



FEMALE ENGAGEMENT

SESSION
GUIDE



NEW PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE
EXPAND
New Partners for Better Health



Desire to have a bright future, get married have a healthy baby, be admired by friends and neighbours, and be accepted by the in-laws

Produced by The New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) Expanding Health Partnerships - NPI EXPAND Project with support from the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC	Antenatal Clinic
CHVs	Community Health Volunteers
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FP	Family Planning
FANC	Focused Antenatal Care
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HTP	Harmful traditional practices
IEC	Information Education Communication
IPC	Interpersonal Communication
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPI	New Partnerships Initiative
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NUP	New and Underutilized Partners
PPR	Pinch Place & Roll
PHE	Population Health Environment
RH	Reproductive Health
SBCC	Social Behaviour Change Communication
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually transmitted Infection
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
SGBV	Social and Gender-Based Violence
WHO	World Health Organisation



NEW PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE
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New Partners for Better Health

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Using the Education through Listening approach

The Education through Listening approach

The communication and discussion facilitation strategy of this SGC Picture Code tool is based on the Education through Listening approach. With the ETL approach, each session will be audience-centred and participatory.

“People are more likely to listen when they feel listened to”

Carl Rogers

This statement captures why the Education through Listening approach is effective and how this behaviour change communication strategy is to be implemented.

Participation is key.

By forming positive interpersonal relations and using open-ended questions, dialogue is encouraged as the participants will relax and share with others how they have experienced challenges and successfully overcome barriers. Adult learners are best in listening, absorbing and retaining information.

They begin the process of using their knowledge to change their behaviour when the atmosphere of the group session is empathetic, affirming, supportive and firmly based on reflective listening and respectful rapport. The sessions are forums for the facilitator to partner with the community, assisting them to clarify their barriers to practicing a desired behavior and in building confidence in their abilities to adapt solutions.

These are not forums for the facilitator to educate or pass on information unless this is requested by the group. Since these discussions can evolve in a broad manner (to be scripted) this guide therefore aims to equip the facilitator with some OARS – or tools required to steer the discussion.

- **Open ended questions** to initiate and guide the discussion
- **Affirmations** to encourage participation and self confidence
- **Reflective listening** to clarify what was said and what was meant
- **Summary** of the key discussion points and a key question to enable the participant to come up with plan of action

While each session will likely be different from the next, the underlying technique does not change and there are distinctive qualities that can be observed throughout a session facilitated using the ETL approach. Here are some of these distinctive qualities:

Establish rapport – Establish rapport – Begin each session by introducing yourself and asking the participants to do so too. Discuss and set ground rules (e.g. turn-off cellphones, be on time, etc) and establish how much time each session will need. The facilitator is to be a partner in the sessions and not the expert. Build rapport by acknowledging that each participant has valuable experience and knowledge to share from their observations or experiences in living and dealing with the situation/problem in their community.

Ask for permission – Adopting a behavior is a choice of the participants; and thus a need to establish their consent to participate is important. Ask how much time the participants will avail for the discussion and if they would like more information.

Open-ended questions – Use questions that start with “How” or “Why” to encourage the participants to share their personal stories and experiences. For example, ask the “How did you treat diarrhoea?” instead of “Did you treat diarrhoea?” Practice the skill of asking open-ended questions and it will become easier to use this discussion prompting approach.

Affirmation – We all have a need to be affirmed. It builds our confidence and will encourage more sharing. Encourage participants to clap, restate what they shared or nod in agreement.

Drawing information – The facilitator does more listening than talking. Resist the temptation to offer answers or solutions but rather asks others to share their thoughts, experiences and ideas from which, more often than not the information or a solution will emerge.

Engage role models – Encourage those already with the desired behavior to share their experiences. This is social support for others to see others in similar circumstances having overcome particular challenges. Point out genuine affirmation for the qualities they have expressed - their ingenuity in overcoming barriers, resourcefulness, knowledge, courage and hard work in caring for their families and themselves as good mothers, fathers or caregivers.

Roll with resistance/deflect arguments – For some people, given the choice of changing their behavior or not, they may choose to justify the behavior they currently are engaging in. To prevent a session turning into an argument, the maxim ‘we begin to believe what we hear ourselves say’ holds true therefore it is counterproductive to have lengthy sessions on reasons why it is difficult to practice a behavior.

Here are some ways to roll with resistance:

1. Questioning, asking for clarification and elaboration, even using exaggeration, may help: For example, when discussing condoms: “So you feel that using a condom is like putting your private part into a straight jacket... and do you mean you feel like you’ll not be able to fully express yourself sexually? Is it the material used... or the color? ...or the size of the condom...?”

2. Humor if used well can lighten the mood and give a less serious perspective to challenges. For example, when discussing condoms:

Participant: “Using condoms is unrealistic; instead people who have HIV should be marked so one can avoid having sex with them...”

Facilitator: “Do you mean a tattoo, or branding like live-stock...? Let’s hope it wouldn’t become fashionable and everyone would want to have one... Interesting suggestion, but could we first discuss more of the solutions we are able to control?”

3. Offer new perspectives but don’t impose on them... For example: “Could you also consider what experts have said about this...?”
4. Focusing on solutions If most are keen on an argument and it is not focused on getting a solution, end the dialogue. For example, say, “Let’s talk about this for 5 more minutes and move on...”

Reflective listening – By reflecting back exactly on what was said or especially where a challenge is raised, reflecting both sides of what was said, and by restating what was said and what it implies is ‘reflective listening.’ Here’s an example:

Participant – “I don’t use condoms because they are difficult to put on.”

Facilitator — “I see you have a desire to use condoms as you have tried them before. Are you saying you don’t use them because you tried to put one on and was unable to?”

Summary and Call to Action– Summarise what was discussed and ask the key question from which the participants outline what they need to do and when in order to achieve the desired behavior. Plan a follow up session.

How to use this Small Group Communication Tool

Before facilitating a group session, please read and review the relevant Quick Reference section for the sessions you’ll be facilitating so that you’re familiar and comfortable with the topics. Being prepared with facts and knowledge will enable you to guide discussions and clarify questions or queries that arise. The brief information provided in this SGC tool is to help facilitators in prompting discussions and activities among the group while using the Picture Codes to initiate them.

The sessions in this SGC tool are grouped by a Topic. An introduction to the topic is given along with a statement on who this topic is important to and why. The props needed for the sessions within that topic are also listed.

The Message Take-Out phrases appearing in the beginning and again at the end of each Session Script are to remind the facilitator of the directions you’ll be prompting the participants to take in the discussions, encouraging their understanding and self-confidence with the topic to grow. These are messages you’ll be guiding the participants to understand, say in their own words and own!

The Session Scripts begin with a title or session focus, followed by Facilitator’s notes. These include suggestions for Ice Breakers to introduce the focus of each session.

Once the group has expressed their specific concerns and interests in the session focus, look at the Picture Codes together and begin exploring the topic further by prompting a discussion. To assist, some questions are offered under the Start the discussion heading. Feel free to add to or change these prompting questions so they best fit the socio-cultural settings of the group and then proceed to facilitate or guide the discussions by listening effectively and reflectively to the members of the group.

Role Plays and Group Activities are also included. Read through these before facilitating a session to be sure you’re familiar with how the activity is to be conducted and make sure you bring to the session any required objects for the activity you’ve selected for that session. Again, if you know of other group activities, games or role plays, please use the ones you feel will work best for the participants.

Before facilitating a group session, try to visit the venue or arrive earlier than the group and decide how you will arrange the space and seating for the discussions and activities. Be sure to place this SGC tool so that the group can easily view the Picture Codes and you can easily glance at and read the notes and questions on the opposing pages once they’ve been flipped behind. This is an SGC tool that should be continuously referred to by the facilitator, but remember these sessions are discussions and not lectures!

Above all, be prepared. Read and review this SGC tool so that you’re familiar and comfortable with the contents, communication and discussion objectives, and the activities. Being prepared is the best way to ensure the participants and you enjoy these sessions!



SESSION

I

Correctly and consistently use modern contraceptives of their choice

Objectives & Discussion Questions

Objectives

1. Understand the benefits of contraceptives.
2. Appreciate the barriers to modern contraceptive use and how to mitigate them.
3. Discuss how to negotiate the use of modern contraceptives with husbands/partners

Discussion Questions

- 1) How many children do you desire to have?
- 2) What are the benefits and challenges of having a small family?
- 3) What are the benefits and challenges of having a large family?
- 4) Do we ever discuss the number of children we would like to have with our husbands?
- 5) If we wanted to, would we know how to plan the number of children?
- 6) What modern contraceptives do we know.
- 7) What are the benefits of using modern contraceptives?
- 8) What are the barriers to the use of modern contraceptives?
- 9) How can women be supported to access and sustain on modern contraceptives?

KEY MESSAGE

Consistently and correctly use modern contraceptives, prevents unplanned pregnancies, and gives you good health and economic benefits



SESSION 2

Attend Focused Antenatal Care (FANC Clinics)

Objectives & Discussion Questions

Objectives

- 1) Understand the benefits of FANC visits.
- 2) Identify barriers to FANC visits.
- 3) Identify practical actions, that women can take to ensure that they attend 4 - 8 FANC visits.

Discussion Questions

- 1) What are some of the ways we take care of our health and that of our baby when we are pregnant?
- 2) Do we think regular FANC visits contribute to the well-being of both the mother and the baby?
- 3) What are some of the reasons or challenges that might prevent pregnant women and girls from attending FANC visits regularly?
- 4) What cultural beliefs or practices might affect a woman's decision to attend FANC visits?
- 5) How might we overcome these barriers in a sensitive manner?
- 6) How do we make FANC visits more accessible and appealing to pregnant women in our community?
- 7) Are there any traditional practices or rituals that can be modified or integrated with FANC visits to encourage women to seek professional prenatal care?
- 8) Are there any personal experiences or stories you have heard about FANC visits that highlight their importance?
- 9) What do you think are some of the positive outcomes or benefits of attending FANC visits during pregnancy?
- 10) How can we involve men, elders, and community leaders in promoting the importance of FANC visits and supporting women throughout their pregnancies?
- 11) In what ways do you think our community can support pregnant women to ensure they attend FANC visits consistently?

KEY MESSAGE

Attending all ANC clinic appointments enables you to have potential complications detected and addressed timely, get an ANC card and benefit from the Linda Mama program.



SESSION

3

**Have a safe
delivery by
a skilled
attendant.**

KEY MESSAGE

Delivering your baby at a health facility is safe. It is the best option in the event of an emergency.

Objectives & Discussion Questions

Objectives

1. Identify practical actions, that will enable women to have a delivery by a skilled attendant.

Discussion Questions

- 1) Did we deliver our children in a health facility or at home?
- 2) How many of us know if the delivery was safe?
- 3) What do we think would make delivery unsafe?
- 4) What do we think would make delivery safe?
- 5) What are some barriers to supporting women and girls during pregnancy and delivery?
- 6) What are the ways husbands/partners can support pregnant women to carry the child to term and have a safe delivery?
- 7) What practical actions can we take as women to ensure that we do not lose our lives or children because of pregnancy-related complications?



SESSION 4

Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution in relationships and families.

KEY MESSAGE

Amicably solving conflicts with your husband or boyfriend, is the culturally appropriate way peacefully and harmoniously address relationships and issues.

Objectives & Discussion Questions

Objectives

1. To understand and appreciate that all forms of violence are harmful cultural practices.
2. Appreciate the role of women in changing the norms around harmful gender practices.
3. Change attitudes towards violence.
4. Identify ways to amicably resolve conflicts with husbands & partner.

Discussion Questions

1. Are there situations where couples need to address misunderstandings, real or perceived misconduct?
2. How are misunderstandings and misconduct currently addressed?
3. How can they be addressed in a better way?
4. What role can women play in stopping violence in our communities?
What would need to happen for us to adopt some of the alternatives we have come up with?



SESSION 5

End harmful practices that violate the rights of women and girls and limit their full potential

KEY MESSAGE

Respecting a girl's choice to not get circumcised, ensures she can pursue her dreams, start a family when she is ready and avoid the risk of medical complications while giving birth later in life.

Objectives & Discussion Questions

Objectives

1. To understand and appreciate that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and early marriages are harmful gender and cultural practices.
2. Understand the effects of harmful gender and cultural practices.
3. Appreciate the role of women in changing the norms around harmful gender and cultural practices.
4. Change attitudes towards harmful gender and cultural practices such as FGM & early marriage.

Discussion Questions

- 1) Are there cultural practices in our community that some would consider harmful?
- 2) Which are these?
- 3) What are the effects of these practices?
- 4) What effect does it have on those that don't go through these practices?
- 5) What can we do as women to make our communities safer from these practices?
- 6) How can girls who choose not to undergo FGM and families that do not promote FGM be supported to uphold their decisions?



SESSION

6

Conserve the environment in order to have healthy families and communities

KEY MESSAGE

- Embracing eco- friendly cultural, agricultural and income generating practices, is the sustainable way to make money while safeguarding the environment that provides us and keeps us healthy.
- Embracing sustainable environmentally friendly income generating practices safeguards the health of all people in our community

Objectives & Discussion Questions

Objectives

- 1) To understand and appreciate the relationship between health and environmental conservation.
- 2) To understand and appreciate that some agricultural, cultural and livelihood practices are harmful to the environment.
- 3) To identify ways of maximizing environmental conservation

Discussion Questions

- 1) Are there any agricultural, cultural or income generating practices in Narok County, which are harmful to the environment?
- 2) Which are these?
- 3) What are the effects of these practices on the environment?
- 4) Has that affected our health in any way?
 - a. At the household level
 - b. At the community level
- 5) Do we see any connection between the increased drought and flooding and our agricultural, cultural and livelihood practices?
- 6) Has the health of community members suffered because of drought and floods?
- 7) What can we do as women, to get our community to adopt more eco-friendly cultural, agricultural or income generating practices?

There are different types of contraceptive methods.

- 1) Women-controlled methods
- 2) Men-controlled methods
- 3) Cooperative methods

Always consult your health provider for counselling before taking a method. Contraceptives give a couple the peace of mind and offers an opportunity for the female partner to engage in Community participation and livelihood activities that help them to realize their full potential.

- 1) Contraceptives help to delay or space childbirth as per the couple's needs/desires.
- 2) Birth spacing is good for the health of both the mother and children.
- 3) It helps families to comfortably take care of the children they choose to have especially in terms of health and education.
- 4) It reduces pressure on land and inheritance.
- 5) The economy is bad. Couples spacing births with modern contraceptives can help to start livelihood activities for additional family income and reduce household running costs.
- 6) It enables women to have sufficient time for other activities that can improve their livelihoods, wellbeing and increase their participation in community activities.

Barriers to modern contraceptives include:

- 1) Myths & misconceptions exist about contraceptives.
- 2) Some women experience side effects which can be managed with the help of a health provider.
- 3) In some areas the facilities are far and require money for transport which may not always be available considering competing priorities- women can negotiate with husbands/partners, to budget for transport as a critical need and to take advantage of outreaches.

How to negotiate the use of modern contraceptives with husbands or partners

- 1) Initiate open conversations with their husbands/partners about family planning and the importance of spacing births.
- 2) Involve Elders and other respected community figures like faith leaders: Women can seek the support of respected elders and other community leaders who support family planning and women's rights to collectively negotiate with their husbands at the community level.
- 3) Emphasize shared goals: Discuss the benefits of family planning in terms of providing better care and opportunities for existing children and improving overall family well-being.

Once a woman learns that she is pregnant it is important to go to the clinic for ANC as soon as possible to monitor how the fetus is growing and the mother's health.

The ANC visits help with the following.

1. Monitor growth and detect any anomalies in the growing baby.
2. Learn from skilled health providers about warning signs during pregnancy and childbirth.
3. Prevent maternal death by referring for specialized care in case of a warning sign.
4. Prepare mother and father for birth, lactation, and care post-birth.
5. Provide supplements to pregnant women.
6. Provide 'The mother and child health booklet' (The purple booklet) to women and men, which helps with birth registration and recording the mother, fetus, and child growth progress.
7. Can help reduce costs of delivery through access to Linda Mama* and access to free maternity care which covers both vaginal delivery and Caesarean section delivery.

Every 2 minutes, a woman dies from pregnancy-related causes World Health Organization (WHO)

Most maternal deaths are preventable if the mother gets timely management by a skilled health professional in a supportive environment (hospital)

Benefits of hospital delivery include:

1. Prevention of maternal and neonatal/child morbidity and mortality for both mother and child as the environment is supportive.
2. Early detection of complications for either mother or child.
3. Early referral and care for both mother and child in case of complications.
4. Provision of health education and counselling to mothers and fathers on post-partum care for mothers and children.

Barriers to male engagement

1. Long queues
2. Culture
3. Unawareness of the need

Among the Maasai community, in Narok, domestic violence is viewed as an acceptable practice in the community by many men and women. The practice of caning women is seen as normal.

Women are beaten by husbands when they lose goats, sheep, or cattle when grazing; when they leave the homestead without consent or return late; when they resist instructions of any kind from the husband; when fighting occurs within polygamous households; and sometimes when a daughter gets pregnant early which is viewed as a sign of the wife's poor parenting.

Because Gender Based Violence (GBV) is usually concealed, only survivors who have suffered from the most severe physical abuse will seek treatment.

- 1) It's essential to realize that there is no justification for any form of violence and that everyone deserves to live a life free from fear and abuse.
- 2) People of all genders should practice effective communication, respect, and understanding within the relationship.
- 3) Those in violent situations should seek immediate help from church, support groups, respected community members or family members.

Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) are cultural or social practices that happen widely and have become to be perceived as normal. They include Female Genital Mutation, Early and Forced Marriages and Social and Gender Based Violence. They violate the girl's and women's human rights and are punishable by law. These practices also cause sharp divisions in families and societies.

- 1) FGM, Early and forced marriages, and SGBV significantly reduce the ability of a community to compete economically at national levels.
- 2) The HTP are a violation of human rights and collaborators and perpetrators both can face legal and freedom consequences through jailing.
- 3) The HTP contribute to and compound health risks for women e.g., maternal and child deaths from obstructed labor, and fistula when young girls have to give birth.
- 4) Women can catalyze and scale change by supporting alternative rites of passage for girls including de-stigmatizing women and girls who have not undergone FGM.

Narok's main natural resources include the Maasai Mara National, Mau Narok Forest, Rivers & Mines. Households benefit a lot from environment and conservation activities like proceeds from leases, sale of livestock and trees and minerals. These resources should be used to improve the quality of life for all members of a household.

- 1) When the resources are overused, we start to experience phenomena like drought, floods, and animal's death due to lack of pasture.
- 2) Drought impacts on agriculture include crop losses, lower yields in both crop and livestock production, increased livestock deaths, increases in insect infestation and plant and animal diseases, damage to fish habitat, forest and range fires, land degradation and soil erosion.
- 3) Food insecurity and the lack of access to affordable nutritious food, can leave individuals, families, and communities with deficits in vital macro and micronutrients. They are also associated with increased risk for multiple chronic health conditions such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, mental health disorders and other chronic diseases.
- 4) When the natural resources are degenerated, we experience water scarcity, less rainfall, perennial flash floods and in turn this has negative effect on our ability to stay healthy.
- 5) Excess floodwater can contaminate drinking water sources when rainfall makes contact with the ground and comes into contact with things like human and animal waste.

Some of the ways we could protect our environment are by:

- 1) Increasing our knowledge of natural resources and need for management.
- 2) Establishing community Natural Resource Management committees that incorporate women.
- 3) Adopting alternative use of land for example turning idle land into conservancies, crop rotation, tree planting and reforestation
- 4) Embracing environmentally friendly income generating activities such as bee keeping and use of alternative fuels to avoid charcoal burning
- 5) Practicing safe disposal of used sanitary products like sanitary towels, baby diapers and other synthetic products.



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