The influence of social norms on health-related practices

Ben Cislaghi
Associate Professor
Centre for Gender, Health and Violence
ben.cislaghi@lshtm.ac.uk

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Agenda

1 Welcome & **Recap**

2 Group Activity: **Social Norms in Your Work**

3 Group Presentations

4 **Assignment** & Wrap Up
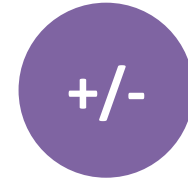
Recap:
What are **social norms**?

Social Norms defined

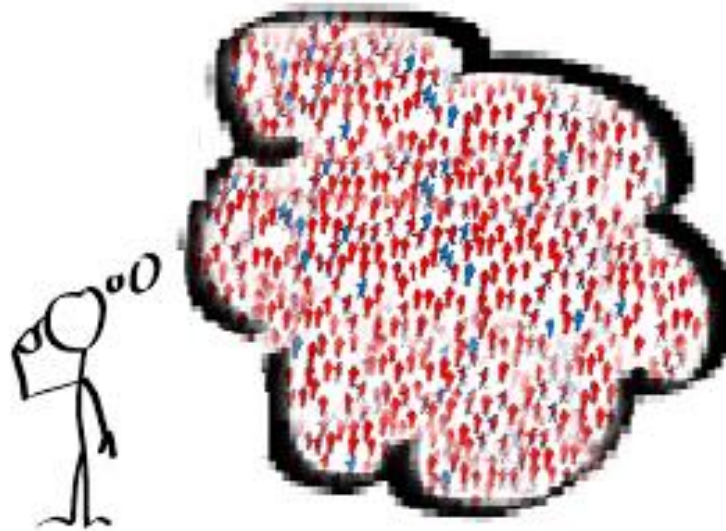**Unwritten rules about what is acceptable** in a given society or group of people ("reference group")

Examples: Bring gifts after a travel abroad, offer water to a visitor, leave a tip to the waiter

Often maintained by positive and negative social sanctions

Social Norms as Beliefs

1. What people believe others do

(**Descriptive norms** or empirical expectations)

2. What people believe others approve and disapprove of

(**Injunctive norms** or normative expectations)

Kallgren, C. A., et al. (2000). "A Focus Theory of Normative Conduct: When Norms Do and Do not Affect Behavior." Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin 26(8): 1002-1012.

But complying with social norms
can also result in harm to self or others.
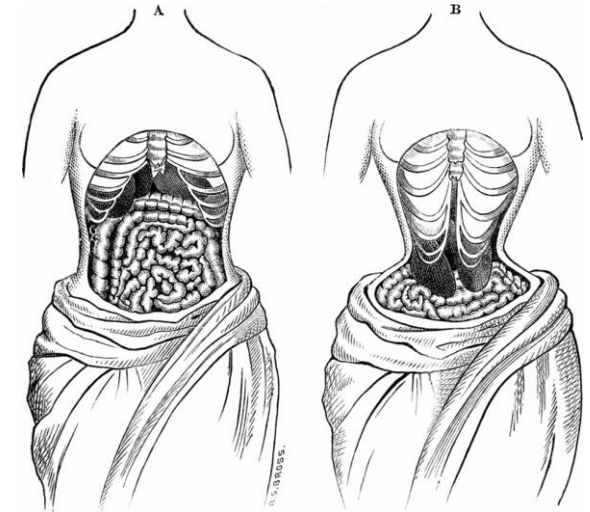
Today we will be discussing the harmful side of norms specifically,
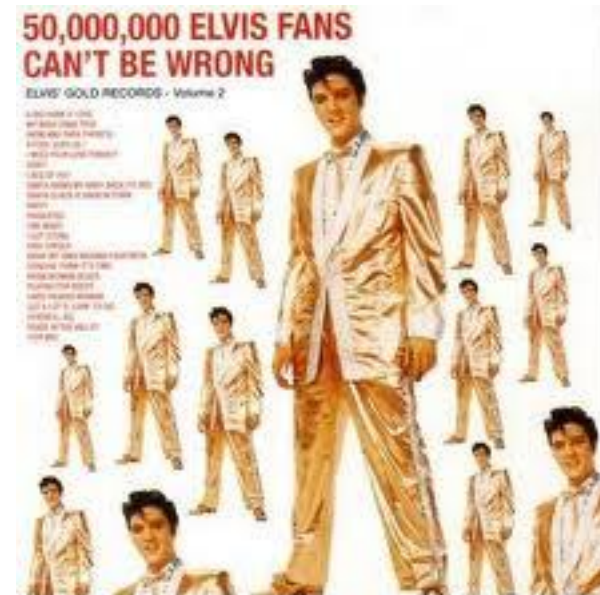but let's bear in mind many norms also have positive effects.

Types of **social norms**

Descriptive Norms:
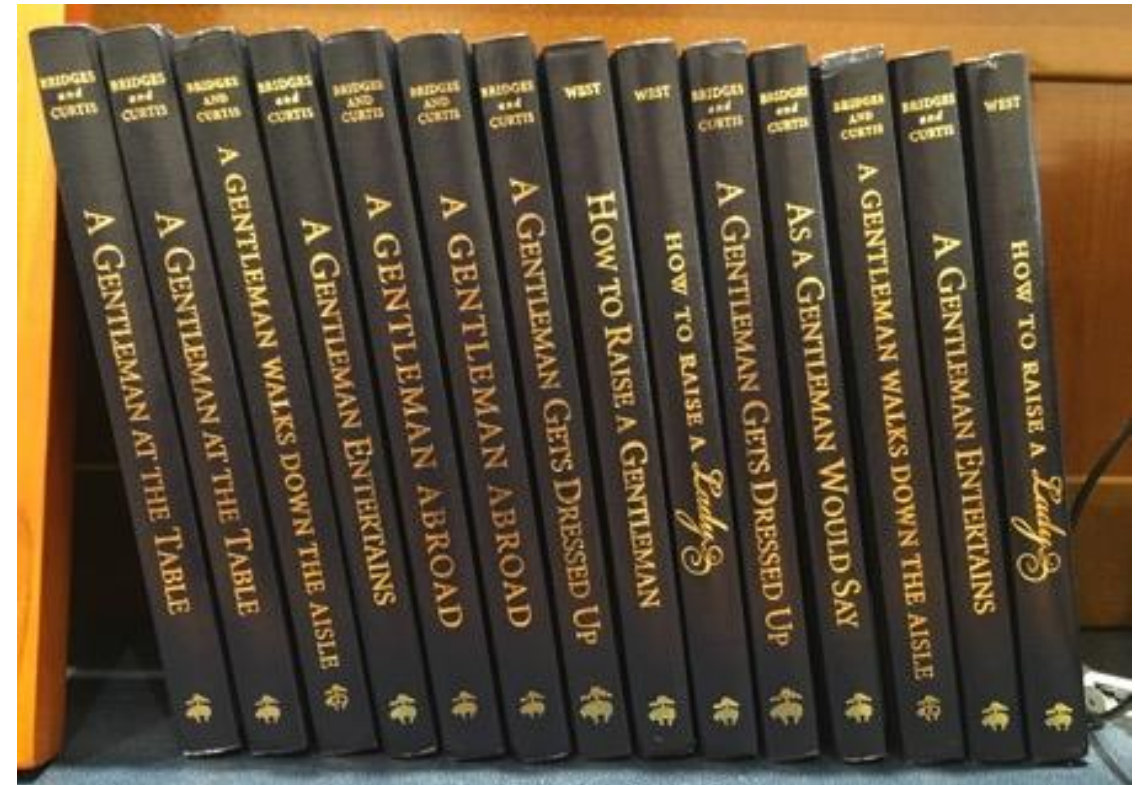## What do people believe others in their group do?

Marketing strategy use the power of descriptive norms: "everyone does it"

Injunctive Norms:
To what extent do people believe others in their group approve of something?
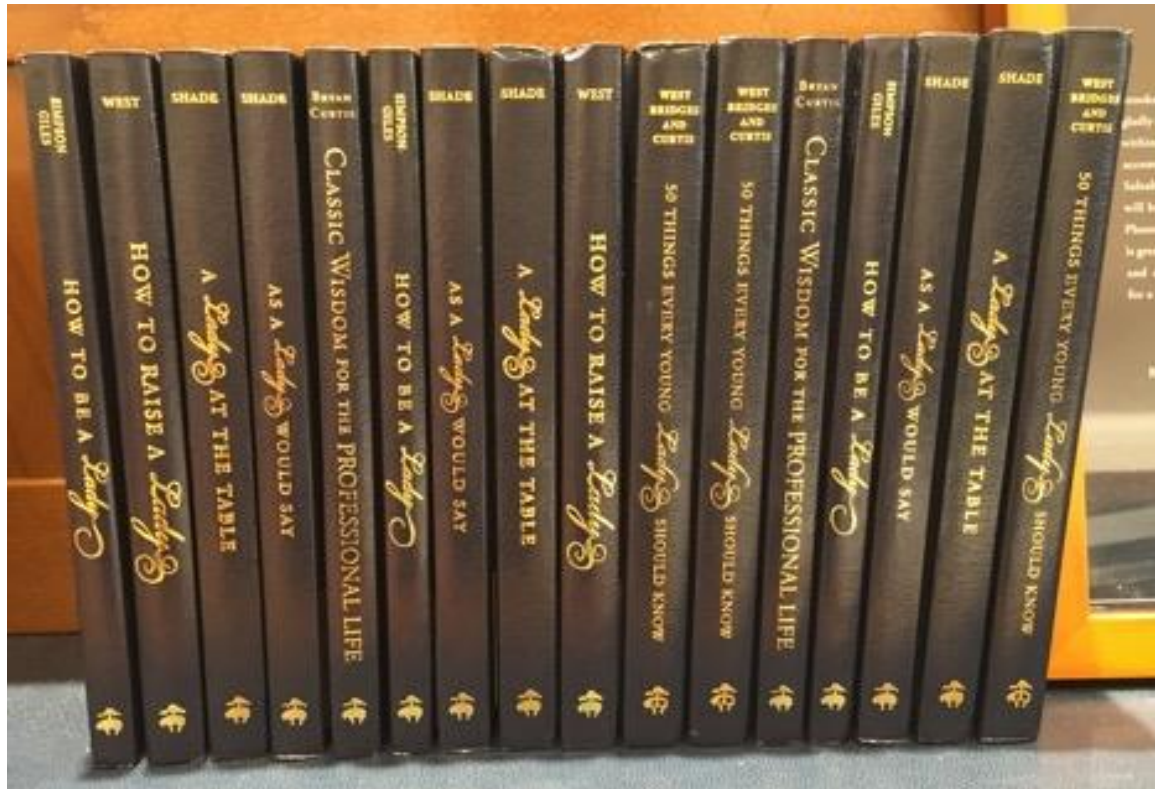
(what are others approving of? What do they think I should do?)

Not just "good" manners, but the **appropriate manners** to be considered good members of a group.

Sanctions:
What do people anticipate happens to (non) compliers in their group?

A Social Norm is NOT a personal attitude.

Some advanced
key points

1 **Group** Norms **and Societal** Norms

Sometimes the norm exists in a **specific reference group**...

...and sometimes they are in the **"society"**

Cislaghi B, Heise L (2018); Theory and Practice of Social Norms Interventions: Eight Common Pitfalls. Globalization and Health, 14(1), p.83, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-018-0398-x

"If you can't get one, you're not part of the gang. Definitely."

2 **A practice can be sustained by "indirect" norms.**

DIRECT

INDIRECT

BEHAVIOUR:
FGC

NORM:
FGC

BEHAVIOUR:
HITTING WIFE

NORM:
FAMILY
HONOUR

NORM:
FAMILY
PRIVACY

NORM:
TOLERANCE
OF VIOLENCE
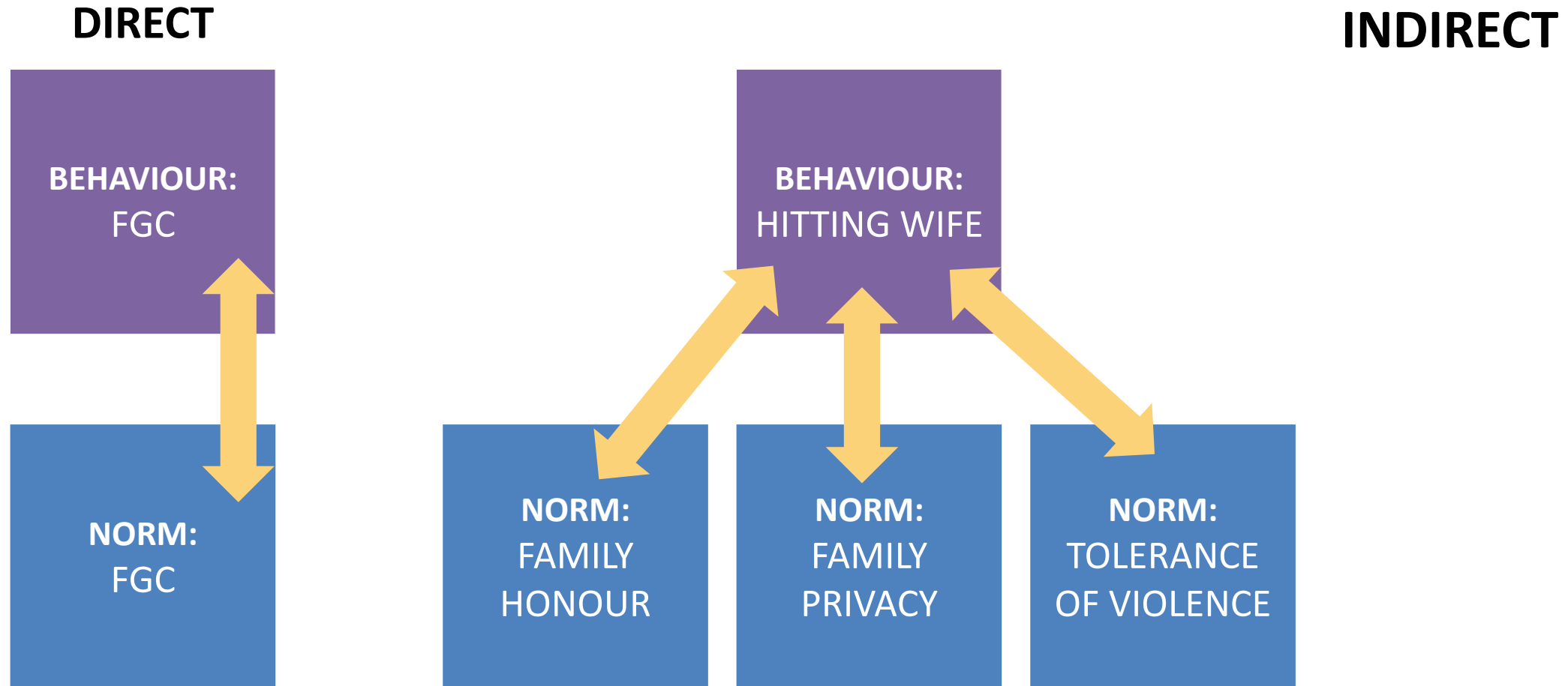
3 **Norms are in a system of structural factors** that intersect and sustain action.

Institutional
e.g. Laws – family inheritance, property
Institutions
Governance structures (political representation)
Economic policy (tax structure, social protection, job market)
Criminal justice system

Global
e.g. Rising consumerism
Globalisation
Technological innovation
Ideologies (human rights, fundamentalism)

Material
e.g. Availability of services
Transport/ Infrastructure
Available assets (property, land, jobs, livestock)

Individual
e.g. Factual beliefs
Aspirations
Skills
Attitudes
Self-efficacy

POWER GENDER

Social
e.g. Social networks and support
Availability of models
Positive deviants

4 **Gender** Norms

- Gender norms are **social norms defining acceptable and appropriate actions for women and men** in a given group or society.

- **They are embedded** in formal and informal institutions, nested in the mind, and produced and reproduced through social interaction.

- They **play a role in shaping women and men's (often unequal) access** to resources and freedoms, thus affecting their voice, power and sense of self.

Cislaghi B, Heise L (2019); Gender norms and social norms: differences, similarities and why they matter for prevention science. Sociology of Health and Illness. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.13008
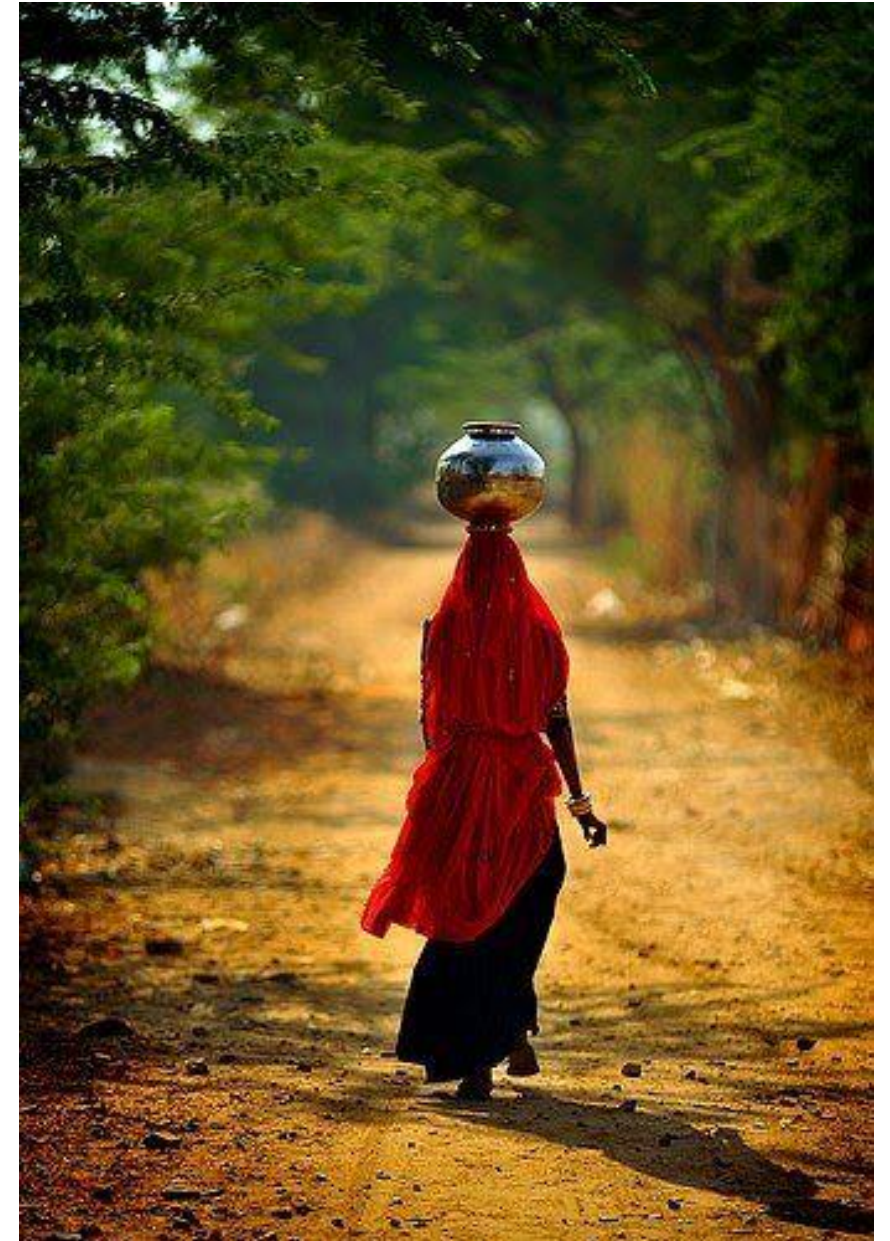
Key Takeaways

1

Social norms are beliefs of two types: descriptive (what one believes others do) injunctive (what one believes others approve of)

2

Different social norms apply across different groups.

3

Different social norms can together sustain a practice (not necessarily 1 practice – 1 social norm)

4

Social norms can be the main driver, or not (they can intersect with other non-normative factors).

5

Some norms specifically contribute to defining men's and women's place in the group, structuring hierarchical relations. These are called gender norms

**Questions?
Comments?**
Social Norms Recap

Seminar Activity:
Social norms in your work

Social Norms in Your Work

In small groups, each of you will briefly describe your work and then explain what social norms influence your work and how.

This is a safe space to practice and give feedback on identifying social norms!

Norm: Respectable women marry early.

Subject: Adolescent girls who reached puberty

Sanctions: Less desirable marriage prospects at age 18

Reference Group: Community members (eg, future in-laws and husbands

Note any variations by groups

Present the Social Norms in Your Work

Explain what social norms influence your work and how.

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Reflection Task

In preparation for the next seminar

Select 2-3 norms in your work and develop a vignette to explore these norms in your work. You will present these vignettes in groups during the next seminar.

You can find examples of vignettes from the previous webinar series among other online resources.

What's Next?

Session 1:
Social norms theory for health promotion interventions

Wednesday, February 10, 2021, Nigeria 2pm-4pm

In the first session, we will briefly recap basic social norms concepts from the previous webinar training series followed by practical exercises to apply knowledge on identifying norms, reference groups, sanctions of social norms as they pertain to health.

Session 2:
Diagnosing social norms

Monday, March 08, 2021, Nigeria 2pm-4pm

In the second session, we will provide an opportunity to create a plan to uncover information about social norms from various groups of people. We will facilitate groups as they apply social norms knowledge in creating these plans for use in various work contexts and utilizing different participatory and other data collection methods.

Session 3:
Identifying strategies for norm change

Wednesday, April 07, 2021, Nigeria 2pm-4pm

In the third session, we will form groups to create a Theory of Change for a particular health problem seeking to utilize norms shifting in programming. Participants will consider existing evidence for social norms as they create the goals and methods for health promotion interventions to shift norms.

Session 4:
Monitoring and evaluation planning

Wednesday, April 28, 2021, Nigeria 2pm-4pm

In the final session, we will provide space and time to create a monitoring and evaluation plan for social norms shifting programs based on approaches and resources currently used in the social norms field. Our facilitators will provide insights and guidance as groups create their M&E plan for social norms interventions centered on health promotion.

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