
MODULE 11

Gender Expectations and Norms

11 Gender Expectations and Norms

What Is in This Module?

This module opens with an icebreaker that helps participants explore personal values related to gender norms and inequalities. The module then examines, through an initial participatory activity, the gender norms and inequalities people face, following up with a review of key concepts. The module includes a structured discussion to directly identify the links between gender norms, inequalities, and HIV, and concludes with a brief reflection on how the module can be put into action.

Although it can stand alone, the gender expectations and norms module would ideally be given in close conjunction with modules on gender and sexual diversity, sexual health, and HIV and human rights.

OBJECTIVES	By the end of this module, participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Define and explain the differences between gender and sex▪ Explain the social expectations for men and women▪ Explain how social expectations may limit men's and women's ability to develop and maintain good health and well-being
TIME	3 hours 20 minutes
ACTIVITY OVERVIEW	<p>11.1 Vote with Your Feet (Values Clarification and Energiser) (20 minutes)</p> <p>11.2 Act like a Man/Act like a Woman (1 hour, 15 minutes)</p> <p>11.3 Structured Discussion: Links Between Gender Norms and Inequalities and Positive Health, Dignity, and Prevention (PHDP) (1 hour)</p> <p>11.4 Key Messages, How to Put this Module into Action, and Wrap-up (45 minutes)</p>
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Posted signs with agree/disagree▪ Two to three "Vote with Your Feet" statements (see Activity 11.1, Step 2)▪ Flipchart paper▪ Markers <p>Handouts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Key Messages—Gender Expectations and Norms<input type="checkbox"/> Putting Learning into Action—How Can I Use What We've Done? Gender Expectations and Norms

Activity 11.1 Vote with Your Feet (Values Clarification and Energizer)¹

Adapted from the USAID Interagency Gender Working Group's "Vote with your Feet."

OBJECTIVES	By the end of this activity, participants should be able to talk about their attitudes and values related to gender.
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¹ USAID InterAgency Gender Working Group. n.d. *Vote with Your Feet*. Available at: <http://www.igwg.org/training/SettingTheStage/VoteWithYourFeet.aspx>.

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TIME	20 minutes
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Posted signs with agree/disagree (on either side of the room) ▪ Two to three “Vote with Your Feet” statements (see Step 2)
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the group to stand in the centre of the room. Explain that you are going to call out a statement. Tell the participants to go to the side of the room which says ‘agree’ if they agree with the statement or step to the other side of the room if they disagree. 2. Call out the first statement. Repeat it to ensure that everyone heard it. After everyone indicates whether they agree or not, ask two or three participants from each side to explain why they voted the way they did. <p>Possible statements (choose two to three):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Women are naturally better parents than men.” ▪ “Sex is more important to men than to women.” ▪ “It is easier to be a man than a woman.” ▪ “People who go against expectations for being a man or a woman experience more internal stigma.” ▪ “Women’s socialisation makes them more likely to engage in self-care than men.” ▪ “HIV-positive women are more accepted and supported than HIV-positive men.” ▪ “The freedom to express one’s sexuality openly is key to contributing fully to society.” 3. Facilitate a brief discussion about their reasons. Read up to three statements. 4. Debrief the activity by asking the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How did it feel to do this exercise? ▪ What struck you? ▪ What did you learn? ▪ How does what you learned apply to working as leaders in our communities? 5. If not mentioned, offer the following additional points for consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Even though we may be familiar with the different expectations and opportunities for men and women, we likely all have deeply ingrained (and varying) assumptions. ▪ Being able to reflect on our assumptions critically is important for our own health and relationships, and for our ability to work with/for our peers. ▪ Also, as we will discuss in more depth later, being able to help participants listen to each other and to different opinions is an important skill for facilitating discussions about gender and sexuality.

Activity 11.2 Act Like a Man/Act Like a Woman²

Adapted from the USAID Interagency Gender Working Group’s “Act Like a Man, Act Like a Woman.”

OBJECTIVES	<p>By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the social expectations for men and women ▪ Explain how social expectations may limit men’s and women’s ability to develop and
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² USAID InterAgency Gender Working Group. n.d. *Act Like a Man, Act Like a Woman*. Available at: <http://www.igwg.org/training/ExpositoryActivities/ActLikeAManActLikeAWoman.aspx>.

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	maintain good health and well-being
TIME	1 hour, 15 minutes
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flipchart paper ▪ Markers
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants if they have ever been told to 'act like a man' or 'act like a woman' based on their gender. Ask them to share some experiences in which someone has said this or something similar to them. Why did the individual say this? How did it make the participant feel? 2. Tell the participants that the group is going to look more closely at these two phrases. Explain that by examining them, participants can begin to see how society can make it very difficult to be either male or female. 3. In large letters, print on a piece of flipchart paper the phrase 'Act Like a Man.' Ask the participants to share their ideas about what this means. These are society's expectations of who men should be, how men should act, and what men should feel and say. Draw a box on the paper and write the meanings of 'act like a man' inside this box. Some responses might include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be tough. ▪ Do not cry. ▪ Shout at people. ▪ Show no emotions. ▪ Have sex with many women. <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Facilitator Note: <i>If it is not mentioned, prompt participants to think about expectations regarding who men are supposed to be attracted to sexually and romantically.</i></p> </div> 4. Then ask, "What are behaviours that are outside of the box? And what names are men called if they act outside the box?" Take a few responses and record them. 5. Once you have brainstormed your list, initiate a discussion by asking the following questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Can it be limiting for a man to be expected to behave 'inside the box'? Why? b. Which emotions are men not allowed to express? c. How can 'acting like a man' affect a man's relationship with his partner(s)? How about his children? d. How can social norms and expectations to 'act like a man' have a negative impact on men's health? How about on dignity and prevention? e. How do these expectations link to stigma and discrimination? f. Can men actually live outside the box? Is it possible for men to challenge and change existing gender roles? g. What are the consequences of acting outside the box? h. Is it different for men in rural versus urban areas? i. When is it OK for a man to live outside the box? 6. Now, in large letters, print on a piece of flipchart paper the phrase 'Act Like a Woman.' Ask the participants to share their ideas about what this means. These are society's expectations of who women should be, how women should act, and what women should feel and say. Draw a box on the piece of paper and write the meanings of 'act like a

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woman' inside this box. Some responses may include the following:

- Be passive.
- Be the caretaker.
- Act sexy, but not too sexy.
- Be smart, but not too smart.
- Be quiet.

Facilitator Note: *If it is not mentioned, prompt participants to think about expectations regarding who women are supposed to be attracted to sexually and romantically.*

7. Then ask, "What are behaviours that are outside of the box? And what names are women called if they act outside the box?" Take a few responses and record them.
8. Once you have brainstormed your list, initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
 - a. Can it be limiting for a woman to be expected to behave 'inside the box'? Why?
 - b. What emotions are women not allowed to express?
 - c. How can 'acting like a woman' affect a woman's relationship with her partner(s)? How about her children?
 - d. How can social norms and expectations to 'act like a woman' have a negative impact on a woman's health? How about on dignity and prevention?
 - e. How do these expectations link to stigma and discrimination? How do they link to sexual and reproductive health?
 - f. Can women actually live outside the box? Is it possible for women to challenge and change existing gender roles?
 - g. What are the consequences of acting outside the box?
 - h. Is it different for women in rural versus urban areas?
 - i. When is it OK for a woman to live outside the box?

Activity 11.3 Structured Discussion: Links Between Gender Norms and Inequalities and Positive Health, Dignity, and Prevention (PHDP)

OBJECTIVES	By the end of this activity, participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the key gender norms that may limit PHDP in our lives ▪ Talk about actions to help change these
TIME	1 hour
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepared flipcharts (see Step 2) ▪ Flipchart paper ▪ Markers

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STEPS

CURRENT HARMFUL EXPECTATIONS	HOW THESE EXPECTATIONS LIMIT POSITIVE HEALTH, DIGNITY, AND PREVENTION	ALTERNATIVE EXPECTATIONS AND MESSAGES
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1. Explain that the group should now focus on how specific expectations—those expectations

Prepared Flipcharts (for each group)

In your small group

1. Please identify two to three key expectations that limit positive health, positive dignity, and positive prevention.
2. Please discuss and fill out the following grid with your results.

that define a 'box' and whether a person is inside or outside of it—relate to positive health, dignity, and prevention. In particular, we want to consider what harmful expectations of men and women can limit their respective abilities to realise PHDP, and what helpful expectations of women and men can lead to greater PHDP.

2. Tell participants that they will work in four small groups to explore these links (note that the exact number of groups will depend on the number of participants). Explain that half of the groups will focus on women and half of the groups will focus on men. Review the group work assignment, pointing to the flipchart that each group will receive.

Expectations of Being a Man (or Being a Woman)

CURRENT HARMFUL EXPECTATIONS	HOW THESE EXPECTATIONS LIMIT POSITIVE HEALTH, DIGNITY, AND PREVENTION	ALTERNATIVE EXPECTATIONS AND MESSAGES

Allow 15 minutes for group work. Explain that the groups should be looking for highlights. Some examples from previous workshops include the following:

CURRENT HARMFUL EXPECTATIONS	HOW THESE EXPECTATIONS LIMIT POSITIVE HEALTH, DIGNITY, AND PREVENTION	ALTERNATIVE EXPECTATIONS AND MESSAGES
<p>For Women</p> <p>Women have to be 'less than' men.</p> <p>Women are expected to act quietly and be submissive.</p> <p>Women are expected to be caregivers to their family, young and old.</p>	<p>Limit women's ability to develop their full potential.</p> <p>Limit women's access to healthcare services because they are taking care of others or expected to get permission from men.</p>	<p>Women have the same human rights as anyone—and should be able to develop their full potential.</p> <p>Women should be able to seek out healthcare whenever they feel they need it. Men should be willing to take on other responsibilities to support the health and well-being of their partners.</p>

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<p>For Men</p> <p>Men cannot show emotions.</p> <p>Men must always be in control and not be 'weak.'</p> <p>Assumed to be gay if outside of the box.</p>	<p>Psychological challenges.</p> <p>Men do not seek healthcare.</p> <p>Hard to adopt healthier, alternative ways of behaving for all men.</p>	<p>It is important for men to express emotions.</p> <p>Seeking healthcare and taking care of oneself are parts of being a healthy man.</p> <p>The 'box' limits all men. All men will be healthier and stronger if we let men express the full range of who they are.</p>
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3. Have each group present their results. When all groups have finished, facilitate a discussion asking the following:
 - a. What stands out?
 - b. What are the similarities and differences between women and men?
 - c. Are there particular types of norms or expectations that appear to be most important to challenge? Which ones? Why?
 - d. What are the key messages related to these expectations that we think will help promote greater positive health, dignity, and prevention?

How can we put these into practice in our own lives? In our communities? In our advocacy for people living with HIV?
4. Close the activity by summarising some of the discussion and sharing any final thoughts. A final comment and question could be as follows:

The roles of men and women are changing in our society. It has slowly become less difficult to step outside of the box. Still, it is hard for men and women to live outside of these boxes—and some aspects of 'living inside the box' can profoundly limit options for positive health, dignity, and prevention.

 - What would make it easier for men and women to live outside of the boxes?
 - What can we do to try to make it easier for men and women to live outside of boxes?
5. Close the activity, thanking participants for their participation. Transition to the next activity.

Activity 11.4 Key Messages, How to Put This Module into Action, and Wrap-up

OBJECTIVES	<p>By the end of this activity, participants should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recall the key issues and lessons on gender ▪ Develop a plan of action for using the information they have learned in their everyday lives
TIME	45 minutes
MATERIALS	<p>Handouts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key Messages—Gender Expectations and Norms ▪ Putting Learning into Action: How Can I Use What We've Done? Gender Expectations and Norms

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STEPS

Review of Key Messages

1. Explain that we have finished Module 11: Gender Expectations and Norms.
2. Invite participants to share any further comments or reflections that they have at this time.
3. Explain that the group will conclude this module by reflecting on key take-away messages.
4. Ask participants to take three minutes to discuss with a partner, "What are your key lessons about gender?" Ask participants to note their responses so they can share them out loud.
5. After three minutes, ask for responses to people's discussions. Record responses on a large flipchart.
6. Distribute the handout Key Messages—Gender Expectations and Norms. Ask one person to read them aloud.
7. Facilitate a brief discussion, recognising key messages already identified by participants, highlighting any new ones, and clarifying any questions. Invite participants to include their additional responses on the key messages handout for their own future reference.

How to Put This Module into Action

1. Distribute the handout Putting Learning into Action: How Can I Use What We've Done? Gender Expectations and Norms.
2. Ask people to complete it individually.
3. Ask select people to volunteer to share what they wrote.

Wrap-up

Thank participants for their participation.

Handout: Key Messages—Gender Expectations and Norms

1. In every society, gender expectations and gender roles influence aspects of both men’s and women’s lives, including our health and sexual lives.
2. Gender expectations and roles shape the lives of all people, including individuals of all gender identities and sexual orientations.
3. Gender expectations that uphold rigid ideas of what it means to be a man or a woman can:
 - a. Increase vulnerability to HIV
 - b. Limit access to healthcare and prevention options
 - c. Fuel stigma and discrimination against those who live outside of these norms
 - b. Undermine our ability to live with dignity and realise our human rights
4. Although there are variations, most gender expectations give more power and rights to men compared to women, and to men and women who are in heterosexual relationships rather than those in same-sex relationships. In other words, many gender expectations maintain inequalities.
5. Gender expectations and roles are learned. They change and vary across different cultures and over time. We can take action to change harmful expectations and to promote alternative, more positive norms.
6. Gender equality is fundamental to achieving positive health, dignity, and prevention for everyone.

Additional key messages or lessons include the following (please fill in, based on your own reflections and those of others):

Handout: Putting Learning into Action: How Can I Use What We've Done?

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1. How can I use information from this module in my own personal life? Please list.

2. How might I want to share information from this module with others? (For example, in support groups, at work, in advocacy with healthcare providers, or ...)

- a. With whom would I want to share? Please list.

- b. For each person or group with whom I would like to share, please consider:

PERSON 1 OR GROUP 1: _____

1. What do I want to share?
2. How will I share the information? (For example, conversation, presentation, use of methods or materials from the curriculum, or ...)
3. If I am going to use methods or materials from the activities I've just done, what other preparation or adaptation might I need to consider?

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PERSON 2 OR GROUP 2: _____

1. What do I want to share?
2. How will I share the information? (For example, conversation, presentation, use of methods or materials from the curriculum, or ...)
3. If I am going to use methods or materials from the activities I've just done, what other preparation or adaptation might I need to consider?

PERSON 3 OR GROUP 3: _____

1. What do I want to share?
 2. How will I share the information? (For example, conversation, presentation, use of methods or materials from the curriculum, or ...)
 3. If I am going to use methods or materials from the activities I've just done, what other preparation or adaptation might I need to consider?
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3. What additional support or information do I want? How can I get it?