



Food and Agriculture
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Gender transformative approaches for food security and nutrition



GOOD PRACTICE

Journeys of Transformation or Engaging Men as Allies in Women's Economic Empowerment

PREPARED BY

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SECTION 1

OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

Name of the methodology

Journeys of Transformation, also known as Engaging Men as Allies in Women's Economic Empowerment

Countries with implementation experience

- **East and Southern Africa:** Rwanda, Mozambique, Zambia
- **Asia:** Bangladesh, Sri Lanka

Start/end date

Promundo's original curriculum for Journeys of Transformation was developed in 2011 with CARE International and the Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC), a national NGO founded with a mission to engage men in gender equality and violence prevention. It was first piloted and then rolled out in tandem with CARE's Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). The approach has been further adapted and implemented to complement economic development, women's economic empowerment, or livelihoods programmes globally, several of which are ongoing.

Lead organization sponsoring the development and implementation of the methodology

Promundo is a global leader in promoting gender justice and preventing violence by engaging men and boys in partnership with women, girls and people of all gender identities.

Promundo has since adapted and/or developed additional curricula from Journeys of Transformation to engage men as allies in women's economic empowerment as part of economic development or livelihoods programming in partnership with other organizations, such as Concern Worldwide, WorldFish and World Vision.

Purpose of the methodology and the domains of gender inequality that are addressed

The Journeys of Transformation methodology emerged from the vision that, although women's economic empowerment programming has powerful benefits on its own, it can be made even more effective at advancing gender equality when men are deliberately engaged as allies. Promundo develops programmes that operate in conjunction with women's economic empowerment initiatives to engage men as partners and ensure that they understand the positive effects of shifting gender roles around earning power.

The gender transformative curricula engage men, alongside their partners, in group education sessions designed to challenge inequitable gender norms and power dynamics, including those that hinder women's ability to participate in and fully benefit from economic opportunities. Core issues addressed include:

- promoting shared household decision making;
- addressing unpaid care work and promoting men's caregiving; and
- preventing intimate partner violence.

Contribution of the methodology to wider development/organizational/project goals

Since its founding in Brazil in 1997, Promundo has worked in collaboration with partners to advance gender equality and prevent violence in over 40 countries around the world. It does this through high-impact research and evaluation, targeted advocacy efforts, evidence-based education and community-wide programme implementation. Exploring positive models of "what it means to be a man" and promoting healthy, respectful masculinity leads to improvements in the lives of women and girls, as well as in men's own lives.

Engaging men as allies in women's economic empowerment contributes to wider development goals. Working with men, women and households, can challenge the norms about who should perform paid and unpaid work in communities and societies. This work, together with the promotion of men's participation in unpaid care work and women's engagement in decision making, contributes to a more gender-equal world, including an intergenerational shift in who does care work. Working with men as allies in women's economic empowerment also provides an entry point for addressing intimate partner violence, sexual and reproductive health, and parenting.

Target group

The methodology complements economic development and empowerment programmes, and targets the male partners of women who participate in these programmes.

Typically, facilitators and/or project staff first identify and ask all partnered women who are participating in their economic development programming if they would be interested in participating in a group education intervention together with their partner. In some settings, depending on whether the programme (e.g. savings group) is targeting women only or both women and men, men will also be asked. Those who are interested are invited to attend the group education session together with their partner. Facilitators and/or staff may also reach out directly to the male partner (with the women's consent) to tell them more about the intervention and/or hold specific information sessions for couples to learn more before participating in the intervention.

In some settings group education interventions include specific sessions only for men, which come later in the group sessions. Occasionally, partners ask all couples from households receiving support from the organization to participate in small group sessions, but this is not generally recommended.

In Sri Lanka, the methodology has been designed specifically to include persons with disabilities. In Bangladesh, the methodology also includes four sessions targeting mothers-in-law.

SECTION 2

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Key entry points for applying the methodology

The entry point for applying the methodology are individuals or couples at the household level.

Women and their male partners are recruited from ongoing economic development or livelihoods programmes implemented by Promundo's partners to participate in gender transformative group education sessions. The programmes include savings and lending groups, producer groups, farmer field schools, and graduation programmes that often target poor or ultra-poor households.

Implementing partners

The implementing partners vary according to the context and nature of the project but are usually international, national or local NGOs.

In Rwanda, following the initial development of the methodology for CARE International with RWAMREC, the methodology was adapted for Concern Worldwide (2014) who implemented it in collaboration with RWAMREC.

In Zambia (2013–2015), Promundo collaborated with WorldFish and the CGIAR to develop a curriculum to complement its Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC). WorldFish worked with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Caritas-Mongu to implement the curriculum.

In Bangladesh (2013–2015), Promundo collaborated with WorldFish and the CGIAR to develop a curriculum to complement its aquaculture for income and nutrition programme for women. Since 2017, Promundo has been collaborating with World Vision Australia and World Vision Bangladesh to develop curricula to complement its work with producer groups and infant and young child feeding groups.

In Mozambique (2015–2017), Promundo collaborated with Concern Worldwide and HOPEM to develop a curriculum to engage men in improving nutrition outcomes and create links to farmer field schools and care groups.

In Sri Lanka (since 2016), Promundo is collaborating with World Vision Australia and World Vision Sri Lanka to develop a curriculum that complements Savings for Transformation (S4T) and producer groups.

Process of and criteria for selecting facilitators/champions/mentors

The group education sessions are facilitated with small groups of 10 to 20 individuals who are led by 1 to 2 trained facilitators. Facilitators have included staff of the international NGO or national NGO overseeing the implementation of the approach and/or the economic development programme to which it is tied; staff from local partner organizations; and local community members trained to facilitate the approach. The intervention targets men and addresses issues of masculinity, so facilitators are often, but not always, men. However, successful groups have been led by either male or female facilitators. In some settings a pair of facilitators (one male, one female) are trained to facilitate the small group sessions.

Successful facilitators usually meet the following criteria:

- personally committed to gender justice and women’s economic empowerment;
- able to model respectful, equitable gender relations;
- capable of building trust with participants and facilitating open dialogue and sharing;
- able to engage with participants in a participatory, non-hierarchical manner; and
- able to withhold judgment and refrain from ‘teaching’ the participants

Local community facilitators typically receive transportation and communication allowances to enable them to reach the groups. Sometimes these individuals are working within existing government (or parallel) structures at the community level, and are therefore not remunerated directly for their facilitation.

Training of facilitators/champions/mentors

The training of facilitators is sometimes done through a training of trainers or cascading approach. Promundo trains master trainers within local, national or international NGOs who cascade the training, or works directly to train the facilitators. Facilitator training generally lasts between 5 and 14 days depending on the context and the experience and skills of the facilitators. Refresher training (two to five days) is often given after the piloting of the approach or after one cycle of implementation has been completed.

The content of the training usually begins with understanding a gender transformative approach (GTA) and men’s engagement. Facilitators often come with a passion for and some experience in working on gender justice issues (personally or professionally). However, it is important to first set the stage and ensure they all have a common foundation from which to work from and understand the importance of creating spaces for individuals to critically reflect on, and question, harmful gender norms in order to foster social change and gender equality.

The training also includes an overview of the approach and how working with men and couples at the household level can contribute to addressing some of the barriers to women’s economic empowerment. The facilitators are introduced to the content for each session and related activities, and have the opportunity to see them carried out. Facilitators have time to practice facilitating the activities, which consist of role playing and participatory exercises, and receive feedback. Additional time is spent ensuring that they are informed about the logistical and organizational aspects of implementation.

SECTION 3

IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE

Key steps in the implementation cycle

The steps in the implementation process vary by location and project, but generally include the following:

— Step 1: Formative research to inform curriculum development

Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews are held with men and women who will be targeted by the intervention. The research aims to understand existing gendered attitudes and behaviours with regard to a range of issues including employment and income-generation, decision making, unpaid care work, violence, the barriers to women’s economic participation and empowerment, and perceptions of how men can support women’s economic empowerment. If the curriculum is being developed to complement an existing economic development programme, interviews are also conducted with facilitators, participants and key stakeholders to understand the impact of the existing programme and the barriers it faces in reaching its full potential. This includes understanding men’s perspectives and reactions to women’s participation in the economic development programme.

— Step 2: Curriculum development

This is based on information gathered from the formative research and is tailored to the local context and aims of the economic development programme. Curriculum adaptation is led by Promundo in collaboration with the partners. To the extent possible, input is sought from implementing partners and target participants in order to ensure the curriculum resonates with those it aims to reach. Typical content includes sessions on gender roles and norms; power; unpaid care work; men's caregiving; household decision making; men's support of women's paid work or participation in a particular economic development or livelihoods programme (tailored to the specific context); couple's communication; violence prevention; and sexual and reproductive health.

— Step 3: Capacity building of staff on gender transformative approaches

It is critical that staff go through their own process of critical reflection and dialogue where they question harmful gender norms and their own gendered attitudes to ensure that engaging men as allies in women's economic empowerment is truly gender transformative. Prior to conducting training on the curriculum, Promundo often conducts a three- to five-day preliminary training on GTAs for the implementing and strategy partners. This training focuses on the importance of addressing harmful gender norms and masculinity in order to achieve programme goals, and understanding the core elements of a GTA. It includes staff reflection on their own gendered attitudes and behaviour, as well as the mapping of the gender norms and power dynamics present in the communities in which they work.

— Step 4: Training of staff/local facilitators to implement the approach

The training of trainers is conducted on the curriculum with a set of master trainers – often staff of the organization responsible for implementing the programme as well as other key stakeholders – who then cascade the training down to the facilitators. In some (limited) instances, the training is done directly with the facilitators. The training of trainers focuses on providing an understanding of the aims and approach of Journeys of Transformation and the content of the curriculum, and providing opportunities for facilitators to both see and practice the implementation of the group activities.

— Step 5: Piloting the draft curriculum and final revision

Where possible, a small pilot of the curriculum is done with the target group in order to test the applicability and feasibility of the session activities and the logistical aspects of implementation, prior to full implementation. Feedback is elicited from the facilitators and participants, as well as from observers from the implementing partner and/or Promundo. This feedback is used to strengthen the curriculum and address any logistical challenges encountered.

— Step 6: Implementation of the final curriculum in group education sessions

After the successful finalization of the curriculum, participants are recruited, and full implementation of the curriculum begins with groups of between 10 to 20 individuals. Implementation includes participatory activities (e.g. role play, games); guided discussions to build trust and encourage communication between partners; and monitoring and evaluation. Very often, implementation is staggered in cycles with different groups within a community, with a new cycle starting every three to five months.

— Step 7: Learning and scaling up (where applicable)

Following implementation and evaluation, key lessons learnt and outcomes are shared with participants, community members and key stakeholders. Where possible, efforts are made to mobilize key institutions and/or fundraise to enable the scaling up of the approach.

Average length of the implementation cycle

The methodology is time-intensive in order to change attitudes and behaviours related to deeply entrenched gender norms. The process of developing and piloting the curriculum often takes between four and six months. The implementation cycles generally last between three and five months, depending on the length of the curriculum. The methodology is tailored to the local context and the economic development or empowerment programme it complements. The curriculum may include between 10 and 20 sessions, which can last from 1.5 hours to 3 hours per session. Sessions are usually implemented on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Graduation from the methodology

In some settings, a more formal ‘graduation’ from the programme is organized, often with the families and friends of participating couples, as well as local authorities. However, it is not a core component of the methodology.

SECTION 4

MONITORING

Monitoring system

Monitoring is conducted by the implementing partners and facilitators through routine feedback meetings with the facilitators and the submission of monitoring forms. Monitoring data gathered include participant attendance and retention, session implementation, success stories and challenges encountered. The implementing partner also conducts monitoring visits to the group education sessions and follows up with facilitators who may need additional training or support. Periodic feedback is solicited from programme participants to gather insights on how the sessions and topics addressed are perceived and appreciated.

Indicators

The indicators used to evaluate the impact of the methodology vary depending on the partner and programme, but generally include some of the following quantitative indicators.

- Percentage of men and women with equitable gender attitudes based on Gender Equitable Men (GEM) scale scores (see *Making Women Count* in the resource materials for a description of how to use the GEM scale)
- Percentage of men and women who believe it is acceptable for a woman to work outside the home
- Percentage of men and women who support men’s caregiving
- Percentage of men and women reporting an increase in joint household decision making or a reduction in male dominance of household decision making (e.g. related to household finances)
- Percentage of women reporting experiencing intimate partner violence or percentage of men reporting the perpetration of intimate partner violence (Note: these indicators are not used in the same project or with couples from the same household; timeframe for experiencing intimate partner violence is adjusted based on the project and evaluation period)
- Women’s and men’s time spent on unpaid care work
- Women’s time spent on paid work
- Men’s support for women’s economic activities

Data on these indicators are also gathered qualitatively through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with male and female participants, facilitators, the implementing partner and key stakeholders in the community.

Where possible, information from the evaluation of the economic development or empowerment programme that the methodology complements is collected (e.g. with a control group) and used to understand whether the addition of the gender transformative male engagement component has contributed to greater economic impacts of the programme.

SECTION 5**BUDGET****Main items of expenditure**

The budget varies significantly depending on the context, length of implementation, rigour of the evaluation, and number of participants reached. The greatest costs relate to the training of staff and facilitators, which covers both the mindset reflection period and the training on the curriculum, and the research, monitoring and evaluation. The group education itself can be implemented at low cost depending on the context, whether incentives are provided to participants, and the costs associated with facilitators. Facilitators generally receive transportation and communication allowances/stipends or other forms of material support to enable them to implement activities, rather than being paid for implementation and transportation.

Total budget

Not available

SECTION 6**RESULTS****Number of beneficiaries reached**

A conservative estimate is that at least 3 000 direct beneficiaries have been reached by the approach through programmes that Promundo has been directly engaged in since 2011. The actual number will be higher because several programmes have been expanded or are ongoing without Promundo's involvement and, because the methodology is open access, other organizations may be implementing it.

Main changes attributed to the methodology**— Gender-related changes**

- More equitable gender attitudes among men and women
- Increased support of men for women's participation in livelihoods or paid work
- Greater levels of shared household financial decision making and increased agency of women in making decisions
- Increased participation of men in unpaid care work, including childcare and household responsibilities
- Greater communication between couples and less conflict
- Less acceptance of intimate partner violence among men and women

— Other changes

The results of the field testing of Journeys of Transformation in Rwanda in 2011-12 found that households that had participated in the VSLAs together with men's engagement group education reported greater household income than households that only participated in the VSLAs.

Key success factors and strengths of the methodology**— Positive approach to engaging men**

Men can be critical allies in supporting women's economic empowerment and gender justice. This methodology takes a positive approach to framing men's engagement – highlighting the benefits that it can bring to women, men and their families – by targeting men as part of the solution rather than the problem. The group education sessions create a space for men to better understand their partners' involvement in economic development initiatives and how they can work together for the betterment of their household and to achieve their long-term goals for their household and family.

— Taking a gender transformative approach

The group education sessions create safe spaces where men and women can critically reflect on and question existing gender norms and roles, and learn and practice new ways of behaving. Through personal reflection and dialogue, men begin to see how rigid constructions of masculinity not only can lead to harm for their partners but also for themselves, and see the benefits of more equitable relationships.

— Emphasis on men’s caregiving

The methodology has a strong focus on increasing men’s participation in childcare and household tasks in order to address the inequitable distribution of care work. This includes reflection on men’s roles as fathers and how restrictive gender norms discourage men’s caregiving. Through dialogue and participatory activities, men are encouraged to become more equitable, be involved and non-violent caregivers and partners, and recognize the benefits of embracing more nurturing, loving relationships.

— Working with couples

The group education sessions create important opportunities for partners to discuss together their perspectives and experiences and develop a shared vision for their household. For some couples, the sessions are the first time that partners openly discuss key issues like decision making or household responsibilities. Activities also equip participants with skills and knowledge to help them resolve conflict.

— Supportive peer environment

The sessions take place within a small group – individuals attend the same group for the duration of the programme – and are designed to create a safe, supportive environment for men and women to learn from each other and their peers. The group offers a support network for men and women to safely learn and navigate new, more equitable ways of being, with support from others.

Challenges and measures to overcome them

- “Change starts with us”: staff and facilitators are not free from bias.
 - Buy-in is required at multiple levels of the organizations involved, along with an understanding that norm change takes time. Therefore, buy-in from staff and senior management is important to enable success, funding and sustainability. The management (not just the staff in charge of gender) must see the importance of and champion gender transformative men’s engagement. However, if budgets are tight, activities related to staff reflection on their mindset is the first thing that many people want to cut, on the assumption that their staff have already bought into GTAs.
 - Training staff and facilitators on GTAs is critical.
 - For facilitators, a mindset shift may be required to move away from a ‘teaching’ style to a more participatory process where the facilitator is tasked with sparking conversation and facilitating the sharing of experiences.
 - For some partners, implementation requires shifting away from an NGO-driven schedule, to one that is participant-driven. Some organizations have faced challenges in the recruitment and retention of participants because they organize the group sessions at dates, times or locations that are convenient for their staff. Listening to participants and organizing group meetings when it is most convenient for them can lead to greater participation, buy-in and retention in the programme.
- This methodology is designed as a complement to or an integrated part of economic development or livelihoods programmes, which may provide material goods, training, or financial support to their participants. As such, it is important that there is transparency on any incentives (or lack of) when recruiting participants for the men’s engagement component in order to establish clear expectations.

Potential for upscaling

To date, implementation has often been carried out as a pilot activity or on a small scale. There is great potential for international and national NGOs to scale up this GTA as a core part of their economic development or livelihoods programmes that target or include women. In addition, there is potential for reaching a greater number of households by taking this approach to scale through government social protection programmes, such as cash transfers.

Upscaling requires organizations or governments to have the buy-in, funding and commitment to a long-term process of social change necessary to implement the approach on a large scale.

Potential for replication

Promundo's methodology for engaging men as allies in women's economic empowerment has already been adapted to multiple settings and economic development programmes implemented by a range of partners.

Sustainability of the methodology once project/external input is complete

The methodology is designed to foster a process of attitudinal and behaviour change among participants, which includes but is not limited to, promoting men's support for women's work, women's decision-making power, and men's participation in sharing care work within the home. The methodology itself is time-bound, but the process and the impact of the attitudinal and behaviour change promoted in the intervention is a longer-term process.

Promundo's evaluations of similar gender transformative interventions engaging men (e.g. in maternal, newborn and child health) have demonstrated that key changes related to men's participation in unpaid care work, women's decision-making power, and women's experiences of intimate partner violence have been sustained more than one year after the intervention ended.

In Rwanda, for example, group members have continued to meet or reached out to other community members to promote change in their communities beyond the life of the programme.

SECTION 7

RESOURCES

Publications

- *Original Journeys of Transformation manual created for CARE International*
<https://promundoglobal.org/resources/journeys-of-transformation-a-training-manual-for-engaging-men-as-allies-in-womens-economic-empowerment/?lang=english>
- *Making Women Count* (description of use the GEM scale)
<https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Measuring-Gender-Attitude-Using-Gender-Equitable-Men-Scale.pdf>
- *Engaging men for improved nutrition outcomes in Mozambique*
https://admin.concern.net/sites/default/files/media/migrated/engaging_men_for_improved_nutrition_outcomes_in_mozambique.pdf
- *Zambia manual produced for WorldFish*
<https://promundoglobal.org/resources/silcgta-facilitation-manual-savings-internal-lending-communities-plus-gender-transformative-approach-silcgta/>
- Promundo-US and CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems (2016) *Promoting Gender-Transformative Change with Men and Boys: A Manual to Spark Critical Reflection on Harmful Gender Norms with Men and Boys in Aquatic Agricultural Systems*
<https://promundoglobal.org/resources/promoting-gender-transformative-change-men-boys/>
- *Considering Gender: Practical guidance for rural development initiatives in Solomon Islands*
<https://promundoglobal.org/resources/considering-gender-practical-guidance-rural-development-initiatives-solomon-islands/>
- Promundo-US and WorldFish (2016) *The SILC+GTA facilitation manual: The Savings and Internal Lending Communities plus Gender-Transformative Approach*
<https://promundoglobal.org/resources/silcgta-facilitation-manual-savings-internal-lending-communities-plus-gender-transformative-approach-silcgta/>

Cover photo: Family who participated in a gender transformative, men's engagement programme in Nyaruguru, Rwanda

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