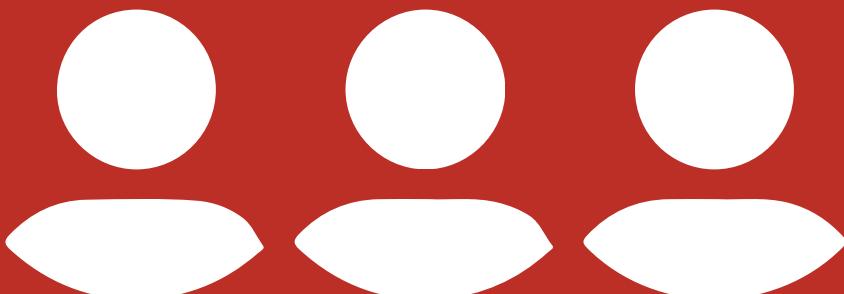


Community Led Dialogues Facilitators' Guide

**Empowering communities to
eliminate Teenage Pregnancy
and Child Marriage**

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A publication by CISP

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Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY LED DIALOGUE APPROACH	13
2. OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY LED DIALOGUE	46
3. PROCESS TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY LED DIALOGUES	7
4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE CLD	14
5. COMMUNITY LED DIALOGUE MODULES FOR CLD FACILITATORS	15
Phase 1	16
<i>Week 1: Getting to know each other and a world we hope for</i>	22
Meeting 1: Welcome, introductions and working together	
Meeting 2: Sharing our vision for healthier, safer and violence free community	
Phase 2	26
<i>Week 2: Human dignity</i>	27
Meeting 3: What human dignity means	30
Meeting 4: Threats to human dignity	34
<i>Week 3: Human Growth and Development</i>	37
Meeting 5: Stages of human growth and development	38
Meeting 6: Children; their needs, and development stages	54
<i>Week 4: Fairness</i>	61
Meeting 7: Fair punishment for children	62

Meeting 8: Positive parenthood: healthy child-parent relations	66
<i>Week 5: Discrimination</i>	72
Meeting 9: Tackling discrimination	73
Meeting 10: Promoting equality and non-discrimination	76
<i>Week 6: Human rights and child rights</i>	80
Meeting 11: What are Human rights? What are child rights?	81
Meeting 12: Taking stock of the rights of women and children in our community	84
Phase 3	87
<i>Week 7: Gender and Power</i>	88
Meeting 13: Exploring Gender roles and decision-making power in our community	89
Meeting 14: Sharing experiences about abuses of power in relation to men and women and boys and girls	95
<i>Week 8: Abuses faced by women and children</i>	101
Meeting 15: Child marriage and its consequences	102
Meeting 16: What is Sexual Violence?	109
<i>Week 9: Abuses faced by women and children</i>	114
Meeting 17: Teenage pregnancy and its consequences	115
<i>Week 10: Beliefs, and Norms about sexual violence</i>	119
Meeting 18: Community beliefs about sexual violence	120
Meeting 19: Personal beliefs about sexual violence	123
<i>Week 11: Beliefs, and Norms about teenage pregnancy and child marriage</i>	126
Meeting 20: Community beliefs about teenage pregnancy and child marriage	127



marriage	
Meeting 21: Personal beliefs about teenage pregnancy and child marriage	131
Phase 4	134
<i>Week 12: Rules for behaviour</i>	135
Meeting 22: Affirming positive rules	136
Meeting 23: Building on positive rules	139
<i>Week 13: Change</i>	141
Meeting 24: Role of Men in prevention of sexual violence, teenage pregnancy and child marriage	143
Meeting 25: Ideas for new rules	151
Meeting 26: What can we do?	154
<i>Week 14: Making an action plan</i>	159
Meeting 27: Brainstorming actions to address Sexual violence, Teenage Pregnancy and Child Marriage	160
Meeting 28: Agreeing on actions to address Sexual Violence, teenage pregnancy and child marriage	166
<i>Week 15: Communicating our commitment to others</i>	169
Meeting 29: Drafting our declaration	170
Meeting 30: Making a public commitment	177
	183
Annexes - Process to facilitate CLD	193
Tools - Monitoring and Evaluation of the CLD	217
Questions and Responses from social norms assessment survey	233
Icebreakers for Community facilitators	240
Handouts	

1. INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY LED DIALOGUE APPROACH

Violence against women and children is preventable. Its roots lie in unequal power relations between women and men, adults and children. In addition to pervasive gender inequality, violence against women and children happens because of shared beliefs and expectations in a community about gender, sex and violence. These shared beliefs and expectations are unspoken rules for behaviour.

In 2014 UNICEF developed the Communities Care: Transforming Lives and Preventing Violence Programme (CC Programme)¹ based on evidence and experience² that show that changing collective beliefs and unspoken rules in communities can lead to change in collective practices and behaviours.

Within the framework of the Communities Care (CC) programme, the community led dialogue approach was launched to prevent gender-based violence in conflict-affected areas in both Somalia and South Sudan by UNICEF, it was tested by CISP in Somalia and evaluated by JHU³. Since 2016, CISP has adapted the community led dialogue guide also to the Kenyan context to prevent violence against children and gender-based violence.

The main strategy for catalysing change in harmful community norms is to facilitate dialogue among key groups in the community. Dialogue stimulates reflection on human rights principles and ideals and on shared

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1. Communities Care toolkit, UNICEF 2014 www.unicef.org/documents/communities-care.

2. For more information about a social norms perspective to end FGM/C, see "The Dynamics of Social Change: Towards the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Five African Countries," Innocenti Insight Paper, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, (Florence, 2010), www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/fgm_insight_eng.pdf.

3. Glass et al. Conflict and Health (2018) 12:5, Evaluating the communities care program: best practice for rigorous research to evaluate gender-based violence prevention and response programs in humanitarian settings.



community values and beliefs, debate about beliefs and norms that are harmful for women and girls, and deliberation about alternatives. It localizes human rights concepts and situates them in a culturally and contextually appropriate way. Once community members identify the benefits of change and decide on alternative norms, the programme will support them to take collective action to make these changes.

The approach consists of involving communities in a 4-step process: **Step 1. reflect on harmful norms that foster GBV; Step 2. explore and choose alternative positive practices; Step 3. come up with an action plan to promote positive values; Step 4. communicate the change.**

This process of change entails several activities: **i.** the identification and training of group facilitators, who are recognised community models in protection; **ii.** the establishment of community led dialogue groups, 4-8 in each community, comprising of about 20 members each. The groups should include all community representatives (men, women, youth, elders, religious leaders, community leaders, service providers); **iii.** 30 guided bi-weekly dialogues among the group members discussing root causes of gender inequality and gender-based violence occurring in their communities, protective measures that could replace harmful beliefs and practices in the community, as well as action plans to promote change; **iv.** declaration events carried out jointly by all groups in the community; **v.** implementation of an action plan led by the groups to promote change in their community. This process of change entails the involvement and buy-in of key decision makers, stakeholders, and agents of change of both genders.

This document is to be used as a guide by implementing partners training selected CLD facilitators on the CLD methodology and by the trained facilitator to conduct the CLD group meetings. It will help the facilitator ensure that key information is understood and passed to the group members in a systematic way. The guide is divided in 15 weeks (or 30 meetings) addressing different topics. This guide adheres to all key human rights principles and peaceful practices such as gender equality, adherence to positive norms, non-violent behavior and attitude, and stress management.