



SESSION 5:

Power Walk: *Who are we going to listen to – and talk with?*

CONTEXT

This exercise is a simulation of a community/society in ‘development’. Everyone starts off equal, but ends up very different. The debriefing following the exercise allows participants to reflect on what disparities exist and why and to consider how to address these disparities through programming. The characters and questions should be adapted to the context where the exercise is being done so as to make it relevant.

Ideally 1 to 1 1/2 hours should be allowed for this exercise so as to allow enough time for thorough discussion/debriefing. The issues that emerge during the debriefing guide later discussions on rights and duties and the capacities needed.

Take everyone outside (if there is not enough space inside) and give 20 participants each a piece of paper with a character from a typical community written on it (it is useful for the later discussion to add gender and age to the description of the character – e.g., orphaned child (male, 12 years). If there are fewer than 20 people to participate in the Power Walk, reduce the number of ‘characters’, making sure that you do not take too many out of one ‘group’ (e.g., all the powerful ones, or all the vulnerable ones).

Statements

I can influence decisions made at municipal level
I get to meet government officials
I can read newspapers of my interest regularly
I have time and access to radio and TV stations of interest for me
I would never have to wait to meet municipal and administrative officials
I have access to micro credit
My opinion is important within my own ethnic group
I can afford to buy the food I like and go to restaurants
I can buy condoms
I can negotiate condom use with my partner
I went to secondary or I expect to go to secondary school
I will be consulted on issues affecting young people in our community
I can pay for treatment at a private hospital if necessary
My opinion is respected and has weight in the municipality where I live
I eat at least two full meals a day
I sometimes attend workshops and seminars
I have access to plenty of information about HIV
I am not in danger of being sexually harassed or abused

I own a small business

I can question expenditure of community funds

Instructions

- ❖ After reading out the statements, ask each one to move one step forward if the statement is true for their character and to stay where they are if it is not
- ❖ Ask who are those who have come to the front. Discuss. Why they are at the front. Say that these are the people we normally meet when we go to the community.
- ❖ Ask the people at the back who they are. Ask how they felt as they watched all the others moving forward. If no one else points it out, say that the people at the back are those for whom the country programme is intended.
- ❖ Lead a discussion on how to reach the people at the back when they go to the community. Because communities are very heterogeneous, it is important to make deliberate efforts to reach the poor and the marginalised, and especially the young.
- ❖ Ask what the outcome of the power walk tells us about the way in which we should work with communities during the country programme planning, implementation and evaluation.
- ❖ Ask what capacities the different people need in order to participate effectively or to listen to others.
- ❖ Agree on the different groups to talk to when visiting the community.

The Power Walk not only allows people to identify marginalised groups and work out a strategy for including them in the process; it also clearly shows the power structure of the community – the subject of the role and pattern analysis that will come later.

POWERWALK CHARACTERS

1. Girl aged 11
2. Priest
3. Tribal chief
4. Man living in tribal area
5. Imam
6. Trafficked girl, 17, from neighbouring country, farm worker
7. Shopkeeper
8. 21 year man from Northern Region, mine worker in the West
9. Gold mine superintendent
10. Male leader of a youth group
11. Community Nurse
12. District director of the education department
13. District director of the health department
14. Orphaned boy aged 13
15. Orphaned girl aged 13
16. Grandmother taking care of orphans

17. Uncle taking care of orphans
18. Primary school boy, aged 12
19. Primary school girl, aged 12
20. Toddler aged 2
21. Married woman, 35 years
22. Girl aged 16 looking after sick mother and younger siblings
23. Female member of parliament
24. NGO community worker
25. A policewoman
26. 25 year woman who is HIV positive
27. Visually impaired young man
28. Young woman with Down Syndrome
29. UN Resident Coordinator
30. Senior Finance Ministry official
31. Newspaper editor
32. Member of Commission on Human Rights and Administration of Justice
33. Supreme Court judge