

APPLYING THE SOCIAL NORMS EXPLORATION TOOL

Using participatory action research to identify & diagnose social norms and take action within programs

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Overview of Training

Review: Key Social Norms Concepts



Review: Phases of the Social Norms Exploration Tool (SNET)



Problem Tree Activity (small groups)



Group Share-out and Expert Panel Feedback



Identifying Reference Groups



Wrap-Up

Training Objectives

- 1. Increase knowledge of key social norms concepts**
- 2. Increase knowledge of how to implement SNET**
- 3. Provide participants with opportunity for hands-on engagement**

Review: Key Social Norms Concepts

DEFINITION

Social Norms

Social norms are the often **implicit, informal rules** that most people accept and abide by. They are influenced by **belief systems**, perceptions of **what others expect and do**, and sometimes by perceived **rewards and sanctions**

Norms are embedded in **formal and informal institutions** and produced and reproduced through **social interaction**.

- ALIGN, Overseas Development Institute

TERM		DEFINITION
Social Norm	Social norms are the perceived informal, mostly unwritten, rules that define acceptable, appropriate, and obligatory actions within a given group or community.	
	Descriptive Norm	What I think others do
	Injunctive Norm	What I think others will approve/disapprove of me doing
	Gender Norm	Expectations for how individuals should behave based on their gender identity

TERM	DEFINITION
Behavior	What I do
Attitude & Belief	What I prefer / what I know
Reference Group	<p>People whose opinions matter to me (for a particular behavior or context)</p> <p>People who reward or sanction me for my behavior</p>
Sanctions	Rewards or punishments that an individual and community believe will follow a given behavior

GROUP POLL

How did social norms influence my behavior this week?

- Please respond in the Zoom chat box

DEFINITION

What is a norms assessment?

Norms assessments are activities used to rapidly determine the most relevant social norms affecting the behavior(s) of interest in a specific setting.

Norms assessments can help guide programs across the project lifecycle. During (A) program design, (B) implementation strategies, and (C) monitoring and evaluation.

NORMS ASSESSMENTS WILL HELP YOU ANSWER:

Questions	Why is this important?
1. Who are the reference groups that influence the behavior(s)?	Identifying reference groups that do or do not support a behavior helps programs include the right people in interventions and evaluations.
2. What are the social norms that influence the behavior(s)?	Identifying the root causes of an issue – including social norms - ensures your program articulates and addresses the range of determinants of behaviors.
3. Why do people comply with social norms? Why not?	Identifying reasons why people comply will help unpack the ‘black box’ in your program. (Maybe it’s because norms are hidden, or people have a strong desire to conform, or they gain social benefits for conforming or fear sanctions for not conforming.)
4. What are the most influential social norms ?	Discussing, analyzing, and prioritizing normative factors (and taking into account other factors) allows more strategic use of resources for social and behavior change.

An increased focus on social norms can help improve development impact by...



Creating an environment that sustains and spreads behavior change over time



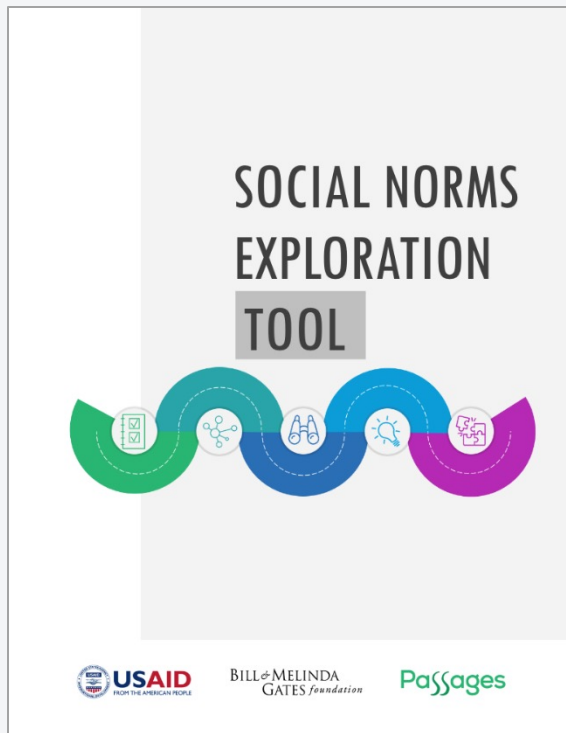
Addressing norms that drive multiple behaviors



Providing a common avenue of collaboration for projects across sectors/divisions

Review: Phases of the Social Norms Exploration Tool (SNET)

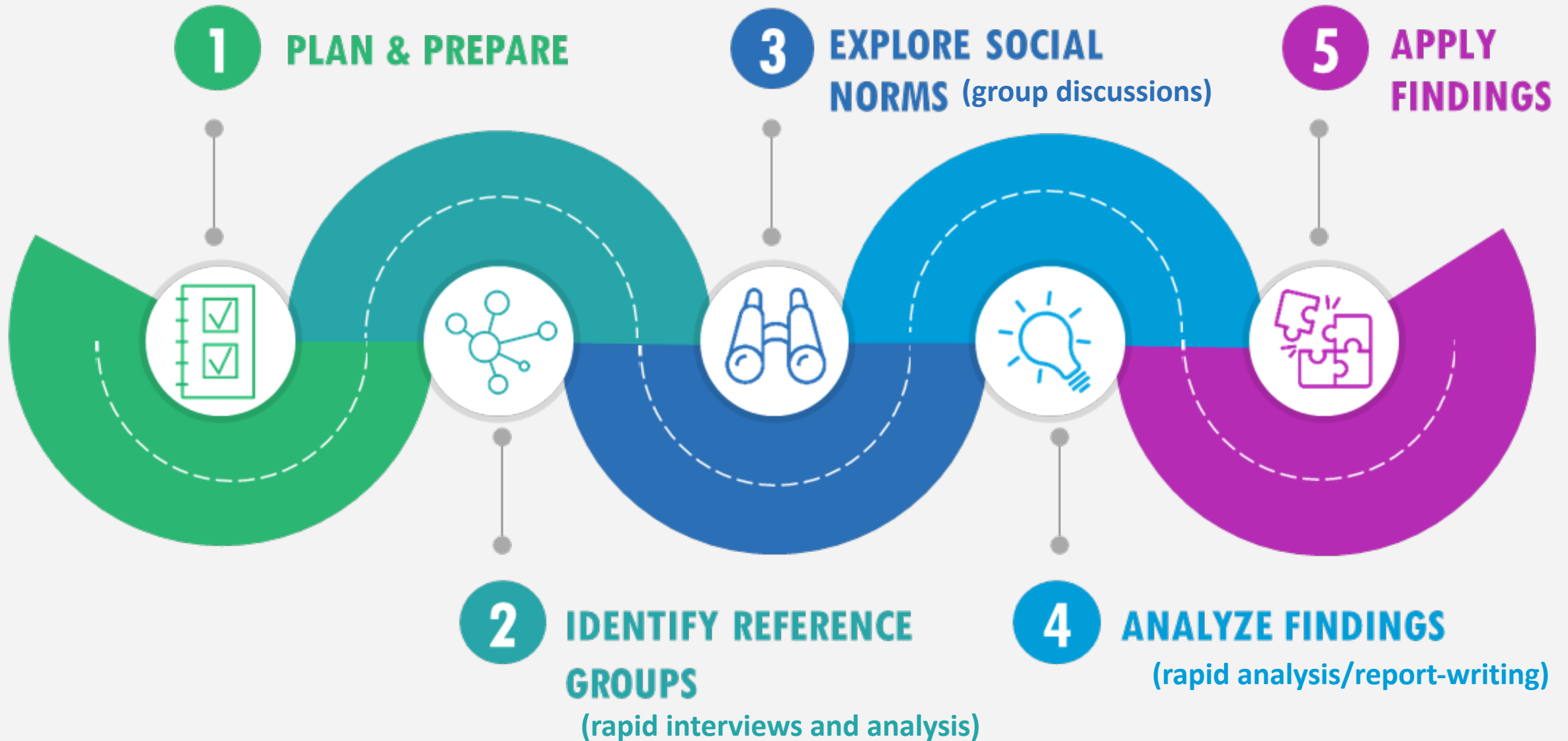
What is the Social Norms Exploration Tool?



- A participatory, learning and action tool that guides a rapid “social norm exploration”
- Allows for rapid identification of reference groups and social norms influencing behaviors
- Offers guidance on how to use the information in program design, strategy adjustment, and evaluation

Available online at: <https://irh.org/social-norms-exploration/>

Social Norms Exploration Process



Phase 1 — Plan & Prepare

ACTIVITIES

1. Use social norms lens to develop new understanding of your project (Problem Tree Analysis)
2. Decide on population segmentation
3. Define the SNE aim and objectives
4. Choose exercises to identify social norms in your population
 - Five Whys
 - Problem Tree Analysis
 - Vignettes
5. Determine which and how many communities and individuals to engage
6. Prepare a plan and organize logistics for field work

Phase 2 — Identify Reference Groups

ACTIVITIES

1. Adapt 'My Social Networks' exercise to behavior and populations of interest
 - Learn which people are influential and provide guidance, advice, or support on a specific issue related to the behavior of interest
2. Create an interview guide
3. Plan and prepare for field activities
4. Conduct speed interviews – provide data to core team
5. Rapidly analyze the information to identify key reference groups
6. Review results with the field team

Phase 1 — Plan & Prepare

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Phase 1, Activity 1:

Problem Tree Analysis

PHASE 1: ACTIVITY 1

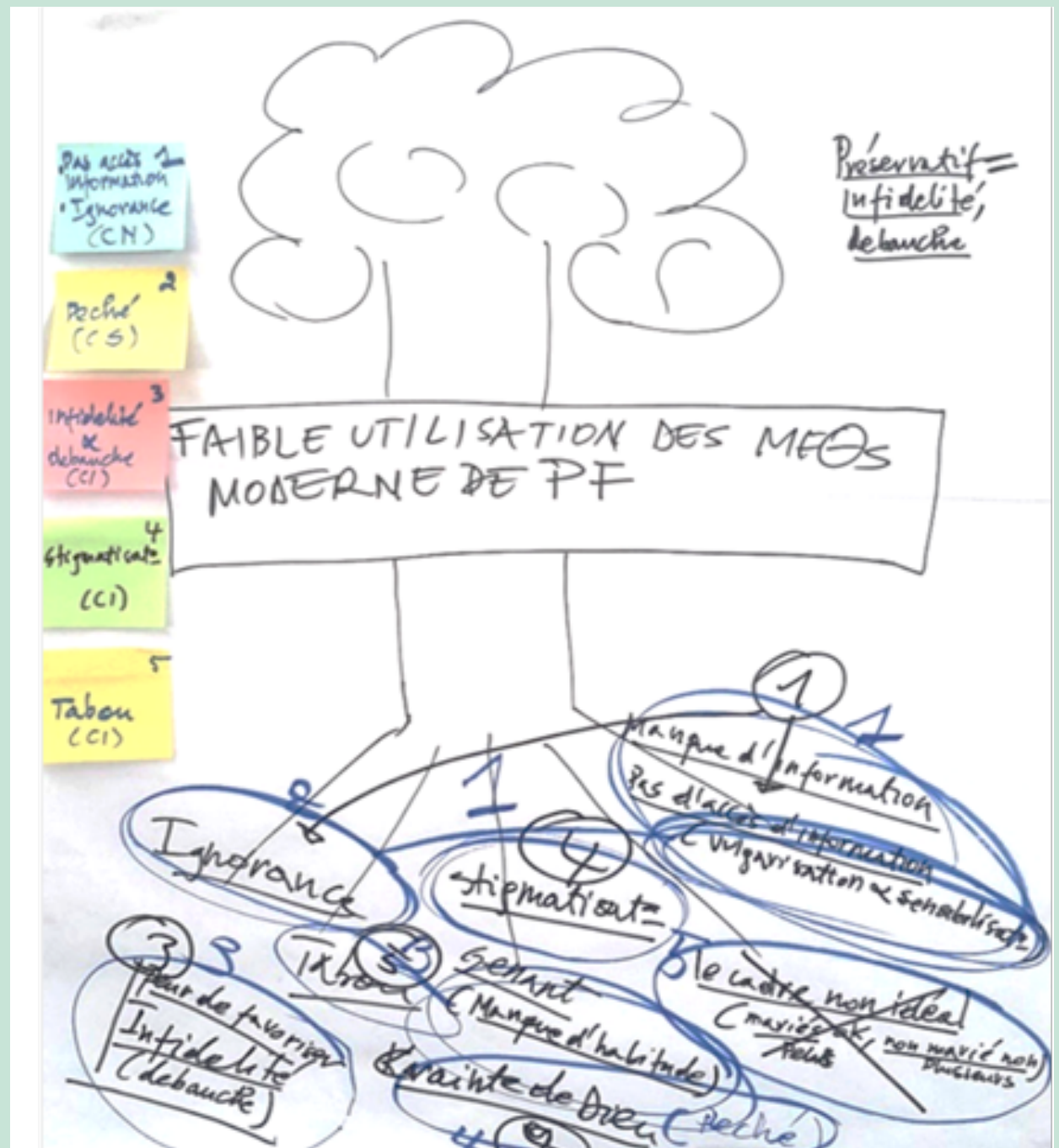
Goals

Work with implementing team to:

- 1) Develop a mutual understanding of your program using a social norms lens
- 2) Internalize and apply social norms concepts
- 3) Relate these concepts to your program

PHASE 1: ACTIVITY 1

Here is a problem tree from a team's exercise looking into the behavior of 'low use of family planning'. The team conducted the analysis, circled and labeled factors, and for each normative factor, created a post-it note with details of the rewards and sanctions.



PHASE 1: ACTIVITY 4

CHOOSE EXERCISES FOR THE SOCIAL NORMS EXPLORATION

The SNET provides three choices of exercises for working with your program recipients.

The selection of exercises depends on available **resources**, **complexity** and **capacity** to conduct this kind of rapid participatory assessment.

The implementing team decides which one is best suited to their needs.

EXPLORE NORMS EXERCISES	TYPE OF METHOD	MAIN PURPOSE	HELPFUL POINTERS FOR SELECTING EXERCISE
<i>The Five Whys</i>	Participatory group analysis and diagramming of social causes of ‘ why does X behavior exist ’	Explore the social norms that influence the behavior of interest, learn which may be most influential, and understand the extent norms are influencing behaviors and consequences (sanctions) of not following a norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to adapt • 45-60 minutes per group discussion • Basic skills for facilitation • Content easy to analyze
<i>Problem Tree Analysis</i>	Participatory group diagramming, discussion and analysis of root causes	Same as above (the 5 Whys), but this exercise can identify both social and non-social causes of behavior in more specificity in real-time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to adapt • 30-45 minutes per group discussion • Basic skills for facilitation • Content easy to analyze
<i>Vignettes (Short Stories)</i>	Participatory group discussions of semi-structured open-ended stories	Same as above (the 5 Whys and the Problem Tree), but this activity can also reveal more context and nuanced analysis with good probing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderately easy to adapt if the team knows the communities; more difficult if not • 45-60 minutes per group discussion • Moderate skills for facilitation • Most complex to analyze given open-ended discussion script

Phase 1: Activity 4

EXAMPLE: FIVE WHYS

SNET PAGE 37

- Why don't married, adolescent girls seek reproductive health services?
 - Girls are afraid to visit a clinic; Girls can't afford services
- Why are girls afraid of visiting a clinic?
 - Harassment on transportation; Mother in law will judge; Belief women shouldn't go alone
- Why will the mother-in-law judge?
 - X, Y, Z ...
- Why?
 - A, B, C ...
- Why?
 - D, E, F ...

Phase 1: Activity 4

EXAMPLE: VIGNETTES

SNET PAGES 42 & 69

Claudine and her younger brother Paul attend the local school. They both work hard at their studies and get very good grades. Claudine is looking forward to starting secondary school. But a month before the school year begins, Claudine's father loses his job. The money that Claudine's mother makes from selling food in the market is enough to pay school fees for only one child. Claudine's parents decide to pay for Paul's school fees. They say that, as a boy, his education is more important because he will have to get a job and provide for his family. Plus, Claudine's mother can use the extra help at home.

- Q1: How many people in this community do you think agree with Claudine's parents that it is more important for boys to be educated than girls? (most/many/some/few)
- Q2: Who do you think benefits most from sending boys to school instead of girls?
- Q3: Do you think some people in your community have this expectation more than others? Who? Why?

Phase 1: Activity 1

PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS: IDENTIFY ROOT CAUSES OF BEHAVIOR OF INTEREST

SNET PAGE 15

- Six groups - three behaviors/problems: 1. unpaid care; 2. GBV; 3. ASRH
 - Two leaders needed: one to fill in tree based on team's ideas; one to report back after activity
- Under the tree (roots), **list all factors that may influence this behavior.** These will be a multiple levels: individual reasons (psychology/biology), social norms, community resources (money, health centers, infrastructure), economic (local/global), macro (civil conflict, political), etc.
 - You may also wish to do the 'Five Whys' as you list reasons

Phase 1:

Activity 1

PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS: IDENTIFY ROOT CAUSES OF BEHAVIOR OF INTEREST

- When done, highlight the root causes that are related to **social norms**
- Next, focus on just the highlighted social norms-related factors.
 - Discuss the **types of norms** that may be at play:
 - Descriptive norms: This behavior is done because other people do it.
 - Injunctive norms: This behavior is done because other people expect me to do it.
- Next, complete the sanctions/rewards box.
 - What are the **benefits to following the norm** (rewards)?
 - What are the **consequences of not following the norm** (sanctions)?

Group Share-out and Expert Panel Feedback

DISCUSSION

1. Small-group share back (by behavior) – please list norms identified in chat. Group leaders provide any clarifications (5 minutes per behavior)
2. Questions to explore as a large group:
 - What was the most illuminating part of this activity?
 - What parts of the Problem Tree exercise do you think would be most challenging to implement in a group?
 - Were there any social norms terms or concepts that were confusing/difficult?
 - What are your thoughts on how best to describe the difference between social norms and other root causes (e.g., physical, economic, or structural barriers)?

Identifying Reference Groups

KEY TERMS

Reference Groups

Definition: People whose opinions matter to me (for a particular behavior or context); People who reward or punish me for my behavior

Example: My mother and aunties got married before they finished school and tell me I should also. But my friends would be disappointed in me if I leave school to marry.

PHASE 2: ACTIVITY 1

ADAPT 'MY SOCIAL NETWORKS' EXERCISE MAIN POPULATION GROUPS & BEHAVIORS

Purpose: Create a series of interview questions designed to learn which people comprise the Main Population's Reference Groups – the people who provide guidance, information, advice or support on a specific issue related to the behavior of interest

PHASE 2: ACTIVITY 1

ADAPT 'MY SOCIAL NETWORKS' EXERCISE MAIN POPULATION GROUPS & BEHAVIORS

Develop a set of questions for the behavior to be explored. Questions seek to understand:

1. who people trust to talk about an issue;
2. who people receive advice and assistance from;
3. who they seek advice from;
4. who actually gives them advice; and
5. who supports them in other ways (financial, material, emotional, etc.)

These are known as 'speed interviews' (only 5-10 min per interview)

MENTI POLL

If you or a friend experienced gender-based violence, who would you turn to for help or support?

- *Submit your response using the link in the chat box:*

<https://www.menti.com/hhbgwp185k>

- *Or use your smart phone camera to scan this QR code:*



TOOL

Guidance about the 'My Social Networks' Exercise and the approach used to conduct it. This will need to be adapted to your context, but it provides an outline to work from.

'My Social Networks' Exercise

Purpose: Learn which people are influential (part of a person's Reference Group) and provide guidance, information, advice or support on a specific issue related to the behavior of interest

Use with: Main Population Group(s)

Time: 5-10 minutes per interview

Mode: One-on-one interview

Resources: Interview Guide (which includes consent), information recording form, pens/pencils

'My Social Networks' General Approach

1. Set up a good place to conduct interviews, ensuring that the location is somewhere close to where other participants are waiting, but far enough away to ensure others do not hear the interview.
2. Invite, one at a time, a participant to sit next to you.
3. Conduct the speed interviews, using your interview guide and the information recording form.
4. Thank the participant and call the next participant to the interview area.

Source: Adapted from Social Networks and Health, Valente, 2010.

Wrap-Up: Final Q&A