

ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO MITIGATE
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

THE CULTURAL LEADERS' TOOLKIT



2020



Spotlight
Initiative



Cover photo: Young people after performing a traditional folksong at Kigulu Cultural Museum in Iganga

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Background

Welcome to the Cultural Leaders' Toolkit, a guide meant to support the interactions of cultural leaders with young people in and out of school to address the issue of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and their access to rights.

Despite the existence of local and international legislation and the efforts of State agencies and gender activists to address VAWG and to promote human rights, women and girls' rights continue to be abused in Uganda. Many VAWG cases go unreported to local councils, the police and the courts of law because of fear of breaking up marriages and social relationships. Other cases are handled by traditional cultural institutions, such as the family and clans.

The Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) in partnership with UN Women, the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to End Violence Against Women and Girls and the Government of Sweden, is implementing a project in the six cultural communities of Acholi, Alur, Buganda, Busoga, Karamoja, and Tooro. This project aims at harnessing the cultural resources of the six communities to contribute to: (i) ending violence against women and girls (ii) promoting sexual and reproductive health rights and (iii) enhancing women's and girls' access to justice. One of the project activities is to build the capacity of cultural leaders to engage young people in school-based cultural heritage clubs and in communities to mitigate violence against women and girls using cultural resources. This toolkit has been developed to assist cultural leaders in this respect.



About this toolkit

This toolkit is intended to guide cultural leaders to engage young people in interactive discussions on cultural resources (values, principles, practices and structures) that can help to deal with violence against women and girls in their communities.

The toolkit reflects the belief that culture is constantly changing and has the potential to contribute to human development that corresponds to Uganda's national identity and diversity.

It describes activities under four thematic areas that will help young people to explore the role that culture can play in promoting the rights of women and girls, as well as in dealing with challenges related to VAWG. These are:

1. Understanding common forms of violence against women and girls
2. Cultural values, principles, practices and structures that can be used to address violence against women and girls
3. Sexual and reproductive health and rights
4. Access to justice from a cultural perspective

The activities are designed to trigger debate, promote dialogue and generate knowledge through sharing information, practical experiences and learning from cultural leaders on issues related to VAWG, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and access to justice from a cultural perspective.

Methods and tools to deliver the activities under each theme and learning points are described. Where resource materials are needed, these are indicated. The activities will however require cultural leaders to be creative and pro-active to engage productively with young people. Activities are designed to take approximately 1 hour each to deliver.

It is recommended that they be implemented one after the other.



Theme 1: Common Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The United Nations defines VAWG as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”

Violence against women and girls in Uganda is still a major problem despite the existence of various laws and structures to address it. Consequently, according to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) of 2016, 51% of women from age 15 to 49 years have experienced physical violence and 28 percent of women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. That means that more than half of Ugandan women and girls have been abused at home, at school, or at work. Sexual violence, especially against girls, is equally widespread with 77.7% of the primary school children and 82% of the secondary school students experiencing sexual abuse while at school. The survey indicates that 57% of women that have experienced violence seek help from their family structures and only 16% from the police.

The 2016 Uganda Police Force’s annual crime report reveals that gender-based violence cases that were reported and investigated increased by 4% (from 38,651 to 40,258 cases) between 2015 and 2016, while cases of defilement increased by 34% from 13,118 in 2015 to 17,567 in 2016.

It should be noted that violence does not only affect the woman or girl who is abused. It also affects their children, families, communities and the entire nation. Violence hurts everyone.

Activity 1: Problem tree - Understanding causes and effects of violence against women and girls

VAWG can be caused by an intimate partner, family members, a neighbour, a friend or a stranger. Violence usually happens because an individual may exercise power and control over the other. It may also happen when people do not address disputes peacefully and fail to utilise the available cultural resources (principles, norms, values and structures) to address and respond to conflicts, based on mutual respect. Utilising cultural resources in the different cultural settings may often give people, especially women and girls, a way to address violence against them.

Purpose

To help young people understand the different forms and causes of VAWG. Young people will also learn the effects of VAWG and how this affects families, communities and country.



Common forms of violence	Examples
Sexual abuse	Defilement, rape, forced marriages, unwanted touches to one's private parts, child prostitution, pornography, online sex, etc.
Physical abuse	Beating, kicking, slapping, punching, caning, corporal punishments, burning, scratching, pinching, shaking, etc.
Economic abuse	Denial of basic needs, such as food, clothes, shelter, medical care, or means for survival.
Emotional or psychological abuse	Abusing verbally, derogatory name calling.

How to go about it

The facilitator draws the rough sketch of a tree on the black board, flip chart or on the ground. S/he should include a trunk, roots and branches, creating space for participants to write in. The facilitator then asks participants to give one example of violence against women and girls, for example child marriage, which he/she writes in the tree trunk.

The facilitator asks participants to brainstorm on what could be the causes of child marriages in their community. For example, poverty, lack of basic needs in a home, fights and cultural beliefs. These are written down in the roots section.

The facilitator also asks participants to brainstorm on the different effects of child marriages. For example, diseases, death, poverty, dropping out of school, etc. These are written in the branch section of the tree.

This can be repeated for other forms of VAWG.





An example of a problem tree

The facilitator then asks the participants the following reflection questions:

- ◆ What do you learn from this exercise?
- ◆ As a young person, what can you do to prevent this type of violence in your community?
- ◆ How does this type of violence affect your family, community and the country?

Lesson learnt

By the end of exercise, young people will learn the different forms, causes and effects of VAWG. They will also learn how the effects of such violence spread beyond an individual. Young people will also discuss the roles they can play to stop VAWG.



Theme 2: Cultural Values, Principles, Practices and Structures that can be used to address Violence Against Women and Girls

Understanding culture is important because it defines who we are and distinguishes us from one another. It also helps us appreciate our different behaviours, social norms, taboos, principles, practices and values. Culture is intangible (what we cannot see or touch) such as language, music and social practices, for example youth kneeling before their elders. It is also tangible (what we can see and touch) such as architecture, art and crafts and historical sites.

Activities under this theme are intended to help young people develop an understanding of how cultural values, practices, principles and structures can promote the rights of women and girls. It is also intended to teach young people how to prevent and mitigate practices that cause VAWG.

This theme in particular looks at:

1. Cultural values
2. The family and the clan
3. Folklore
4. The customary land ownership system
5. The granary

Activity 1: Brainstorming on cultural values

Cultural values refer to beliefs about what is right or wrong that are collectively treasured by a particular group of people. Cultural values help to establish the priorities of a particular community and influence individual decisions. In most communities, they include; honesty, trustworthiness, empathy, care, truthfulness, humanness and integrity. For example, the Baganda, Alur, and Banyakitara (Banyankole, Bakiga, Banyoro and Batooro) cherish humanness (*obuntu bulamu, kura matira and obuntu, respectively*) as a shared value. These values are often transmitted from one generation to another through different mechanisms, such as socialisation and oral traditions.

Purpose

Completing this activity will help young people to learn about different cultural values, how these can be used to promote respect for other people's rights and the consequences of disregarding them. The young people will also learn that continued existence of these values at family or community level is a responsibility that starts with each one of them.

How to go about it

The cultural leader asks young people to think about a cultural value they treasure and to write it on a piece of paper. Young people are then asked to collectively discuss the values they have written down and what they mean to them.

Here are some questions that can be used to trigger the discussion:

- ◆ Why did you choose that value?
- ◆ What does it mean to you?
- ◆ How would you feel if somebody did not respect that value while dealing with you?
- ◆ What would happen to your family or community if that value disappeared?
- ◆ Which value among all those listed is the most important, and why?
- ◆ What can you do to ensure that your family or community continues to practice these values?



Young people demonstrate how to grind millet flour a practice that is transmitted in families amongst different communities in Uganda to prepare young people for family roles.

Lesson learnt

Values play an important role in dealing with VAWG as they oppose violence. Being aware of one's cultural values can help in dealing with violence

Activity 2: Role play on the family

A family is a social unit, with parents, children (biological or adopted) and other relatives living together. Families may be nuclear or extended. Nuclear families consist of a father, a mother and their children, while extended families can include grandparents, guardians, cousins and close family friends. Our families are based on values and principles that have been passed on



to us by our ancestors. Families therefore provide a sense of belonging and are meant to be safe places. In many families, however, violence creates a frightening space for girls and women. Young people who grow up in violent homes often exhibit violent behaviour themselves when they start their own homes, or may leave their homes prematurely. Sometimes girls end up marrying at an early age, making them likely to suffer from violence.

Purpose

To help young people reflect on their individual and collective cultural values and how these values can be used to respect other people's rights.

How to go about it

The facilitator identifies 8 to 10 young people, each representing a family member (father, mother, daughter, son, adopted child, house-help, grandfather, grandmother, aunt and uncle). The facilitator requests the participants to make a circle. Using a string or thread, the facilitator hands over one end to one of the "family members" and ask him or her to throw the other end to any other participant in the circle, but not the immediate neighbours. The cycle continues until each participant is holding part of the string. The facilitator then creates scenarios related to violence against women and girls and asks participants to think about them and how they can affect the family. These may include:

- ◆ How do you feel being connected using the string? Do you feel protected? Do you feel included? Do you feel threatened?
- ◆ What is your role in the family (protector, providers, caretaker, etc.)?
- ◆ What would happen if father and mother try to fight?
- ◆ Who do you think is less important in the family than others and why?

Thereafter, the facilitator instructs the participant identified as less important than the rest in the family to drop the string. This is repeated with 3 to 4 other members mentioned as less important. The facilitator then asks the following questions:

- ◆ How did you feel when you were considered less important than the rest of the family members?
- ◆ How did you feel when the other family members dropped the string?
- ◆ How do you think VAWG affects the family as a whole?
- ◆ What is your role in preventing VAWG in the family?

Lesson learnt

A family can be compared to a web connecting people. If one member gets a problem, all the members will be affected. Families are kept together by the various values they share, such as humanness and empathy. To maintain these values, each member must fulfil their roles and responsibilities, as failure to observe these values weakens the family as a support system. Every family member can therefore play an important role to prevent VAWG.



Activity 3: Brainstorm on the clan

In most parts of Uganda, people are organised in clans. Clans are social units that play important roles in society. Members of the same clan often have shared values. Clans are distinguished by their totems and other symbols. Most of us have a surname that identifies us with a clan and with an animal or plant that we cherish and cannot eat or touch. Clan totems also help us identify people that are from the same clan and this creates a sense of responsibility and protection towards one another. The clan is headed by a clan leader who is supported by other clan elders to settle disputes, and to mobilise their members for social and cultural activities, such as officiating at traditional marriages, and celebrating twins and funeral rites. Strong clans ensure safer communities with few cases of violence.

Purpose

To help participants appreciate the role of a clan and clan leaders in addressing family issues related to VAWG.

How to go about it

The session is divided into 2 parts; one part is facilitated by a cultural leader asking questions of young people and the second is facilitated by young people asking questions of the clan leader(s). The facilitator then explains the roles and responsibilities of clan leaders

Guiding questions from the clan leader to young people

- ◆ What is your name, clan, totem or symbol (if any)? What is the name of your clan leader?
- ◆ Does your clan prevent VAWG? How?
- ◆ What is the role of your clan leader in addressing VAWG?
- ◆ Questions from young people to the cultural leader
- ◆ What is your role as a clan leader in addressing issues related to VAWG?
- ◆ What can young people do if they report a case to a clan leader and are not helped?
- ◆ What would happen if I isolated myself from the clan?
- ◆ What will happen if clan leaders do not involve young people in addressing issues related to VAWG?
- ◆ How can young people support their peers to prevent VAWG?

Activity 4: Brainstorming on folklore

Folklore refers to music, dance, proverbs and stories used by communities to pass on their cultural values and traditions from one generation to the next. In Uganda, folklore is an important means through which culture is transmitted. Folklore is used to communicate sensitive messages such as those related to reproductive education to young people. Other messages related to health, violence, governance, social and economic issues can be relayed through folklore. For example, one of the proverbs in Tooro is *"Nyineeka obwabyamira akalimi, enyana zibyaamira esaabu"* ("The fate of a society is sealed the day its leaders remain silent") and bad names include *"mulyabuto"*, loosely meaning a defiler.



Purpose

To help young people be creative in expressing issues related to violence, which they may feel uncomfortable discussing with elders who can support them.

How do go about it

For the first 30 minutes, the facilitator asks participants to each think about a folk song, proverb, story, idiom or nickname that communicates an important message about respecting each other to avoid violence in society. The facilitator may choose 7 – 8 people and ask each to mention and explain what this means to them.

For the next 20 minutes, the facilitator asks the participants the following questions for reflection;

- ◆ What do you learn from this exercise regarding VAWG?
- ◆ As a young person what role do you think you can play to prevent VAWG?



Young people demonstrate how to play “omusokolome”, a game and song used in Busoga to pass on information about good behaviour in society and to bring harmony between boys and their sisters.

Over the last 10 minutes, the facilitator may conclude: despite the introduction of modern information and communication technology, traditional folk songs, proverbs, music, dance and drama are still important mechanisms for the transmission of knowledge and information today. Young people can also use modern information technology such as social media to communicate and report cases of abuse against women and girls.

Lesson learnt

Despite the introduction of new technologies, folklore is still an important mechanism for the transmission of important messages, such as on the need to have peaceful relationships. It can be used to shape the behaviour of a community.

Activity 5: A debate on land ownership

Before colonisation, land was collectively owned by communities. Some land was held by traditional leaders on behalf of their subjects. There were unwritten rules and regulations that governed its use. This type of land ownership is called customary land tenure system and still exists today.

In some communities, collective ownership of land aims at ensuring each family has where to graze their animals and to plant crops. In most cultural communities, land is allocated to boys when they are ready to marry. Girls and women often have the right to use land after marriage. The sale of customary land is rarely allowed, except with prior consent from the clan leaders. Some communities reserve land for girls in case their marriages fail and they have to return home. Sometimes failure to provide access to land for women and girls in a family results in disputes.

Communal land ownership is however becoming less common because of increasing population and individualism, causing food insecurity and increased cases of VAWG.

Purpose

To help young people understand their land rights as provided for under the customary land ownership system, so that they are able to claim these rights if violated. Boys and men can use these land rights to protect their sisters or women in their families.



Young people during a debate at Madi community museum in Moyo

How to go about it

For the first 10 minutes, the facilitator introduces the topic "*Collective land ownership is better than individual land ownership in preventing violence against women and girls*" to the group and allows the participants to choose a side they are comfortable with (proposers and opposers). The facilitator should ensure that there is a more or less equal number of boys and girls in each group. The participants then identify the chairperson, time keeper and secretary for the debate.



The debate can then take about 30 minutes. The facilitator should not pronounce winners or losers to the debate since the exercise is meant to generate discussions for learning purposes.

The final 20 minutes can be allocated to reflections. The facilitator can ask the participants the following questions:

- ◆ What do you learn from this debate?
- ◆ How can you apply the knowledge generated to prevent VAWG in your community?
- ◆ Are there any leaders in your community where you can report cases of VAWG that arise from land conflicts? Who are they?

Lesson learnt

There are various land ownership systems in Uganda today; some emphasise collectiveness while others promote individualism. They all have advantages and disadvantages. Many women and girls have fallen victim of land rights violations because of a lack of information on their land rights. It is therefore important for young people to equip themselves with sufficient information about their land rights and how they can advocate in their communities, especially for women and girls facing land rights violations.

Activity 6: Visiting a home with a granary



A granary made by the heritage club members at Bishop Asili Secondary School in Moyo

A granary is a temporary structure made of mud and wattle and constructed in the form of a raised hut standing on sticks. In most regions of Uganda, granaries are used to store food and other agricultural produce, especially grains. It is important to note that in the changing society setting, especially in urban areas, granaries have been replaced by food stores. The presence

of a granary in a home signifies a hardworking, food secure, healthy and forward looking family. The number of families with granaries has however reduced, causing food insecurity and consequently VAWG.

Purpose

To teach young people the importance of a granary in a home, to explore the connection between a granary and the rights of women and girls, and to identify the role they can play to ensure food security in a home.

How to go about it

Having identified a home with a granary and having sought permission to visit it, the facilitator introduces the exercise and the topic for discussion. The homestead should be within the school's or community's vicinity.

At the location of the granary, the facilitator asks the participants the following questions and allows time for at least 2 participants to respond. This is to allow young people to share their experiences.

- ◆ How do you call a granary in your language?
- ◆ Do you have a granary in your home? Why?
- ◆ Who is the custodian of the granary in your home?
- ◆ Do you have rules and regulations regarding the use of a granary? What are they?
- ◆ What are the threats facing the use of granaries today?
- ◆ For some of you who do not have granaries in your homesteads, how do you store food for future use?
- ◆ What role can you play to ensure there is food security in your family?

Lessons learnt

Granaries play an important role in ensuring food security in the home. It is the responsibility of all family members to contribute to the production of food that can be stored in a granary. As food insecurity has contributed to VAWG in some communities, it is important to create awareness about the role of granaries in ensuring food security.



Theme 3: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) are rights relating to one's sex (male or female) and reproduction. This may include the right to medical care, the right to access information on SRH, the right to privacy and to take decisions relating to one's body.

This theme aims at helping young people learn about their SRHR provided for within their cultural settings and how they can use the available cultural resources to address challenges relating to the transition from childhood to adulthood. The challenges may include managing body hygiene, sexually transmitted diseases and physical body changes.



A senior woman interfacing with heritage club members of Bishop Taratino Secondary School in Arua

Young people will also learn about the existing structures and mechanisms they can use to prevent abuse of their SRHR and how to support women and girls against abuse of their rights.

This theme deals with:

1. Traditional foods and herbal medicine
2. Reproductive education

Activity 1: Brainstorming on traditional foods and herbal medicines

Traditional medicines and foods have been used the world over since the existence of humanity to treat or prevent various diseases. Most of our traditional foods have medicinal value. Traditional medicines can be from selected plants (such as leaves, seeds, roots and bark) or animals. In our communities, some herbalists and nutritionists have acquired their knowledge

from their relatives through practice while others have acquired theirs through formal training, research and mentorship.

Purpose



A young person taking traditional medicine often locally known as 'emmumbwa'

This activity is meant to illustrate to young people the role of traditional foods and medicines in promoting their health and personal hygiene as they transition from childhood to adulthood. This activity also aims at triggering young people's interest to learn about the principles, norms and values that exist in their communities to promote and protect their SRHR. The activity will also make young people aware of the dangers of abusing herbal medicines.

How to go about it

For the first 10 minutes, the facilitator gives the participants an assignment to identify a traditional food or herb and the disease it that prevents, treats or how it nourishes the human body. Participants are also tasked to identify any food taboos practiced in their community and how these taboos affect women, girls and boys.

For 30 minutes, the facilitator asks participants to share the foods, herbs and taboos they identified during the brain storming session. Depending on the available time, up to 10 participants may present their findings. The facilitator must ensure participation by both boys and girls.

In the remaining time, the facilitator asks the participants the following questions:

- ◆ What lessons have you learnt from this exercise?
- ◆ Who in the community that can help you learn about traditional foods or herbs?
- ◆ How can traditional foods and herbs keep our bodies healthy and clean?



- ◆ What are the dangers or risks of using traditional herbs without guidance from elders or professionals?
- ◆ What advice would you give to fellow young people who have a negative attitude towards traditional foods and medicines?

Lessons learnt

The session teaches young people that food is the first medicine available to human beings to prevent or treat diseases. Traditional foods have a variety of nutrients and are healthier than processed foods. The session also teaches young people that traditional herbal medicine is useful if used correctly with the guidance of practitioners and elders. In many cases, women are the custodians of knowledge and skills regarding traditional foods and medicines. The session can also teach young people how some food taboos violate the rights of women and girls.

Activity 2: A role play on reproductive education

Talking about intimate relations in the public arena is taboo in most of the cultural communities in Uganda. Yet there is a need to provide information and to educate the young people about intimate relations. Culturally, there are practices and ways of teaching young people about intimate relations and sexual and reproductive health. Intimate relationships is traditionally one of the important subjects taught to young people during informal education sessions conducted by clan/family elders. These sessions are conducted whenever clan/ family members gather after a meal at home, around the fire place or during cultural ceremonies, such as last funeral rites or communal food gathering. Today, these sessions are also seasonally held in royal enclosures (*ekisaakaate kya Nabagereka* in Buganda, *ekikaali kya Nyinomukama* in Tooro, *ekigangu* in Busoga) or camps organised by cultural leaders.

Girls and boys are trained separately at the evening fireplace (also called *wang-oo* in Luo, *ekyooto* in Luganda and Rutooro and *ekeno / aperit* in Nga'karimojong). Values and principles (refer to theme 2) are imparted to young ones at the fireplace. The sessions are led by the elders in the family including mothers (*maama*), fathers (*taata, baaba*), aunties (*ssenga, isenkati, aya*) and uncles (*kojja, nyinarumi, mama*), grandfathers and grandmothers. Various modes of communication such as proverbs, folk stories, and idioms are used to enhance learning.

Purpose

To create awareness about the various sexual and reproductive health issues that young people face. The session is also intended to allow participants to share information as they learn.

How to go about it

The facilitator prepares a scene similar to an evening fire place. If the facilitator is male, he invites a female cultural leader to support and vice versa. The facilitator divides the participants into 2 groups; one group for girls and another for boys. The male facilitator engages boys while the female facilitator engages girls for 30 minutes. The facilitator may choose to use different methods of teaching such as a dialogue, questions and answers, or folk stories. The following topics are suggested:

- ◆ Menstrual hygiene; how to keep our bodies clean using locally available resources (girls only)

- ◆ How to maintain body hygiene and avoid body odour
- ◆ Sex maturation (bodily changes as one transits from childhood to adulthood)
- ◆ Grooming boys and girls to become responsible men and women (roles, responsibilities, principles, values and characteristics)
- ◆ Cultural norms, principles, values and practices regarding sexual abuse (incest, rape, defilement)

For 20 minutes, the facilitator then asks the participants the following questions to ensure shared understanding of the topics:

- ◆ What lessons did you learn from the topic(s) discussed today?
- ◆ As a result, what will you do differently?



The fireplace (known as wang-oo, wangoi, ekyooto, ekyoto, ekeno) is a space for learning and talking about cultural values

As a young person, how can you help other young people to stay clean, healthy and safe?

Lesson learnt

It is important for young people to learn that there are cultural resources (traditional medicines, food, cultural leaders and folk stories, etc.) which they can use to stay clean, healthy and safe. Young people will also learn that informal learning spaces such as fire places are useful in relaxing their minds away from the classroom routine.



Theme 4: Access to Justice from a Cultural Perspective

Access to justice refers to the ability of people to seek and obtain a solution against any injustices or action that infringes their rights. In most cultural communities in Uganda, rights cannot be separated from responsibilities. Human rights as defined by culture were and are still regulated by norms, principles, practices, values and customs agreed upon by a particular community and are passed on from one generation to another by word of mouth and through socialisation.

Some categories of people have special privileges to ensure that they realise their rights. Examples include children and people with a disability who cannot fulfil their basic needs and therefore must depend on others. Women are also special because of their reproductive roles. There are different places where people seek justice: the courts of law, the police, clan leaders, relatives, parents, friends, etc. Many people use informal places to seek justice because they are convenient and use local languages. It is also cheap to report and to follow up cases in the community compared to the formal justice system where courts are far from the community, technically challenging and lawyers are expensive. In some communities, some practices, norms, values, principles and customs can lead to the abuse of the rights of others. Such negative practices can lead to physical or psychological harm and slow down the development of the community.

Purpose

The purpose of this theme is to enable young people to learn about their rights and responsibilities. It will also enable them to know the different justice service providers that exist in their communities. The activities are also intended to teach young people about the 'negative' cultural practices that exist in some communities and how they can harm the dignity of women and girls. The theme will also provide young people with an opportunity to reflect and understand that they all have responsibilities to ensure respect and protection of the rights of others. The theme also provides young people with information on how unequal power relations contribute to the abuse of the rights of women and girls.

This theme examines the following:

1. Understanding human rights as defined by culture
2. Understanding power relations and the abuse of rights of women and girls
3. Identifying cultural resources for the delivery of justice

Activity 1: The shopping basket - Understanding human rights as defined by culture

The existence of human rights did not start with the introduction of written laws. Human rights have existed right from the beginning of humanity. People living in a community normally develop regulations that guide the way they interact with each other, consciously or not. These unwritten rules governing people's entitlements is what is referred to as culturally-defined rights. They are passed down from one generation to another informally. While some of these values, principles and practices are positive, others are harmful.



Purpose

This activity aims at helping young people learn about their rights and responsibilities as provided for by their culture. Participants shall also be able to identify 'negative' cultural practices, norms, principles and practices.



How to go about it

For the first 20 minutes, the facilitator introduces the topic to the participants and then asks them to make a circle. The facilitator places two baskets in the middle of the group getting ready for the "shopping". One basket is labelled "rights" and the other "corresponding responsibilities". The facilitator shall then ask the participants to identify and write down on two pieces of paper a right and its corresponding responsibility. In turns, the participants read out and explain what they have written and place them in the respective baskets.

For the next 20 minutes, the facilitator asks the participants the following questions:

- ◆ Among the rights and responsibilities listed, which ones apply to women and girls and to boys and men?
- ◆ What role can you play to ensure the protection of the rights of women and girls in your community??
- ◆ What practices, norms, principles or values in your community violate the rights of women and girls?
- ◆ How can the community ensure the protection of the rights of women and girls?

Lessons learnt

By the end of the exercise, young people will learn that every individual has rights and responsibilities. They will also learn that they have a role to play to enjoy these rights and that enjoying their rights should not cause harm to other people in the community, irrespective of whether they are girls or boys.

Activity 2: The power walk - Understanding power relations and the abuse of the rights of women and girls

Purpose

This exercise aims at teaching young people that power imbalances and 'negative' cultural



perceptions play an important role in allowing the abuse of the rights of women and girls. The value attached to some individuals in comparison to others and the practices and principles exercised in a discriminative way play a large role in promoting the abuse of rights of women and girls.

This exercise demonstrates to young people that social differences created by our societies can put some people in privileged or vulnerable positions. This often leads to the abuse of rights, especially for women and girls who come from poor families and those with a disability.

How to go about it

Before the exercise, the facilitator prepares a list of identities/characters to use for the power walk. 10 identities are developed with different features (5 male and 5 female) and each represents a particular social category in the community. The description of each identity is written down on a piece of paper and is kept secret from the participants. Below are some examples of identities/characters that can be written up to guide the walk

- ◆ *Identity/character 1.* Peter, a young boy, comes from a poor family living in the village. His father and mother own a small piece of land where they grow food that is barely enough to take them through the season.
- ◆ *Identity/character 2.* Jane, a young girl, comes from a poor family living in the village. Her father and mother own a small piece of land where they grow food that is barely enough to take them through the season.
- ◆ *Identity/character 3.* David is a young boy living with a disability. His parents are not rich and they have five other children to care for. The nearest school is 5 kms away.
- ◆ *Identity/character 4.* Sarah is a young girl living with a disability. Her parents are not rich and they have five other children to care for. The nearest school is 5 kms away.
- ◆ *Identity/character 5.* Samuel is a young boy born in a rich family. He has one brother and sister. They live in the town and his parents have well-paying jobs.
- ◆ *Identity/character 6.* Esther is a young girl born in a rich family. She has one brother and sister. They live in the town and her parents have well-paying jobs.
- ◆ *Identity/character 7.* Jotham is a young orphan. He lives with his step-mother in a slum on the outskirts of Kampala.
- ◆ *Identity/character 8.* Harriet is a young orphan. She lives with her step-mother in a slum on the outskirts of Kampala.
- ◆ *Identity/character 9.* Fredrick, a ten-year-old boy, lives with brothers and sisters, they do not have parents or caretakers. He is the oldest.
- ◆ *Identity/character 10.* Susan, a ten-year-old girl, lives with brothers and sisters, they do not have parents or caretakers. She is the oldest.

The facilitator asks some participants to volunteer to role play. No one is supposed to disclose their identity or character until the end of the exercise. The facilitator then asks all the volunteers to make one line. For 30 minutes, the facilitator asks the participants to respond to his/her statements by taking one step forward if the answer is yes. If the answer is no, they should remain in the same position. The other participants are asked to stand on the side and watch. The statements to be read out by the facilitator to guide the power walk are:



- ◆ My parents were happy and excited to receive me when I was born. They celebrated.
- ◆ I will be able to start school when I reach the age of 5.
- ◆ I will be forced to get married before the age of 18.
- ◆ I can easily get a job when I grow up.
- ◆ I can easily make friends in my village.
- ◆ I am likely to be beaten at home.
- ◆ I am likely to have only one meal a day.
- ◆ I am likely to complete school and graduate.
- ◆ I am likely to get medical treatment when I fall sick.

For 15 minutes, at the end of the walk, the facilitator will ask participants the questions below to generate a discussion as each volunteer reveals their identity.

- ◆ How did you feel when people were moving while you trailed at the back (this question goes to the person at the back)? What is your identity?
- ◆ How did you feel when you kept taking a step forward every time a statement was raised (this question goes to one who moved most)?
- ◆ Why did you not move when some questions were read? (ask anyone that moved less than others)
- ◆ What lessons do you learn from this exercise? (for all)

Lessons learnt

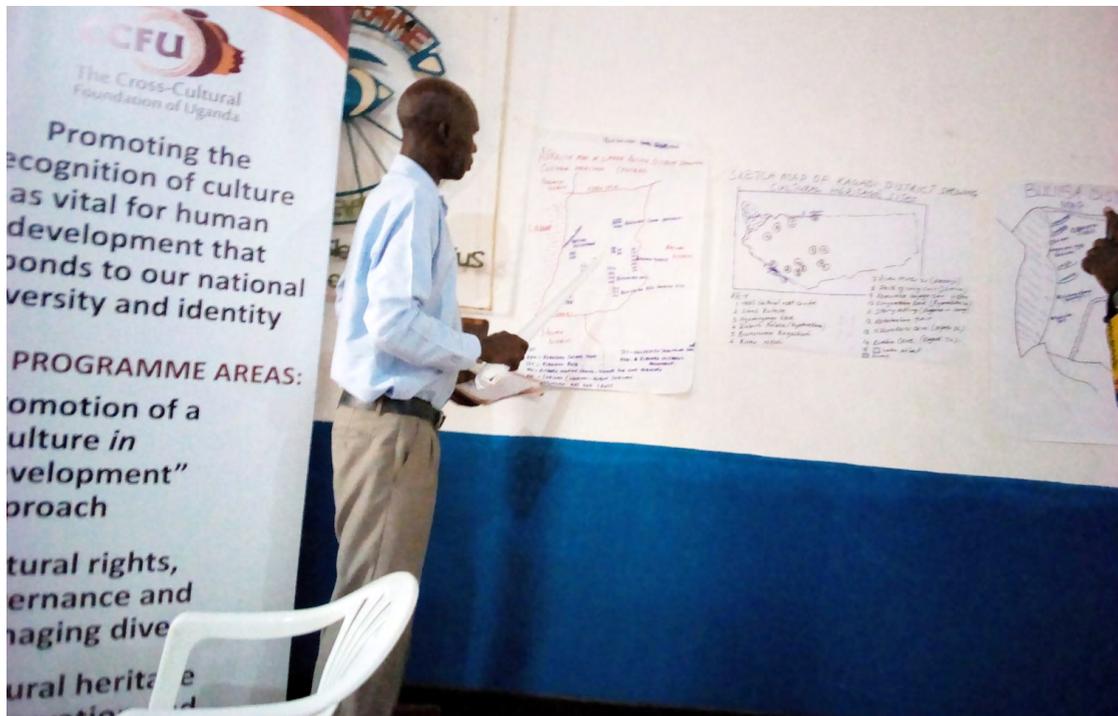
Participants will learn that being born male or female, with a physical or no physical/mental disability or to be born in a poor or rich family, will either privilege them or make them vulnerable. This is because of the value that society attaches to different people and this may be informed by norms, principles and beliefs. For example, in some communities, people with a disability are not valued in the same way as more able-bodied people. In other communities, boys are considered a treasure compared to girls and this inhibits the progress of girls, if not supported. Participants will identify that female counterparts are more likely to lag behind than their male counterparts, yet they may be in similar social and economic circumstances. Participants will appreciate the need to support and promote the rights of the undervalued and least privileged in society.

Activity 3: A community map - Identifying cultural resources for justice service delivery

It is important for young people to be aware of people or places they can go to seek assistance in case their rights are abused. These may include clan leaders, parents, aunts and uncles and elders in the community. It should be noted that, for some cases such as rape, defilement and murder, it will be necessary to report to the police or Local Councils.



How to go about it



Mapping cultural resources

This activity will require young people to draw a sketch map of their school and its surroundings or the community on a large piece of paper or on the ground. They will be asked to identify and plot the resources (people or places) where they can go to seek assistance in case their rights are abused.

After drawing the map, the facilitator will ask the participants to identify the nature of cases that are happening in their communities. For each case mentioned, the participants will be asked to identify where such a case can be reported and plotted under the respective service providers.

The following reflection questions can then be asked:

- ◆ How easy/difficult is it to access sources of assistance when girls and women face violence? Please explain.
- ◆ If it is difficult for women and girls to access these resources, what do you think can be done to make them more accessible?

Practical Tips for the Facilitators

The government recognises and supports several cultural institutions/leaders in Uganda. Cultural institutions are spread across the country and include clans, chiefdoms and kingdoms. Cultural leaders are recognised and respected by their communities; they are the custodians of culture and are responsible for its transmission from one generation to another. They are also well placed people to address any harmful cultural practices that contribute to VAWG.

Roles and responsibilities of the facilitator(s)

S/he should

- ◆ Prepare well in advance, develop and implement work plans for visiting young people in school and within the community.
- ◆ Mobilise young people in and out of school to participate and share information and knowledge on various aspects of culture related to women and girls' rights.
- ◆ Establish a cordial working relationship with school administrators and other community leaders.
- ◆ Be able to liaise with community museum coordinators on possible cultural/ historical sites to visit.
- ◆ Be able to collaborate with other facilitators.
- ◆ Be able to provide basic services such as guidance, counselling, mediation and referral on cases of VAWG reported to him/her.
- Be able to identify, support and follow up cases of rights violation of vulnerable people who cannot report on their own.

Qualities of the facilitators

S/he should

- ◆ be receptive and flexible
- ◆ be audible and a good listener
- ◆ be a good mobiliser.
- ◆ be sensitive to different contexts – gender, age, ethnicity, religion, etc.
- ◆ be a good time keeper, innovative and organised.
- ◆ be confident and respectable.
- ◆ be knowledgeable about his/her culture and how it can be used to address issues related to SRHR, VAWG and access to justice





Makerere Hill, Off Bativa Rd,
P.O. Box 25517, Kampala, Uganda Tel. +256-393 294675/7
ccfu@crossculturalfoundation.or.ug, www.crossculturalfoundation.or.ug
 CCFU_NGO  CCFU NGO