

Introduction to Section D: Working together

Overview

This section of 'Keep the best, change the rest' provides tools to help community groups to work well together on issues relating to gender and sexuality.

This section includes five tools:

- D1** Speaking my truth
- D2** Maintaining energy
- D3** Creating structure
- D4** Building leadership
- D5** Working with allies

Working together

This toolkit is based on the belief that **people need to work together in groups to make change happen** in communities. From birth to death, we live our lives in groups: families, friends, peers and colleagues. So, it is logical that we work together in groups to make change.

When working on gender and sexuality, it is particularly important to work in groups. This is because individuals acting alone cannot bring about the sort of changes in norms and beliefs that may need to happen. Building the power of groups to work together on such action is essential.

Building skills and maintaining energy

Dealing with HIV and AIDS and other community concerns may mean that people need to develop new skills. Examples include skills for campaigning for better services and educating community members about the need to change existing gender roles.

Addressing gender and sexuality also means that a group needs to maintain its energy and enthusiasm, even when its work is difficult and challenging.

Developing leadership and structure

Groups need to be clear about their purpose, while members need to feel valued and connected. Balancing these two requires good leadership.

Effective leadership means being willing to think about the group as a whole and offer direction to meet its goals. Many people have experiences with leaders who made all the decisions or who didn't listen to others. These are aspects of leadership that have to be overcome for the group to work together well.

Leadership is made up of many components and we can share these among the group's members. Leadership and teamwork need to go hand-in-hand. The group is not dependent on any one person, but rather on the collective abilities of its

members. Each person brings their own views, skills and experience.

The purpose of sharing leadership is to value all the members of the group and to give each person a chance to exercise their own strengths. In addition, groups need to identify some type of structure that allows them to work well as an 'organisation'. This includes having systems and processes for decision-making and agreed roles and responsibilities.

Working with allies

Groups also need to try to work in partnership with other individuals, groups and organisations.

Partnerships can be about sharing lessons and materials, creating referral networks or building coalitions to campaign for change. In all of these cases, good partnership rests on:

- common interests and shared objectives
- clear communication on roles and responsibilities
- clear agreements on methods and approaches.

Courage to change – keep the best, change the rest

This section of 'Keep the best, change the rest' recognises that pressure from friends, family and the larger community can make it hard to challenge widely-held, but harmful, beliefs about gender and sexuality.

However, for people to lead happier and healthier social and sexual lives, change is necessary – even if it takes a lot of courage to make it happen.

'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 how they want to work as a team and support each other while they take action on gender and sexuality in their community.



74 Tool D1 Speaking my truth

Working together

What is it?

This tool involves role-playing in threes and having one person 'speaking my truth', another listening and another challenging – to support discussions about how people can speak up about issues that they care about.

Why use it?

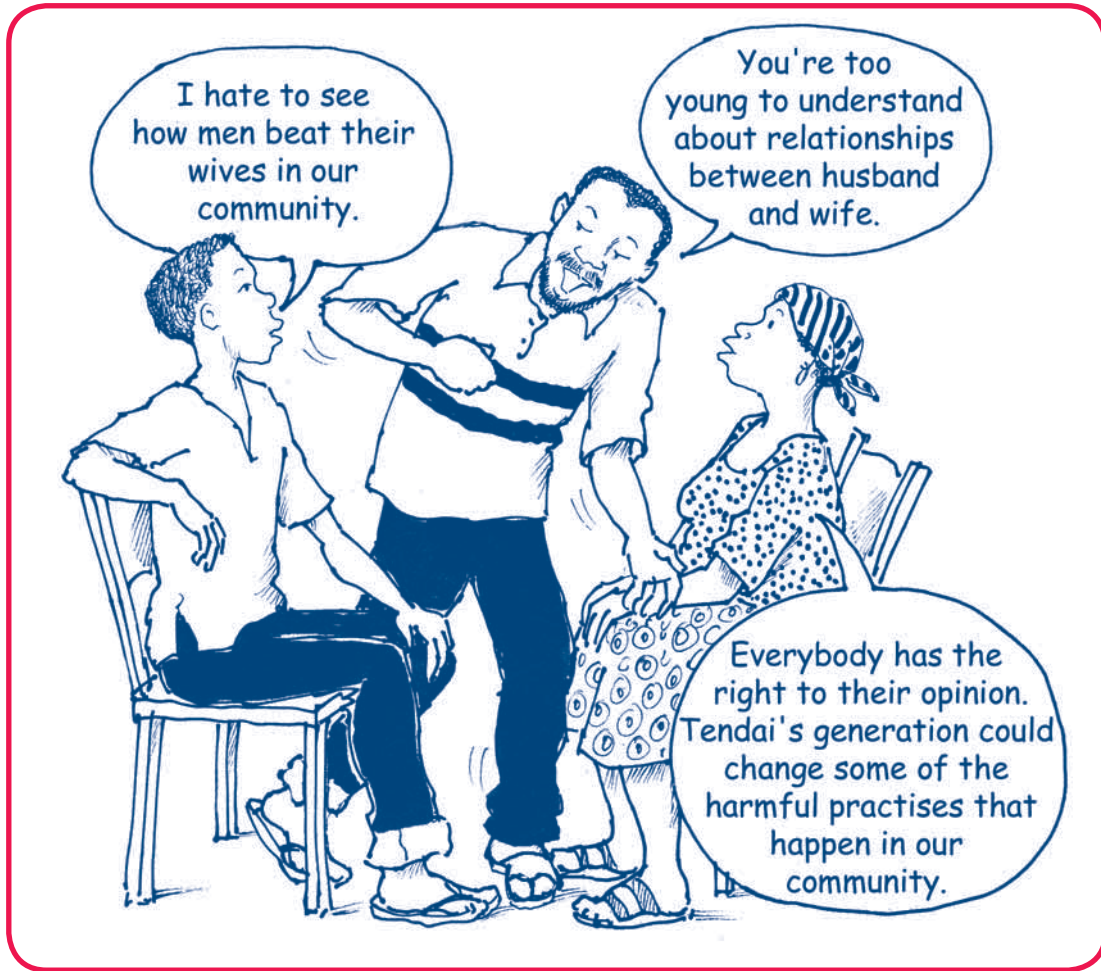
To strengthen group members' confidence and ability to speak up for what they believe in and care about.

Facilitator's notes

- We can also use this tool with women-only and men-only groups. This highlights what men can do to support other men and what women can do to support other women in relation to speaking up.
- Support both women and men to speak up in the group about the changes that they care about. For example, challenge any participant who uses 'roles' to try to silence another member of the group (e.g. a man saying to a woman that something is 'a subject that only men should talk about').

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the group to think back on the issues about gender and sexuality that they have discussed. Ask each participant to think of one change in relation to women and men's roles and lives that they really care about, but have not spoken about in public before.
- 3 Divide the participants into groups of three people. Give each person in the groups a different role: **A**: Speaker, **B**: Listener, **C**: Challenger.
- 4 Ask **A** to sit opposite **B** and 'speak my truth' – by talking about the change that they care about. Tell **C** to try to challenge the right of **A** to speak. Ask **A** and **B** to respond to this challenge.
- 5 Ask the members of the groups to change roles twice. Repeat the process so that each person has acted each role.
- 6 Bring all of the participants back together. Encourage them to discuss what they have learned from the activity. Ask them questions such as:
 - *What did it feel like as person **A** to 'speak my truth' about the changes that you want to see? What did it feel like as person **B** to hear this?*
 - *What did person **C** do or say that made it harder to 'speak my truth'? How did the others deal with them?*
 - *What would help you to speak up in the face of opposition?*
 - *What difference, if any, does being a woman or a man, or being a young person or adult, make to people's ability to speak up?*
- 7 Ask the group to make a list of what they could do to support each other to speak up about issues about gender and sexuality that they care about.
- 8 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any action points and decisions made by the groups and identify next steps.



76 Tool D2 Maintaining energy

Working together

What is it?

This tool involves discussions about ways of 'maintaining energy' while working on gender and sexuality.

Why use it?


To identify sources of energy that can sustain the work of a group and ways to make the best use of those sources.

Facilitator's notes

- Prepare the participants for the reality that trying to change aspects of gender and sexuality will take time and require a lot of energy.
- Encourage the participants to think about how to maintain their energy while they take action together. For example:
 - value and build on the sources of energy that already exist in their lives
 - think in terms of sources of energy for both individuals and the whole group
 - share your own experiences about maintaining energy to do this work.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask one or more of the participants to open the session with a song, prayer or ritual that helps them to renew their energy and spirit.
- 3 Discuss the importance of 'maintaining energy' when taking on the challenge of changing aspects of gender and sexuality.
- 4 Ask the participants to identify different sources of energy that could help them to sustain their work together. Examples might include: commitment and passion, hope and inspiration, success, religious faith, money, good health, supportive relationships, celebrations, etc.
- 5 Divide the participants into groups of 3-4 people. Give each group one of the sources of energy that have been identified. Ask them to discuss the source based on the following questions:
 - *What (or who) can help the group to tap into this source of energy?*
 - *What obstacles might the group face in trying to tap into this source of energy?*
 - *How can the group overcome these obstacles?*
- 6 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask the groups to share the highlights from their discussions. Support the participants to summarise how they will make the best use of the different sources of energy.
- 7 Close with another song, prayer or ritual.
- 8 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any action points and decisions made by the groups and identify next steps.



Once a month
we could meet together -
to share some food, support
each other and celebrate the
good work we are doing in
the community.



78 Tool D3 Creating structure

Working together

What is it?

This tool involves discussing and drawing a structure for the group that, in particular, reflects its commitment to gender equality.

Why use it?

To make an agreement on how the group will work together to take action on issues relating to gender and sexuality.

Facilitator's notes

- Support the group to identify the kind of structure that it needs by:
 - encouraging the participants to talk about their own experiences and what already works. The group could be part of an existing structure
 - reminding the participants of the need to find the right balance between having some sort of structure, while not getting too complicated.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Explain the idea of a 'structure'. For example, a 'structure' might involve having a chairperson, vice chairperson, officials (who are elected to take on particular responsibilities) and members.
- 3 Ask the participants to share their own experiences and examples of structures from groups that they already belong to (such as micro credit groups, burial societies, sports teams, village development committees, etc). Ask them to identify the qualities of a good 'structure' and those of a bad 'structure'.
- 4 Support the participants to discuss how a 'structure' will help the group to decide:
 - *How will we make decisions?*
 - *How will we manage the work that we will do?*
 - *How will we be accountable to each other and to others?*
 - *How will we support each other as we work together?*
 - *How will we link with or build on existing structures?*
- 5 Divide the participants into women-only and men-only groups. Ask them to discuss:
 - *How can the structure of our group show our commitment to more equal and just roles for women and men?*

Ask each small group to design a structure for how the group as a whole will make decisions and work together in a way that shows its commitment to more equal and just roles. Encourage them to draw the structure, for example on the ground or on a blackboard.

- 6 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask each group to present their results. Encourage the participants to identify any similarities or differences between the women's and men's groups.
- 7 Encourage the participants to summarise what type of structure the group will set up to support its work on gender and sexuality.
- 8 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any action points and decisions made by the groups and identify next steps.



Tool D4 Building leadership

Working together

What is it?

This tool involves debating statements about women and men's leadership roles – to support discussions about what makes 'good leadership' for a group taking action on gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To help the group to identify the type of leadership that it wants and needs and to begin to build that leadership.



Facilitator's notes

- Try to 'practise what you preach' – by being a role model for the type of leadership qualities that are discussed in this activity.
- Let the group know when you see examples of unequal and unjust roles being played out among them and how these affect their work in relation to group leadership.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Ask the participants to share examples and stories about good leadership from their own personal and professional lives.
- 3 Discuss the qualities of a good leader for a group that wants to work on issues relating to gender and sexuality. Examples might include 'leads by example', 'is a good speaker' or 'accepts criticism in a positive way'.
- 4 Divide the participants into two groups – women-only and men-only. Ask each group to discuss the following statements:
 - *Women communicate and show empathy better than men.*
 - *Men may think they are the leaders, but women really have the power.*
 - *Women have too much work to do at home to become leaders.*
 - *Women are most affected by gender and HIV, they should be the leaders.*
- 5 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask the groups to share the key points from their discussions. Encourage the participants to compare the similarities and differences between the women's and men's groups.
- 6 Explain that, in a group working on issues relating to unequal gender roles, it is important that the leadership is shared between women and men.
- 7 Divide the participants into two groups again, but this time with a mixture of women and men. Ask each group to discuss:
 - *What leadership do we have in the group now and what leadership do we want in the future?*
 - *How can we, as women and men, share our leadership in the group?*
 - *How can we as a group put into practice the qualities of leadership?*



- 8 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask the groups to share the highlights of their discussions. Encourage the participants to make an agreement among themselves about how they want the group's leadership to be and how they will put that agreement into practice.
- 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 D5 Working with allies

What is it?

This involves drawing a 'venn diagram' to support discussions about relationships with 'allies' for work on gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To identify the allies and relationships that can help a group in its work on gender and sexuality.

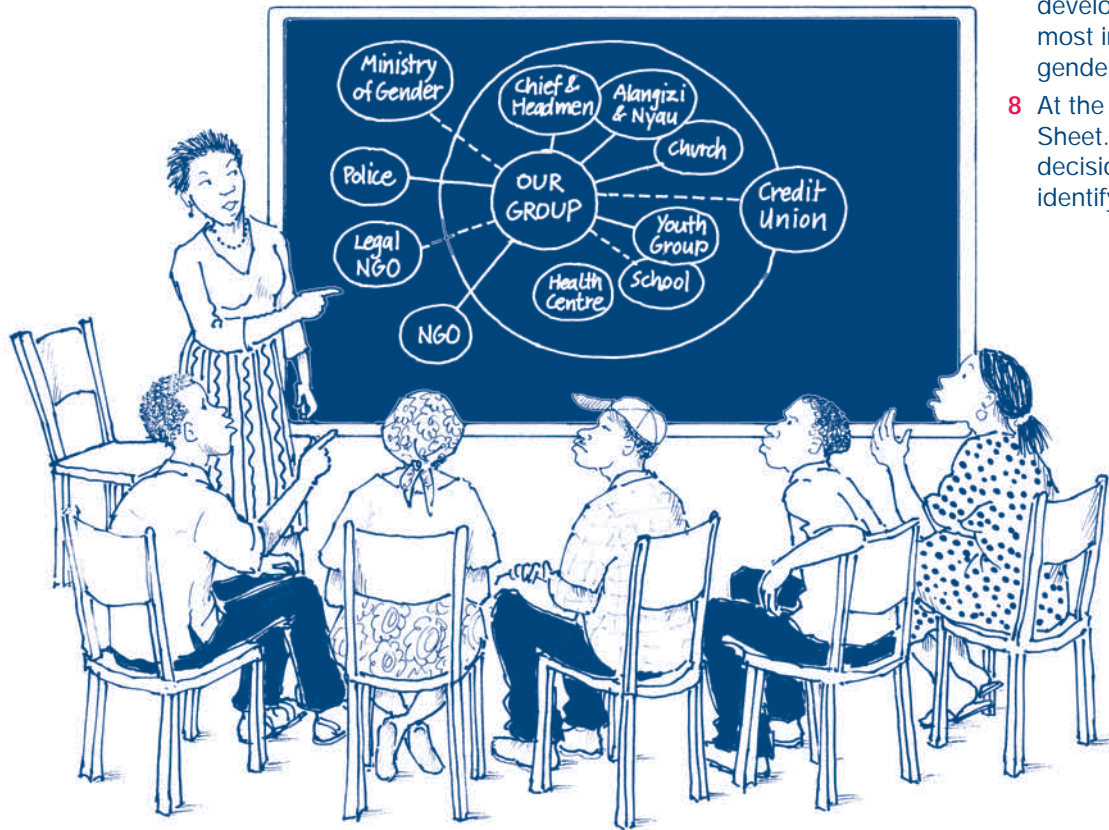


Facilitator's notes

- Emphasise that being imaginative about allies, and finding the right ones, is vital to work on gender and sexuality.
- Be aware that this tool can be complex to understand 'in theory'. Support the participants by presenting an example of a 'venn diagram' at the start and going through the process step by step.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Introduce the idea of an 'ally' – a friend or supporter. Ask the participants to give examples from their own lives of people, groups or institutions that have been their 'allies'. Identify the qualities of a good 'ally'.
- 3 Show an example of a 'venn diagram'. Explain how:
 - *the size of circle shows how important an ally is – the bigger the circle, the more important the ally*
 - *the length of line shows the strength of the relationship with the ally – the shorter the line, the closer the relationship with the ally*
 - *the type of line shows the status of the relationship with the ally. For example, a solid line shows a current relationship, while a dotted line shows a potential one.*
- 4 Draw a circle in the middle of a space on the ground, blackboard or large sheet of paper. Tell the group that this represents their work on gender and sexuality.
- 5 Ask the participants to list the current and potential allies that could help them with their work on gender and sexuality.
- 6 For each of the allies listed, ask the participants to:
 - *Decide how strong their relationship is with the ally. What do we do now with the ally? Then draw the ally at a short, medium or long distance from the central circle.*
 - *Decide how important the ally is. How can they help? Then draw a small or large circle around the ally.*
 - *Decide how strong or weak their relationship is with a current ally. How often do we meet with them? Then draw a solid line for them and a dotted line between the central circle and potential allies.*



- 7 Review the completed 'venn diagram'. Based on what it shows, ask the group to make a plan to develop its relationships with its most important allies for work on gender and sexuality.
- 8 At the end, fill in an Activity Record Sheet. In particular, note any decisions made by the group and identify next steps.

Introduction to Section E: Making a plan

Overview

This section of ‘Keep the best, change the rest’ provides tools to help community groups to make an Action Plan for working together on issues relating to gender and sexuality. It focuses on the discussions and decisions that are necessary to produce an Action Plan, (see example on page 85).

This section includes five tools:

- E1** Deciding what to work on
- E2** Deciding how to do the work
- E3** Deciding when to do the work
- E4** Deciding who will do the work
- E5** Deciding how to monitor and evaluate the work

Action planning

Action planning is like preparing for a journey. It involves answering the questions: *Where are we trying to get to? How will we get there? How will we know when we have arrived?*

Deciding what to work on begins with deciding what is important. This could be because making such a change will have a big impact on our lives or because no one else is doing much (good) work on making such a change. Deciding what to work on also involves discussing what is easier to work on. For example, the group may already have the skills needed to make a change or may have opportunities to access support or funding.

Action planning involves thinking about and then **taking actions related to gender and sexuality at different levels:**

- **individual** – changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, etc
- **community** – changes in norms, policies, laws, etc
- **institutional** – changes in services’ accessibility, quality, etc.

Groups also need to decide which actions to take now and which to take soon or later. This can make the list of actions seem less overwhelming.

People often think that **checking on progress** (monitoring and evaluation) only happens when a project is finished. However, it is more helpful for the group to plan this at the very beginning by using a baseline survey against which to measure change and monitor the work in progress.

For a community group to take their work forward **using an Action Plan**, each stage needs to be discussed and decided on. Each tool in this section ends with filling in one of the Action Plan columns, leading to the production of a completed Action Plan.

‘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 what action they want to take on gender and sexuality, how and when they want to take it, who will do the work and how they will check their progress.

Action plan

Priorities (What to work on)	Actions (How to do the work)	Time (When to do the work)	People (Who will do the work)	Progress (How to monitor the work)
1.				
2.				
3.				

Tool E1 Deciding what to work on

Making a plan

What is it?

This tool involves using a 'priorities line' to support decision-making about what changes in relation to gender and sexuality a group hopes to address.

Why use it?

To make clear decisions about the changes in relation to gender and sexuality that are the priority for a group to address.

Facilitator's notes

- This tool can cause tensions – men and women of different ages may have very different ideas. Welcome disagreements as it is better for people to disagree openly than reach a 'false' agreement. The groups may want to take different actions, which will all contribute to community change.
- Use materials such as pencils or chalk, rather than marker pens, to fill in the Action Plan chart, so that people can change things as they discuss ideas.

How to use it

Note: Before carrying out this activity, review the Activity Record Sheets that you completed after using tools from sections A, B, C and D of this toolkit. Based on the results, draw up a list of the changes relating to gender and sexuality that the group, over the course of its work, identified as important.

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Summarise the list of changes relating to gender and sexuality that, through their work together, the group has identified as important. Check that the group are happy with the list – or if there is anything that they want to add, change or delete from it.
- 3 Put changes into groups of similar things if this helps. For example, put all improved skills together and everything to do with safer sex.
- 4 Draw a 'priorities line' on the ground. Mark one end 'low priority', the middle 'medium priority' and the other end 'high priority'.



- 5 Draw or write each of the grouped changes relating to gender and sexuality on a piece of card.
- 6 Take the first of the changes and ask the participants to decide whether it is low, medium or high priority for them. When deciding, ask them to particularly consider:
 - *how important the change is in terms of its effect*
 - *how easy the change is in terms of taking action.*
- 7 Based on the discussions, ask for a volunteer to pick up the card with the priority drawn or written on it and place it in the appropriate place on the 'priorities line'.
- 8 Repeat the process for the other changes.
- 9 When the 'priorities line' is complete, point out the 3-4 changes that have been identified as the highest priority. Ask the participants if they agree that these should be their priority areas for work. Encourage them to make changes if necessary.
- 10 Draw a large Action Plan on a wall, blackboard or floor. Fill in the information in the first column (Priorities: What to work on).



Action plan				
Priorities (What to work on)	Actions (How to do the work)	Time (When to do the work)	People (Who will do the work)	Progress (How to monitor the work)
1.				
2.				
3.				

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

Tool E2 Deciding how to do the work

Making a plan

What is it?

This tool involves discussions to identify actions that the group can take to achieve the changes in relation to gender and sexuality that it has identified as priorities.

Why use it?

To make clear decisions about what practical actions the group will take to achieve the changes in relation to gender and sexuality that it has set as its priorities.

Facilitator's notes

- If the idea of a court is not appropriate for the local culture, use another situation where an 'inquisition' might occur. Examples might include a village tribunal, press conference or meeting of elders.
- Allow plenty of time for this activity, so that the participants can thoroughly explore if their actions will be possible and effective.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Review the priorities in the Action Plan started in activity E1.
- 3 Divide the participants into the same number of groups as the number of priority changes that they have identified (i.e. if they have identified three priorities, divide them into three groups).
- 4 Give each group one of the priorities. Ask them to identify the practical actions that people need to take to achieve the priority. Encourage them to consider actions that individuals in the group, the group as a whole and the community (including community groups, services, etc) could take. Encourage the groups to think through their actions carefully – in terms of whether they will achieve the change, if it is practical, if they can get resources, etc. Ask them to prepare a small presentation about their actions.



- 5 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask one of the small groups to sit on one side of the space where you are working and to present the actions that they have identified for their priority. Ask the other participants to sit on the other side and to 'inquisition' or 'cross-examine' the small group – as if they were in a court, asking difficult questions to ensure that the group has thought through its ideas.
- 6 Bring all of the participants back together. Encourage them to work together to make the actions for the first group's priority as strong and effective as possible.
- 7 Repeat the process for the other small groups and priorities.
- 8 Summarise all the actions that have been identified and ask the participants if they are happy with them. Encourage them to make any changes that are necessary.
- 9 Return to the Action Plan and fill in the information in the second column (Actions: How to do the work).



Action plan				
Priorities (What to work on)	Actions (How to do the work)	Time (When to do the work)	People (Who will do the work)	Progress (How to monitor the work)
1.				
2.				
3.				

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

Tool E3 Deciding when to do the work

Making a plan

What is it?

This tool involves developing a 'now, soon, later' timeline to support discussions about when the group will take its actions.

Why use it?

To agree on the timeframe for the group's actions on changes relating to gender and sexuality.

Facilitator's notes

Support the participants to be realistic about when actions can be taken. Remind them that it is more important to have a modest plan that is achieved than a complex one that is not.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Review the Action Plan that has been filled in during activities E1 and E2. Explain that the group will now develop a timeframe for its work on gender and sexuality. Explain that a timeframe can show which actions will take place: **now** (e.g. within the next six months), **soon** (e.g. within the next year) and **later** (e.g. after the next year).
- 3 Divide the participants into the same small groups as in activity E2, so that each one is focusing on one of the priority areas.
- 4 Ask each group to review the actions that they have identified for their priority area.
- 5 Support each group to draw a 'now, soon, later' timeline – by drawing a long line along the ground and marking one end as 'now', the middle as 'soon' and the other end as 'later'.



- 6 Ask each group to draw or write each of the actions for their priority on a piece of card. Ask them to place each card on the 'now, soon, later' timeline according to when people should take the action. Encourage them to consider issues such as:
 - *How important is each action?*
 - *How long will each action take?*
 - *What resources (time, money, information, etc) will each action take?*
 - *Which actions need to happen before or after other ones?*
- 7 Bring all of the participants back together. Ask each small group to present its 'now, soon, later' timeline. Encourage the participants to work together to make the timelines as effective and realistic as possible.
- 8 When all of the small groups have presented their work, ask the participants if they agree about the timelines for their actions. Encourage them to make changes if necessary.
- 9 Return to the Action Plan and fill in the information in the third column (Time: When to do the work).



Action plan				
Priorities (What to work on)	Actions (How to do the work)	Time (When to do the work)	People (Who will do the work)	Progress (How to monitor the work)
1.				
2.				
3.				

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

Tool E4 Deciding who will do the work

Making a plan

What is it?

This tool involves discussions about three levels of strengths (individual, group and community) to support discussions about who will carry out the group's work on gender and sexuality.

Why use it?

To agree who will carry out the actions for each of the group's priority changes in relation to gender and sexuality.



Facilitator's notes

- Take time at the start of the activity to make sure that participants understand the meaning of the term 'strength'. Encourage them to ask questions and provide their own examples of different types of strengths.
- Pay particular attention to identifying the individuals, groups and organisations that have the most ability to take action.
- Allow time to discuss the ways that people and groups can strengthen their abilities to take action. This is especially important in relation to grassroots groups – that may have the potential to take action, but are currently weak.

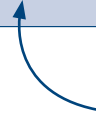
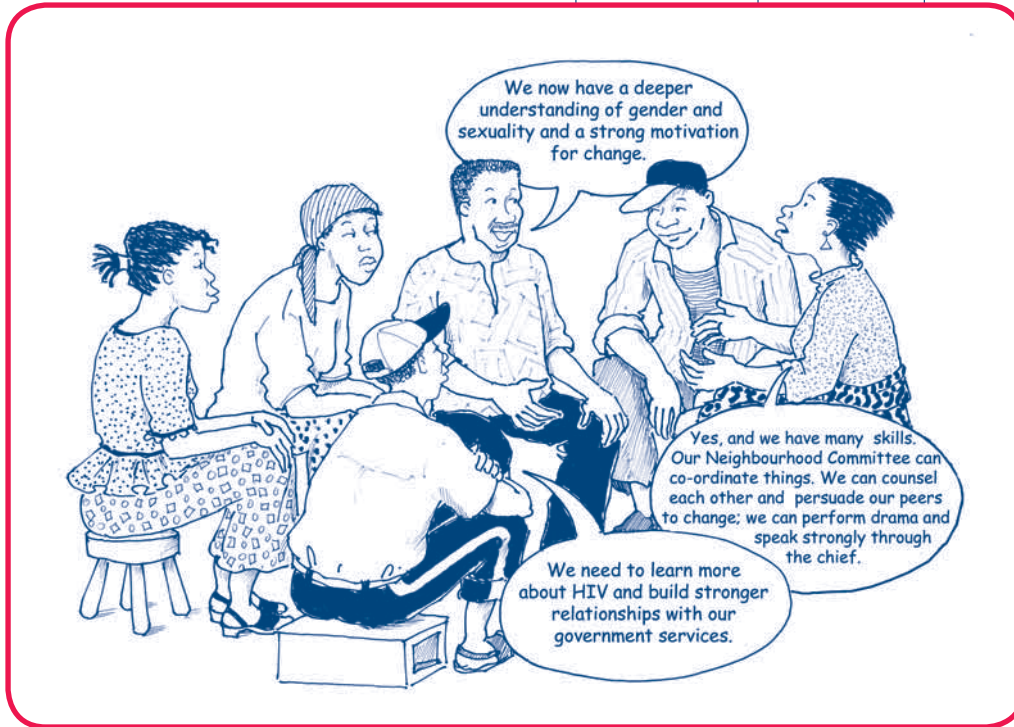
How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Review the Action Plan that has been filled in during activities E1, E2 and E3.
- 3 Explain that the group now needs to identify who will carry out the actions that they have agreed to achieve the priority changes.
- 4 Support the participants to discuss the strengths that are available among:
 - *individuals in the group*
 - *the group as a whole*
 - *the community (including its groups, institutions and structures).*

Encourage the participants to think about a wide variety of different strengths, including knowledge, skills, time, money, influence, relationships, energy and enthusiasm.
- 5 Go through each of the activities that they have identified for each of the group's priority changes. Support the group to identify which individuals or groups will be responsible for carrying out that change.
- 6 Support the participants to identify any gaps in the strengths that individuals, the group or community have to offer and how people might address those gaps.
- 7 Return to the Action Plan and fill in the information in the fourth column (People: Who will do the work).
- 8 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.

Action plan

Priorities (What to work on)	Actions (How to do the work)	Time (When to do the work)	People (Who will do the work)	Progress (How to monitor the work)
1.				
2.				
3.				



Tool E5 Deciding how to monitor the work

Making a plan

What is it?

This tool involves discussions about what type of information is needed to check progress on a group's action plan.

Why use it?

To plan how the group will check on the Action Plan that it has made and the progress that it is achieving in relation to gender and sexuality.



Facilitator's notes

Emphasise that it is important for groups to plan in advance how they are going to check their progress. This helps people to get into the habit of asking for and gathering feedback on their work. It also helps them to identify exactly what information is needed and how it will be collected.

How to use it

- 1 Explain the purpose of the tool to participants.
- 2 Review the Action Plan that has been filled in during activities E1, E2, E3 and E4.
- 3 For each of the priorities that the group has identified for its Action Plan, ask the participants to:
 - *identify the kinds of information that would give the group signs of progress*
 - *identify where that information could come from*
 - *decide how that information could be collected and recorded.*
- 4 Return to the Action Plan and fill in the information in the fifth column (Progress: How to monitor the work).

Action plan

Priorities (What to work on)	Actions (How to do the work)	Time (When to do the work)	People (Who will do the work)	Progress (How to monitor the work)
1.				
2.				
3.				

- 5 Now that it is completed, present the Action Plan to the participants. Encourage them to discuss what they think about the plan and whether they want to make any changes. In particular, ask them to consider:



- Does the plan reflect the most important changes in relation to gender and sexuality that should happen in the community? I.e. does it have the right priorities?
 - Does the plan reflect changes that can happen in the community? I.e. is it realistic?
 - Does the plan reflect changes that the group wants to make in the community? I.e. are they proud and enthusiastic about it?
- 6 Encourage the group to celebrate completing their Action Plan, for example by holding an event to present the plan to other community members perhaps using song, drama or dance.
 - 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.

