Keep the best, change the rest' provides tools to explore general, everyday issues about gender and sexuality and how they affect women and men's vulnerability to HIV.

This section includes ten tools:

- A1** Cartoon strip
- A2** Scenes from life
- A3** But why?
- A4** Chain of effects
- A5** Walking in each other's shoes
- A6** Working day
- A7** Making decisions
- A8** Caring for others
- A9** Lifelines
- A10** Gender boxes

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

Gender refers to the social, cultural and economic roles, characteristics, opportunities and expectations that are linked to being female or male. The situation in relation to gender varies widely in different societies. But, because it is 'constructed' (made) by a society, gender can be changed over time – to make that society more just and equal.

Sexuality is a key aspect of being a human and affects people throughout their life. It involves issues relating to gender, sex, sexual orientation, pleasure, relationships and reproduction. Sexuality can be expressed by some or all of a person's thoughts, beliefs, desires, fantasies, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. It is influenced by the relationship between a wide range of different factors, including those that are social, biological, psychological, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious and spiritual.

Vulnerability relates to the risks of HIV and AIDS that are faced by different kinds of people in different kinds of situations. It helps in understanding the reasons behind those risks and the extent to which people do or do not have control over them. Looking at people's vulnerability is a good way to see how issues of gender and sexuality affect HIV and AIDS.

What influences vulnerability?

Vulnerability involves a combination of several different factors:

- **Bodies:** Some people are physically more vulnerable to HIV than others. For example, girls and young women are more vulnerable because the genital tract is not as developed (strong) as it is in older women. Meanwhile, women or men with other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) may be more vulnerable, if they have cuts in the skin that make it easier for HIV to enter. Research has shown that uncircumcised men are more vulnerable to HIV infection than circumcised men.

- **Choices:** Some people are more vulnerable to HIV because they have fewer choices than others when it comes to their sexual behaviour and dealing with the risk of infection. For example, some women exchange sex for money due to their economic needs and may not be able to choose whether to use a condom with their sexual partners.
- **Abilities:** Some people are more vulnerable to HIV because they have fewer abilities to deal with their risk of infection. For example, if a woman has experienced sexual violence, she may have low self-esteem and confidence and not be able to negotiate safer sex with her husband.
- **Pressures:** Some people are more vulnerable to HIV because they face more pressure than others to take risks. For example, young men might feel under pressure to have many different sexual partners and not use condoms to 'prove' that they are men to their peers.

Changing gender roles – keep the best, change the rest

This section of 'Keep the best, change the rest' focuses on women and men's social and sexual lives, how they are changing and how they are affected by HIV and AIDS.

It helps communities to look at how changes in gender roles are creating both opportunities and confusion for people today. As just some examples:

- Children learn from school and the media about human rights and girls can see women moving into positions of authority. But, at the same time, young people are also under pressure to follow the culture of older generations.
- There are signs that changes in women's roles are creating a negative response from some women and men, putting pressure on people to return to more traditional ways.
- Men are under pressure to live up to their traditional roles as provider and head of the house. But, where there is rising male unemployment, this can become a problem for those who lack the economic means to play this role.

- Some women feel a double pressure – to conform to traditional roles when back home in their village, and to be independent modern women when at work in the town.

'Keep the best, change the rest' is an important principle of this toolkit. It is based on the view that people can make choices about which of their values, beliefs and practices they want to keep and which they want to change. The tools are designed to help people to make these choices for themselves.



Tool A1 Cartoon strip

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves acting out a 'cartoon strip' – a series of scenes about an issue or situation relating to gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To explore people's real life experiences in relation to gender and sexuality.



Facilitator's notes

- Encourage the participants to think of stories that are realistic for their local community, rather than ones that are too exaggerated.
- Inform the participants that 'cartoon strips' work best when the story leading up to the 'incident' (picture 5) takes place over quite a short space of time (hours/days) rather than a longer period (months/years).

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the group to identify four issues or problems relating to gender and sexuality in their community. Examples might include 'young people are starting to have sex at a young age' or 'there are many cases of husbands beating their wives'.
- 3 Divide the participants into four small groups. Ask each group to choose a different one of the issues to work on. Ask each one to:
 - *think of a story about this problem, based on their knowledge and experience of the local community*
 - *tell the story by acting out a 'cartoon strip', involving a series of five scenes.*

Inform them that the final scene (picture 5) should show an 'incident' of the problem (such as a couple having unsafe sex or a wife being beaten by her husband). The previous scenes (pictures 1-4) should show the steps that lead up to the 'incident'.

- 4 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask each group to act out its 'cartoon strip'. Encourage everyone to discuss the stories and support them to draw up a list of the most common issues, events and experiences that lead up to the final scenes.
- 5 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps. For example, people might want to identify ways to prevent these situations occurring.



24 Tool A2 Scenes from life

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves performing 'scenes from life' – role-plays, songs or poems about situations relating to gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To explore the underlying causes of problems relating to gender and sexuality – helping people to 'go deeper' and express what they really think and feel.

 Facilitator's notes

- Be aware that this activity can bring up strong feelings – as it might remind people of painful experiences in their own lives. Encourage the participants to take care of themselves and each other.
- Inform the participants that 'scenes from life' work best if they are typical of their community, rather than too dramatic.
- Ensure that the role-plays, songs or poems keep to the point of the activity.
- This tool can be used in a number of different ways. For example, you can: present some 'scenes from life' showing a problem that the participants might feel uncomfortable to talk about.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the group to identify four issues or problems relating to gender and sexuality in their community.
- 3 Divide the participants into four groups. Divide by age and gender. Ask each group to choose a different one of the issues to work on.
- 4 Ask each group to prepare some 'scenes from life' – a role-play, song or poem about the issue that is based on characters, events and attitudes that are similar to those in their community.
- 5 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask each group to present its 'scenes from life'. Ask the actors to talk about what it was like to perform the role-play, song or poem and what they learned from it. Ask the other participants to talk about how they felt watching the performance and what they learned from it. Encourage discussions about:
 - *What was happening in the 'scenes from life'? Does this happen in the community?*
 - *Why did each character behave as they did?*
 - *What power did each character have in the situation, and why?*
 - *Who was most affected by the situation, how and why?*
 - *How were the different people vulnerable to HIV?*
 - *What could each of the people do to reduce their vulnerability to HIV?*
- 6 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.



► **Example 1**

'Scenes of life' as a song

▼ **Example 2**

'Scenes of life' as a role-play



26 Tool A3 But why?

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves creating a 'but why?' diagram – by drawing a problem relating to gender and sexuality in the centre, repeating the question '*but why?*' and drawing the answers in circles around the problem.

Why use it?

To explore the underlying causes of problems relating to gender and sexuality.

**Facilitator's notes**

- Be aware that this tool can be quite complicated. Support the participants to use it by giving them clear, step-by-step instructions and explaining how the end result shows the different 'levels' of reasons for the main problem. It may help to put arrows on the lines that link the circles – with them all pointing inwards to show how they contribute to the central problem.
- Encourage the participants to allow plenty of space for this tool – so that the diagram can spread out as much as is needed.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the group to identify four issues or problems relating to gender and sexuality in their community.
- 3 Divide the participants into four groups. Ask each group to choose a different one of the issues to work on.
- 4 Ask each group to draw a 'but why?' diagram. Ask them to start by drawing or writing their issue in a circle in the middle of a space on the floor, blackboard or sheet of flipchart paper.
- 5 Ask each group to:
 - Discuss '*but why does this happen?*' Then write each of the immediate answers in separate circles around the problem.
 - Look at the first of the immediate answers and again discuss '*but why does this happen?*' Then write the answer in a new circle and join it to the first circle with a line. Repeat this a few times.
- 6 Ask each group to repeat the activity for each of the other immediate answers and to keep asking '*but why does this happen?*' until they can think of no more answers.
- 7 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask each group to share their diagram. Support the participants to develop a list of the most common reasons for problems relating to gender and sexuality and to discuss why they are the most common.
- 8 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify any next steps. For example, discuss what the group and others can do about each cause.

Because it makes us
happy to love one another.



Express
love to your
boyfriend

curiosity

Why do
girls have
early sex?

sexual
feelings

time to do it
when reaching
certain age in
menstruation

forced
sex

Drugging

Sugar
Daddy

to solve
financial
problems

pressure
from
mother

Tool A4 Chain of effects

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves making a 'human chain' of the effects that result from a problem relating to gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To build understanding about the effects of a problem relating to gender and sexuality and to motivate people to identify strategies to address them.

Facilitator's notes

- Ensure that the central issue is clear and that the effects are focused.
- Looking deeper into the effects of problems can motivate people to change.
- Looking at effects helps to raise people's awareness of the seriousness of a problem and who is affected by it. It also helps to make the links between different issues that the community is concerned about. For example, violence against women is an example of a condition that allows HIV to spread, while also having an effect on the well-being and status of women.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the participants to select one issue or problem relating to gender and sexuality in their community.
- 3 Ask for one or two volunteers to sit in the middle of a large space and represent the issue that has been selected.
- 4 Ask the other participants to think of an immediate effect of the issue (i.e. what does the issue lead to or cause to happen?)
- 5 Ask another volunteer to sit to one side of the 'issue', to link their arms with them and to represent the immediate effect.
- 6 Ask the participants to identify the effects of the immediate effect. Ask other volunteers to sit to the side of the 'immediate effect' and to represent the effects and form a long chain. Encourage the group to keep listing the effects until they can think of no more 'links' in the chain.
- 7 Go back to the original issue and identify another immediate effect. Repeat the process.
- 8 When the 'human chain' is finished, encourage the participants to discuss what they have learned about the different ways in which an issue about gender and sexuality impacts on their community. Also ask them if they have any suggestions about how they could address the issue.
- 9 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.



Tool A5 Walking in each other's shoes

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves women and men 'walking in each other's shoes' by acting out the journey through life that is taken by the other gender.

Why use it?

To help women and men to understand what life is like for each other and to identify ways to improve their relationships.



Facilitator's notes

- Encourage the participants to make their journeys interesting, for example by using objects or clothes that are associated with the other gender.
- Highlight participants' own, real life experiences of successfully 'walking in each other's shoes' and improving their relationships.
- 'Walking in each other's shoes' not only improves individual relationships, it also helps communities to work well together on issues of common concern, such as HIV and AIDS.
- Challenge men who role-play women's suffering but are reluctant to change to reduce it.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Divide the participants into two groups – women-only and men-only.
- 3 Ask each group to talk about what they think it is like to live life as a person of the other gender. Ask them to think about this life in terms of a journey that goes from birth to the present day and that is walked by a typical person in their community. Ask them to prepare to act out that journey.
- 4 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask the men's group to 'walk in each other's shoes' – by acting out the women's journey. Ask the women's group what it was like to see the description of their lives and how closely it fitted reality.
- 5 Repeat the process, with the women's group acting out the men's journey.
- 6 Ask the participants to discuss:
 - *How similar or different were the two journeys? If different, why is that?*
 - *How might these different journeys affect women's and men's experiences in relation to HIV and AIDS?*
 - *Would you want to exchange your journey for that of the other gender? Why or why not?*
 - *How easy or difficult is it for women and men to try to 'walk in each other's shoes'? What could make it easier?*
 - *How can we use our understanding of each others situation to improve our relationships?*
 - *What are our own experiences of 'walking in each other's shoes'?*
- 7 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.



32 Tool A6 Working day

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves drawing a 'working day' timeline and marking on the different tasks that women and men carry out.

Why use it?

To highlight the differences between women and men's daily activities and roles and to explore how they reflect unequal social roles that can influence people's situation in relation to HIV and AIDS.

 Facilitator's notes

- Adapt the tool by:
 - dividing the participants into men-only and women-only groups of different ages. Ask them to do two 'working day' timelines (one for themselves, one for the opposite gender) to highlight different and similar points of view
 - asking the participants to do three separate timelines: family, community and work. This helps to highlight the many different activities that are carried out in relation to the family that are not seen as 'work' and that are usually the responsibility of women.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Divide the participants into small groups, with a mixture of women and men in each. Ask each group to think about their community and to:
 - *think of a typical day in the lives of a typical married couple*
 - *identify all the tasks carried out by the wife and the husband, from when they get up in the morning to when they go to bed.*
- 3 Ask each group to summarise their discussions by drawing a 'working day' timeline on the ground, a blackboard or piece of flipchart paper. Ask them to use words, symbols or numbers to show the wife and the husband (down the left-hand side), the different times of day (across the top) and the tasks carried out (in the appropriate columns).
- 4 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask each of the groups to present their 'working day' timelines. Encourage discussion about the differences that the timelines show about the work of women and men. Ask questions such as:
 - *What benefits do women and men's work bring to the household?*
 - *What would happen if either were to stop doing their work?*
 - *How different is the amount of work, type of work and pay received by women and men?*
 - *Why do those differences exist? How do they affect women and men, especially in relation to their sexual lives?*
 - *Is anything changing in people's working days nowadays? If so, why?*
- 5 Ask the participants whether their answers would be the same for all types of women and men. For example, what differences might there be in the 'working day' timeline for a household headed by a child? Find out by



including child-headed households in using the tool and participating in the discussions.

6 Encourage the participants to discuss:

- *What would you want to change about the working days of women and men in order to improve their lives and their sexual health?*
- *Who would support this change and how can you encourage that support?*
- *Who will resist this change, and how can you deal with that resistance?*

7 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.

	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Housewife																			
Farmer																			



Wake up



Cleaning



Sexual interactions



Religious observances



Wash



Eat



Garden work



Watch TV



Tea



- Washing clothes



Farwing



Sleep



Prepare husband for work

34 Tool A7 Making decisions

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves creating a 'making decisions' chart to support discussions about the power that women and men have in different areas of decision-making.

Why use it?

To explore the different kinds of decisions that face individuals, couples and families and the roles of women and men in making those decisions.

Facilitator's notes

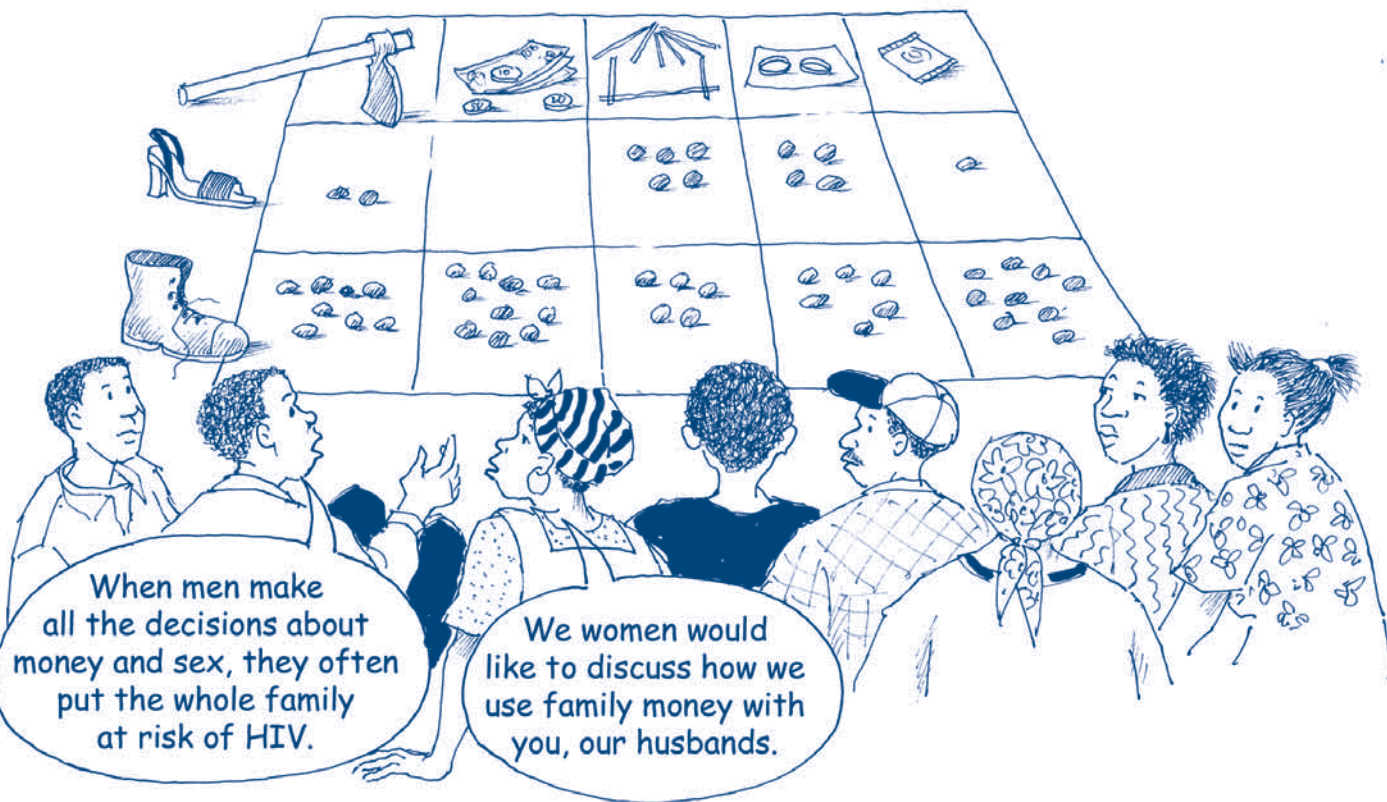
- Welcome disagreements about women and men's roles in making decisions. These will help people to identify what changes need to occur.
- It is best to divide the participants into women-only and men-only groups and to ask them to do their own and each other's chart – in order to highlight where there are similar and different points of view.
- Ask the participants to share any traditional stories or proverbs that say something about the roles of women and men in each of the areas. Talk about how the roles have changed over time and why.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the participants to identify five different areas of decision-making at the household level. Examples might include 'work' or 'money'.
- 3 Draw a 'making decisions' chart. Mark out a grid on the ground, blackboard or flipchart paper and use drawings, items or words to show a man and a woman down the left-hand side and the five areas of decision-making across the top. For example:

	Work	Money	Family	Children	Sex
Woman					
Man					

- 4 Give each participant ten stones or beans. Explain that these are their 'votes'.
- 5 Ask the participants to put their 'votes' in the boxes on the chart to show where women or men have less or more power in making decisions. For example, if they think that men have a lot of power in decision-making about money, they should put several of their 'votes' in that box.
- 6 Discuss what the 'making decisions' chart shows. For example:
 - *Overall, who has a greater role in making decisions: women or men? Why?*
 - *How do current beliefs about the roles of women and men affect their roles in making decisions?*
 - *In terms of HIV and AIDS, which decisions is it most important for women and men to share?*
 - *What needs to change for women and men to share more decision-making, especially in relation to HIV and AIDS?*
- 7 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet as in previous sessions.



Tool A8 Caring for others

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves discussions and role-plays to highlight the different roles and expectations of women and men in relation to caring for others.

Why use it?

To identify the range of caring roles in the community, who normally takes on those roles and how caring tasks can be shared more equally between women and men.

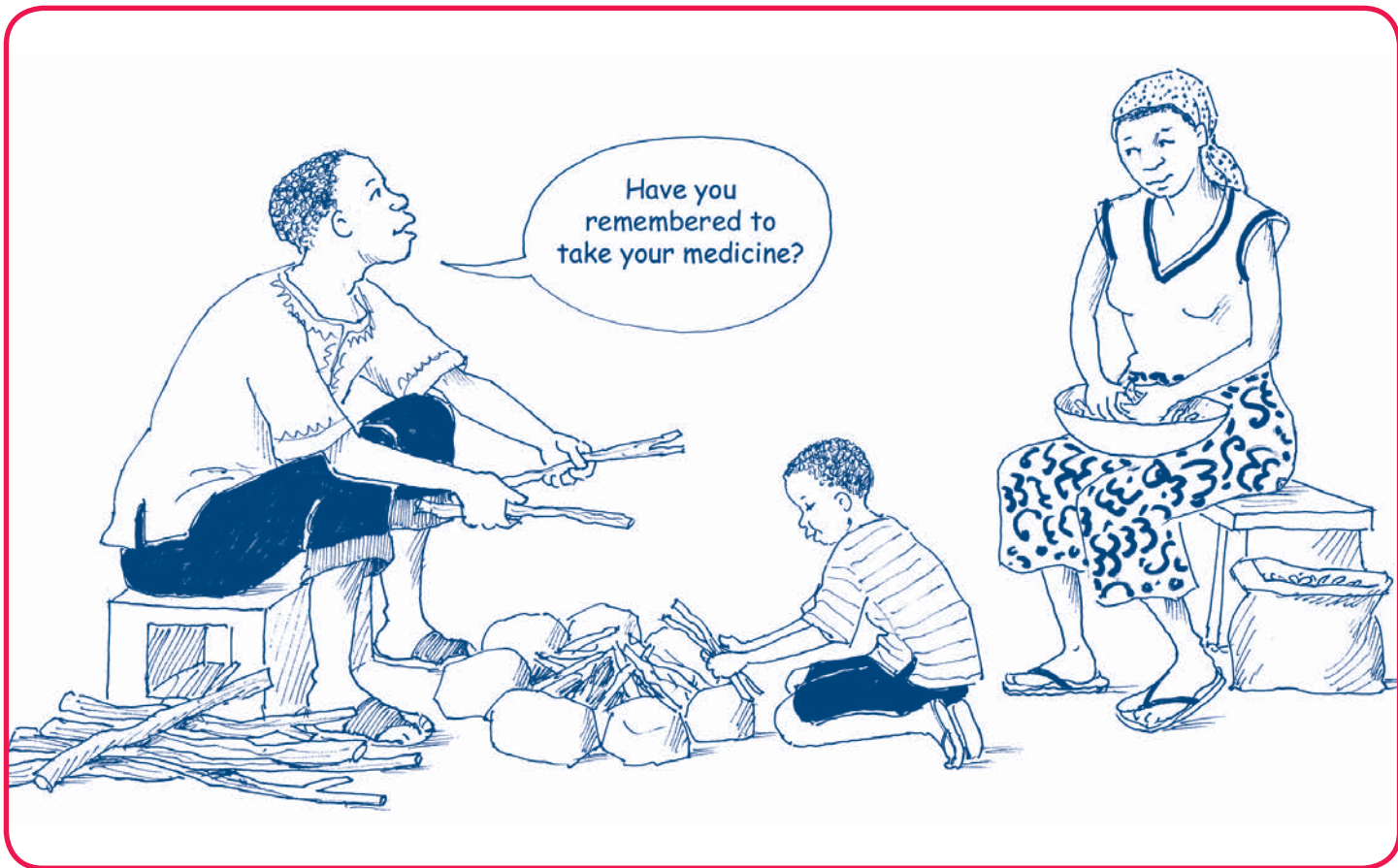


Facilitator's notes

- Be aware that talking about the burden of care might be emotional for some participants, especially if they are themselves carers or close to people who are sick.
- Ensure that you are prepared for emotional reactions by participants and, if necessary, can refer them to local care and support services that you know about.
- Talk about the reality of HIV and AIDS and how this is forcing everyone to question responsibilities in relation to care.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the group to share proverbs, poems or songs that talk about women's and men's role as carers in relationships, the family and the community.
- 3 Based on what the participants have shared, encourage them to discuss:
 - *What are the traditional roles and expectations of women and men in relation to caring for those who are ill? What the reasons for these differences?*
 - *How does the difference in care activities affect the lives of women and men and those living with HIV?*
 - *How has HIV and AIDS affected the caring roles of women and men?*
- 4 Discuss what would happen if care activities were shared more equally. For example, how would women benefit and how would men benefit?
- 5 Ask the participants to give examples from their own lives of men taking on caring roles. Discuss these examples by asking:
 - *What helped these men to get involved in care?*
 - *Which pressure (social, economic, psychological) prevent men from being carers?*
 - *What opportunities are there for men to get more involved in caring for others? What can help men to take advantage of these opportunities?*
- 6 Based on the discussions, ask for volunteers to role-play scenes in which men are challenged, persuaded and supported to play a more active role in care activities. Encourage the participants to discuss the role-play and what they have learned from the activity.
- 7 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.



38 Tool A9 Lifelines

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves drawing a 'lifeline' on the ground, marking it with different ages and using it as the basis for role-plays about what and how young people learn about gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To explore when, what and how young people learn about the roles of women and men as they are growing up and the impact of this on their sexual health.

**Facilitator's notes**

- Be aware that lifelines can bring up personal and emotional issues – as they involve thinking about childhood and adolescence. Look out for anyone who seems upset during the activity and offer support where needed.
- This tool may be used by adults using memories of their own childhood. It is important to talk about the differences between what they learned then and what young people learn today. The best way to do this is to have young people do the same activity and compare the results.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the participants to think about an experience early in their life when they learned that girls and boys are treated differently. Ask them to discuss what it taught them about how and why such treatment occurs.
- 3 Encourage the participants to identify the different 'influential people' that affect boys and girls as they are growing up. Examples might include mothers, fathers, friends, traditional initiators, teachers, church leaders, the media, etc. Ask for volunteers to role-play each of these people.
- 4 Draw a 'lifeline' on the floor – by drawing a straight line and marking it with four stages: 5 years old, 10 years old, 15 years old and 20 years old.
- 5 Ask for two volunteers (one female and one male) to come and stand at the '5 years old' stage on the lifeline. Ask the female volunteer to role-play a typical 5-year-old girl from the community when she was growing up. Ask the male volunteer to role-play a typical boy of the same age.
- 6 Ask the 'girl' and 'boy' to describe their lives. Encourage them to talk about: what they do/do not like doing; how they feel about girls/boys; what they have been told about the differences between girls and boys; and who has the most influence on their feelings about being a girl or boy.
- 7 Ask each of the volunteers role-playing 'influential people' to give the 'girl' and 'boy' messages about their gender roles and differences.
- 8 Discuss whether the messages are helpful or harmful and how they affect children's lives. Ask the 'girl' and 'boy' what messages would help them to live healthily and happily.
- 9 Then ask for new volunteers to play the 'girl' and 'boy' at the next stage on the lifeline (10 years old). Repeat the process.



- 10** Move on to the '15 years old' stage. Repeat the previous steps, but also ask the 'young woman' and 'young man' to role-play a situation in which they are challenging a harmful message. Also ask the 'influential people' to challenge each other about harmful messages that are given to young people.
- 11** Repeat the process for the '20 years old' stage.
- 12** Discuss what the lifeline showed about what young people learn about gender at different stages in their lives. In particular, focus on which messages nowadays are helpful or harmful for young people – and how the helpful ones can be strengthened and the harmful ones challenged.
- 13** At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.

Tool A10 Gender boxes

Gender, sexuality and vulnerability

What is it?

This tool involves drawing 'gender boxes' on the ground and jumping in and out of the boxes to highlight qualities that are – or are not – associated with being a good woman or a good man.

Why use it?

To learn more about the pressures on community members to 'act like a woman' or 'act like a man' according to widespread views about gender roles.

Facilitator's notes

- This tool can also be used by dividing the participants into two groups – women-only and men-only. The groups can start by doing a 'gender box' for their own gender, before then doing one for the other gender. This is a good way to open up discussion about how women and men see each other's situation.
- This tool can also be used with groups of older people and younger people. This helps to explore how traditional and modern expectations affect 'gender boxes'.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the participants to identify what, in the view of their community, are the ten most important characteristics or qualities of an 'ideal' woman and man.
- 3 Draw two large squares on the ground, a small distance apart. Explain that these are 'gender boxes' – one for women, one for men.
- 4 Ask for a male volunteer. Ask him to stand in the gender box for men and to act out the ten characteristics or qualities that were identified for an 'ideal' man.
- 5 Ask for a female volunteer. Repeat the process for the women's box.
- 6 Explain that, so far, the activity has focused on 'ideal' women and men – who fit comfortably into their 'gender box'.
- 7 Now, encourage the participants to suggest characteristics or qualities that real-life women and men have that are not 'ideal' for their gender. Ask the participants to shout out the characteristics or qualities. Ask the two volunteers to jump out of their 'gender box' and to act out the characteristics and qualities.
- 8 Encourage the participants to discuss what they have learned from seeing the volunteers jumping in and out of their 'gender boxes'. Ask them:
 - *What are the benefits to women and men of staying in their 'gender box' and behaving how they are supposed to?*
 - *What are the costs or risks to women and men of staying in their 'gender box', especially in terms of HIV and AIDS?*
 - *What might it feel like to be out of a 'gender box'?*
 - *What support do women and men need to step out of their 'gender boxes'?*
- 9 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions and action points made by the group and identify next steps.

