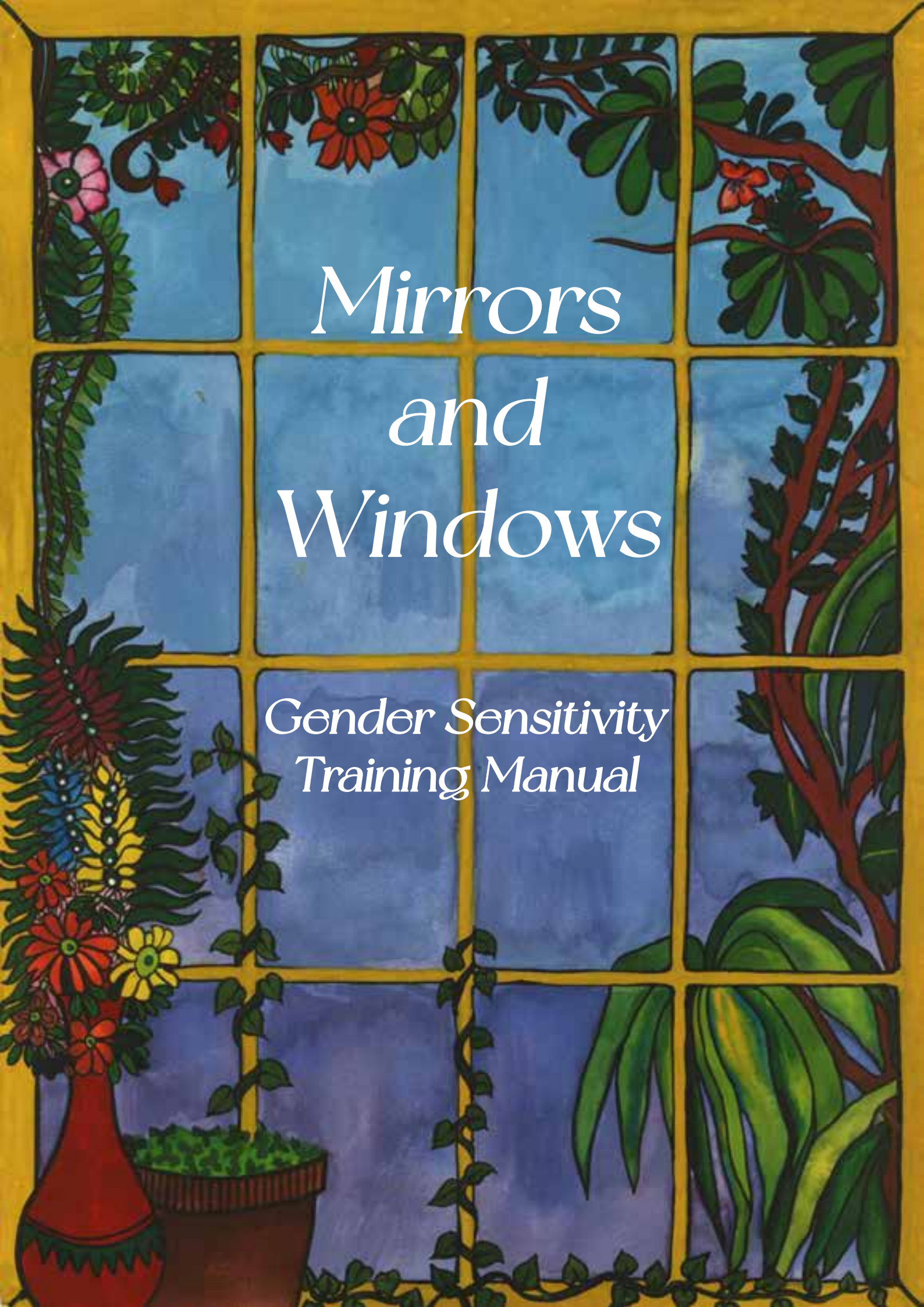


Mirrors and Windows

Gender Sensitivity Training Manual

Mirrors and Windows: Gender Sensitivity Training Manual

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Mirrors and Windows: Gender Sensitivity Training Manual

Mirrors and Windows: Gender Sensitivity Training Manual is part of a collaborative project titled 'Articulating Women: Interrogating Intersectionality: Empowering Women Through Critical Engagements' funded by Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK. (*https://empowering-women.net/)*

The activities of the manual mirror situations that men and women inhabit across the world. Guided discussions, reflections, and brainstorming will lead the participants towards windows that can prompt a more equitable world. Guiding principle of the manual is to enable a meaningful discussion to understand the reasons that sustain the equations between genders and look for possibilities to bring in the desirable change.

Gender awareness and sensitivity demand open mindedness and emotional intelligence, not just intellectual curiosity or political will. However strongly one would want a revolution to happen the reality is that change can happen with concerted effort. The manual is about bringing in that attitude of change, facilitating individuals who would like to act upon the intention to bring in change.



Acknowledgements

The team would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding the project. Without the financial support, it would not have been possible to conduct the relevant research for the manual.

We appreciate the commitment and hard work that Ms. Bhumika Sahani brought in to develop the activities for the manual. Her research skills and imagination have immensely contributed to the visualisation of the manual.

Ms. Aadishree Dixit, Ms. Ankita Gambhir, Ms. Hyma Francis, Ms. Prachi Chitre, Ms. Stephy Noby, Ms. Surabhi Unni, and Mr. Vancouver Gracias L Shullaie have given permission to use their creative writing to develop activities. Their contribution has helped us to include the younger generation's voice to the debates on the gender equation.

Mr. Ankit Ravani, Ms. Aastha, Mr. Dhaivat Shah, and Ms. Sarasija Subramanian imagined the manual aesthetically making it more appealing and interactive. It was a pleasure to work with them.



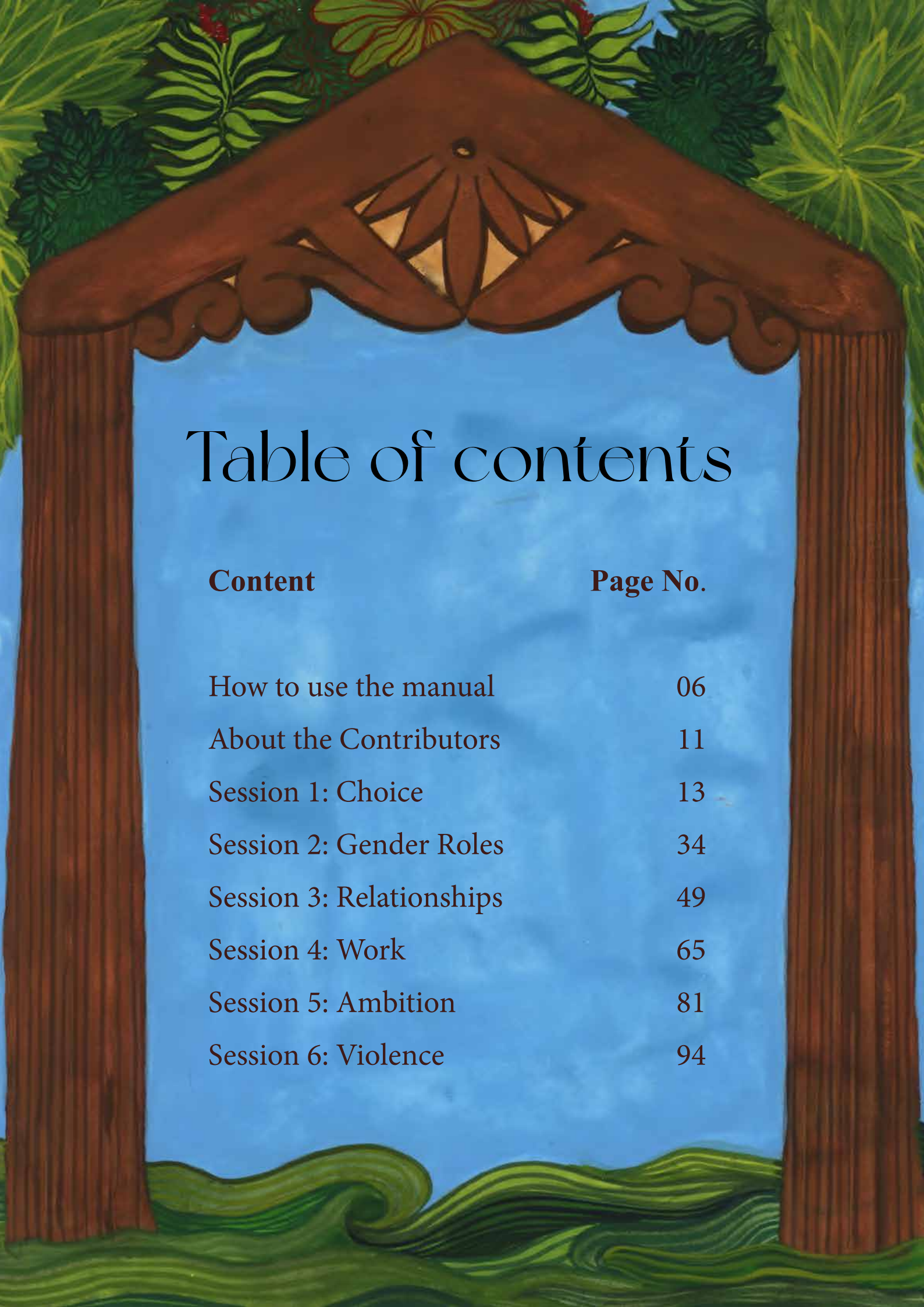


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How to use the manual:

This manual is compiled with the primary objective of educating the participants and making them aware of the importance of using a gender lens in their everyday life, examining the ways in which socially defined male and female identities impact perception, policy, and actions. With a focus on critical thinking, questioning and self-reflection, the activities set out in this manual seek to explore the intersectionalities between various social identities and realities for women. These activities question gender inequity, question the 'normal' and 'accepted' as well as question the norms, culture, customs and traditions of our society. They do so to begin creating a more sensitive and just world for women. Issues of disparity, injustice, violence and disempowerment are not just women's issues but reflect concerns that affect the society as a whole. This manual attempts to create a safe space for discussion, questioning, thinking, and reflecting in the hope that these will then be converted into more equitable practices.

The manual is divided into 6 sessions -

- Session 1 - Choice
- Session 2 - Gender roles
- Session 3 - Relationships
- Session 4 - Work
- Session 5 - Ambition
- Session 6 - Violence

To keep sessions engaging, each provides a range of resources: visual aids, documentaries and movies, poems, short stories, and games. These become the basis for brainstorming and discussions. Each session is about 2-3 hours long. The facilitator may run all six sessions over 2-3 days or select appropriate activities related to the theme of a particular session; this gives them the freedom to use the manual in ways best suited to their circumstances and to the make-up of their group.



What sets this manual apart:

- This manual is designed for a heterogeneous audience. Participants can range from young adolescents to adults. The activities can be used for middle and high school students, college students, working professionals, trainers, teachers. The activities are appropriate for people of all genders.

- The examples, facilitating aids, and activities have been chosen to promote discussion within a range of different cultural, social, and national contexts.

- The personal experience of undergraduate students, as expressed in their poems and short stories, are incorporated in this manual. These very personal, and at times emotive, observations enable discussion to move from the specific to the more general, local to global, personal to political.

- The connections between personal experiences and larger social and political structures have been foregrounded. The personal is always political.

- The sources for particular items in the resource base have been provided for those wishing to follow-up and do further research.



Theoretical framework:

In this manual, theory is actualised in practice through the various activities in the sessions. Here are the theoretical underpinnings for this module -

Feminist perspective - While designing this module, a conscious effort has been made to employ a feminist approach exploring the ground where gender, caste, race, ethnic heritage, class, age, and economic status intersect in ways that determine women's social realities. Participants are asked to reflect upon how different components of identity, in different contexts, combine to create unique forms of discrimination and oppression for a woman. The sessions encourage introspection as participants reflect upon the impact of gender roles and power dynamics in both the private and public domains as women define or are defined by their participation and choices or by those of others.

Ecological perspective - This perspective looks at an individual's interactions within different social systems and institutions. Human beings are constantly creating, restructuring, and adapting to the institutions and social systems around them within their families, schools, communities, and other groups and institutions to which they belong. According to this approach, sub-systems move from the individual's most immediate environment to a larger context. Using this principle, the thematic layout of the module looks as follows:

Thematic Layout of Module

Personal / Micro	Mezzo	Social / Macro
Choice	Family	Women and Work
Ambition	Relationships	Sexual Abuse
Self – sufficiency	Marriage	Violence
	Motherhood and Choice	Victim Blaming
	Gender Roles	

Multi-level and intersecting forms of discrimination have always existed but have been more acknowledged only in recent decades. Age, socioeconomic status, racial or ethnic background, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, citizenship, status, health, and disability can detrimentally influence women's lived experience. Poverty, conflict and war can exacerbate or otherwise influence the nature of discrimination faced by women.

> *"When men leave their villages for better-paid jobs in cities or abroad, women get saddled with the farm work as well as their domestic chores. When bloated state enterprises "rationalise" their workforces, women get laid off before male "heads of household." When sweatshops seek underpaid casual labour, women are the first to be recruited. When inflation bids up dowries and social pressures depress birth rates, girl babies get aborted or murdered in their cribs to make way for male heirs. When the resulting skew in the sex ratio makes for a shortage of marriageable women, a black market arises for kidnapped brides."*

This excerpt from the magazine Far Eastern Economic Review[1] captures the discrimination and exploitation faced by women. Processes of political and economic transformation that have changed the face of the world over the past decades have had a profound impact on the lives of women. Many changes have been positive. Some, however, have strengthened the bonds of subordination and discrimination against women, restricting their enjoyment of economic and social rights.[2]

This manual facilitates an exploration of the multifaceted discrimination faced by women.

1. Kaye, Lincoln. "To Bear Any Burden: Asia's Women Pay a Disproportionately High Price for the Region's Economic Boom." Far Eastern Economic Review, vol. 158, 1997, pp. 42–43.

2. http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/IHRIP/circle/modules/module4.htm#_edn1

Note to the facilitator:

It is important that the facilitators using this manual go over the sessions and various activities before using them with a group, selecting and adapting activities for the groups involved. Some activities may not be suited for middle-school children; some may not be relevant to a group of community workers. You are the best judge!

Additionally, a good understanding of the prevalent gender role expectations and consequent forms of discrimination within the participant's community will enable culturally specific examples and will assist the facilitator in moderating discussions and making the activities more relatable. These sessions do not have ice-breakers and energisers incorporated because of the diversity of potential participant groups, but facilitators are encouraged to use energisers as appropriate. Since the issues dealt with in each session encourage participants to be sensitive and empathetic, group members should have a rapport that enables them to share their personal experiences.

These sessions require participants to take a brave step in questioning the foundations of their upbringing, culture, education system, and social environment. Such deep questioning takes time and commitment. It is unlikely, therefore, that participants will immediately be sensitised or transformed. What one can hope is that these sessions make participants uncomfortable enough to make them think and question, talk and ask, slowly encouraging a shift in their thinking. The ultimate objective is to start a conversation, and to keep it going.

The Scope of the Manual:

As written, these sessions cater largely to an urban population. Participants residing in slums, villages or rural settings may find it harder to relate to the poems, stories and some of the activities.

This manual is not gender-inclusive. It does not talk about the experiences of non-binary people whose gender identities do not align with their biologically defined sex. A conscious decision was taken to keep the focus on women's experiences of discrimination.

We have made an attempt to talk about as many pressing issues as possible in this module, but the sessions are necessarily selective in terms of the issues faced by women.



About the Contributors:

Aadishree Dixit: Aadishree Dixit holds a BA in Philosophy from Fergusson College, Pune and an MA in English with Communication Studies from CHRIST (Deemed to be University). She has worked as a content writer and editor, but zines are her favorite medium of expression. Her areas of interest include learning, creativity, language, and decision making. She is currently pursuing an MSc. in Cognitive Science from IIT Gandhinagar.

Ankita Gambhir: Ankita Gambhir is a Communication Officer by profession, and a social change enthusiast at heart. Working with people is her passion, and believes in using her capacities to create exciting content to evoke empathy and awareness, and conditions for engagement through large scale interventions. Ankita was associated as an Assistant Researcher with The Change Designers, a social change communication organisation.

Hyma Francis: Hyma Francis was born and brought up in Kerala. She has a Masters degree in English with Communication studies from CHRIST, Bangalore. She is currently working as a Learning Developer in an MNC in Bangalore. Typically, very reserved, and shy in nature, she is an occasional writer who finds the exercise highly cathartic.

Prachi Chitre: Prachi Chitre, a graduate of Christ University (Class of 2019) is an Assistant Professor, writer, artist and journalist. Currently pursuing a Doctorate from the United States, her specialty is Early Modern Anglo-Italian Renaissance Studies. Prachi has always been actively interested in the AHRC. Prior to pursuing her doctoral degree, she was collaborating part-time with Kingston University (London) and their TECHNE AHRC awards. She is actively involved with international research organizations in London, Baltimore and Washington D.C that are conducting research in her areas of specialization.

Stephy Noby: Stephy is currently pursuing her Masters in English with Communication Studies at Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore. She completed her Bachelors of Arts in Theatre Studies, English and Psychology. She is a theatre enthusiast with a special interest in Script Writing and Direction. She has written and directed plays during her undergraduate years. Since childhood, she has always loved performing on stage; be it acting, anchoring or delivering a speech. Her interest in script writing actually stems from her love for writing poetry and short stories. I look forward to writing works that instil a moment of thought in the minds of the readers.

Surabhi Unni: She is 24 years old, and her pronouns are she/her. She lived in Bangalore all her life, and deeply loves the city, almost as much as she loves writing about it. She has done her Bachelor's and Master's



in English from Christ. She is currently working as a script-writer for Grades 1-3 at Byju's. She would have never thought that her tendency and ability to weave stories about everything would culminate into a job that demanded her to be as creative as she possibly could be. For as long as she can remember, she has always loved to write about the real, the imagined, and the impossible. This particular piece was born on a night when she felt a little more deeply and strongly about women, and the struggles they go through than she does every other passing second of every day. Although she cannot say she can ever truly empathize with the characters in her works, she knows that all women across the world share a similar burden, a similar weight of struggles, pains, and expectations. This is all she tries to put forward through her writing

Vancouver Gracias L Shullaie: Vancouver Shullaie is a poet from Shillong, India whose penchant for poetry and the arts started from a young age. Shullai is the author of How To Love A Broken Man - a collection of sixty poems. In the poem 'Be Woman' written in 2018, Shullaie brings in a thread of gender equality. It is not so much a poem about uplifting one gender and neglecting another, rather an encouragement of a coexistence to celebrate the strengths and gently accept the weaknesses of each gender.



SESSION 1

CHOICE



Freedom of choice describes an individual's opportunity and agency to make a decision or perform an action. To uphold this principle, globally, attempts[3] have been made to eradicate the gender discrimination that has been continuing from time immemorial.

In the past, the concept of human rights did not take account of women's lives and the fact that women routinely faced violence, discrimination and oppression. When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948, there was considerable discussion about the use of the term "all men" rather than a gender-neutral term. The Declaration was eventually adopted using the terms "all human beings" and "everyone" in order to leave no doubt that the Universal Declaration was intended for everyone, men and women alike. In addition to that, Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, was adopted in 1967, which states that discrimination against women is an offence against human dignity and calls on member countries to "abolish existing laws, customs, regulations and practices which are discriminatory against women, and to establish adequate legal protection for equal rights of men and women."

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the General Assembly in 1979. This Convention covers both civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights (including rights to education, work, health and financial credit). The Convention also pays specific attention to institutions where there are risks to women's full enjoyment of their human rights; for example, in rural settings, specific instances of exploitation like trafficking are noted as are abuses that take place within marriage and the family.
The Convention defines discrimination as encompassing any difference in treatment on the grounds of sex which:

- Intentionally or unintentionally disadvantages women;
- Prevents society as a whole from recognizing women's rights in both the private and the public spheres;
- Prevents women from exercising their human rights and the fundamental freedoms to which they are entitled.

Non-discrimination and equality between women and men are central principles of human rights law. It is with these global commitments in mind that we engage with the theme of 'choice' in this session, and reflect upon how far (or not) have we come toward achieving fundamental freedoms with respect to choice.

3.Women Rights Are Human Rights. 14th ed., United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner,2014,ohchr.org,www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/WHRD/WomenRightsAreHR.pdf.



Objectives

- To make participants reflect upon the forms of inequalities existing in the society around them
- To explore the predicament of choice in the context of gender
- To delve into their own and others' experience of 'choice'



Outcomes

- Participants will recognize and acknowledge the struggles of a girl/ woman and the restricted freedom of choice she might experience.
- Participants will be encouraged to reflect upon their and others' experience of freedom to choose and to make a decision.
- By the end of the session, the participants will be able to identify how gender and other social factors play a role in shaping that experience for each person.



Resources

1. Identity placards
2. Handout with the printout of the poems for all the participants
3. Chart papers
4. Sketch pens/Markers
5. Computer or system to play the video
6. Projector
7. Speakers



Duration
165 minutes

- Activity 1
  Who wins the race? : 20 minutes
- Activity 2
  Poem : 60 minutes
- Activity 3
  Video : 15 minutes
- Activity 4
  Gender lens : 20 minutes
- Activity 5
  Beyond the veil : 50 minutes



Activity 1
Who wins the race?

(Adapted from – Aflatoun
Social and Financial education for children, 2016)

Duration – 20 minutes

Process

Each person will be asked to draw a placard from a bag. Placards will have the following roles written on them. Facilitators can include other roles to reflect the specific socio-cultural conditions and also help the participants to resonate with the role they enact –

- A girl from a village
- A boy who works in a garage
- 18 year old girl with a physical disability
- Pregnant lady
- A police officer
- An old man
- An orphan girl living with her uncle
- A housewife
- An administrator in the Government
- A boy studying in a private school
- A man working in an office
- A single mother
- A widower
- An auto driver
- Wife of an alcoholic
- A migrant worker's daughter
- A refugee woman

1. All participants will stand behind a line for a race. The end line will be at a distance depending on the space available.
2. Each person will have just one placard.
3. Each participant must remember the character they are playing while participating in the race. Any confusion about the character will be clarified by the facilitator.
4. A statement will be read out and the participants must judge whether the statement applies to their character. If yes, they will take a step forward. If they don't agree, they will not move.
5. This will continue until all statements are read out.

Statements

These are indicative statements. The facilitators can add specific statements to reflect the socio-cultural markers of the participants.

- Today I have money to buy food for my family
- I can decide for my family independently, without consulting the others
- At home, I can say what I think without any hesitation
- I can step out of home alone at night without any fear
- I have many friends
- I have finished my primary education
- I can complete my higher education
- Everybody respects me in my family and neighbourhood
- I can travel wherever I want
- I do not have any restrictions to go over to some places
- I am scared that someone might hurt me
- I am confident that I can make decisions about my future
- Even if I become an orphan, I don't have to worry about my everyday life.

Discuss on the following points after this game:

- Who won the race?
- Who lost the race? Why?
- What were some characteristics of those who won? Would it have been different if we changed some characteristics? If it was a widow rather than a widower, for example?
- Should there be a race like this in real life/society?



Facilitator's notes

Before beginning a discussion on gender inequality, participants should be made aware of multiple inequalities that exist. This activity will briefly introduce the participants to the prevalence of inequities in various forms – social, economic and cultural. Also, one might easily spot the divide between the poor and the rich, a person with disability and one without any and so on. However, the inequalities based on gender often go unnoticed and rather get accepted as a norm. This will set the stage for discussion that differences based on gender do hinder the overall growth for not only girls/women, but also boys/men.



Activity 2
Poem

Duration – 60 minutes

Process

Read aloud the following poem to the participants. Inform the group that questions will be taken up later. Be sure to read slowly so that all the participants can follow.
'Both', 'Mermaids', and 'Selkies' are written by Aadishree Dixit.

Group discussion for 25 minutes in smaller groups. Each group should be restricted to 4 members to facilitate participation

1. Divide the larger group into 2 or 3 smaller groups (depending on the size). Hand out chart papers to the groups and ask them to write their discussion points on it. Encourage the participants to look more deeply into the poem and to reflect on the underlying meaning.
2. After 10 minutes of discussion among themselves, ask the groups to present to the other groups.

Questions for Group 1 -
Who could the protagonist be?
What are her struggles in the poem? (Try and look beyond the poem)

Questions for Group 2 -
Where do you think she belongs? (Try and look beyond the poem)
What does the protagonist long and aspire for?

Questions for Group 3 -
What does she fear? (Try and look beyond the poem)
What can help her overcome her fear?
What hurdles does she recognise as standing in the way of her aspirations?

With the larger group, discuss the following questions – 15 minutes

- Would the story have been different if the protagonist was a male? What would be different in the story?
- Would there be similar struggles?
- Why might he have struggled to make a choice? What factors would he have been forced to consider?
- What choices might have brought opposition from his family or community? Why?

BOTH

Once upon a time, there was a girl with matches in her fists and a bonfitre where her heart should be.
Once upon a time, there was a girl who was told only to fall for the sea.

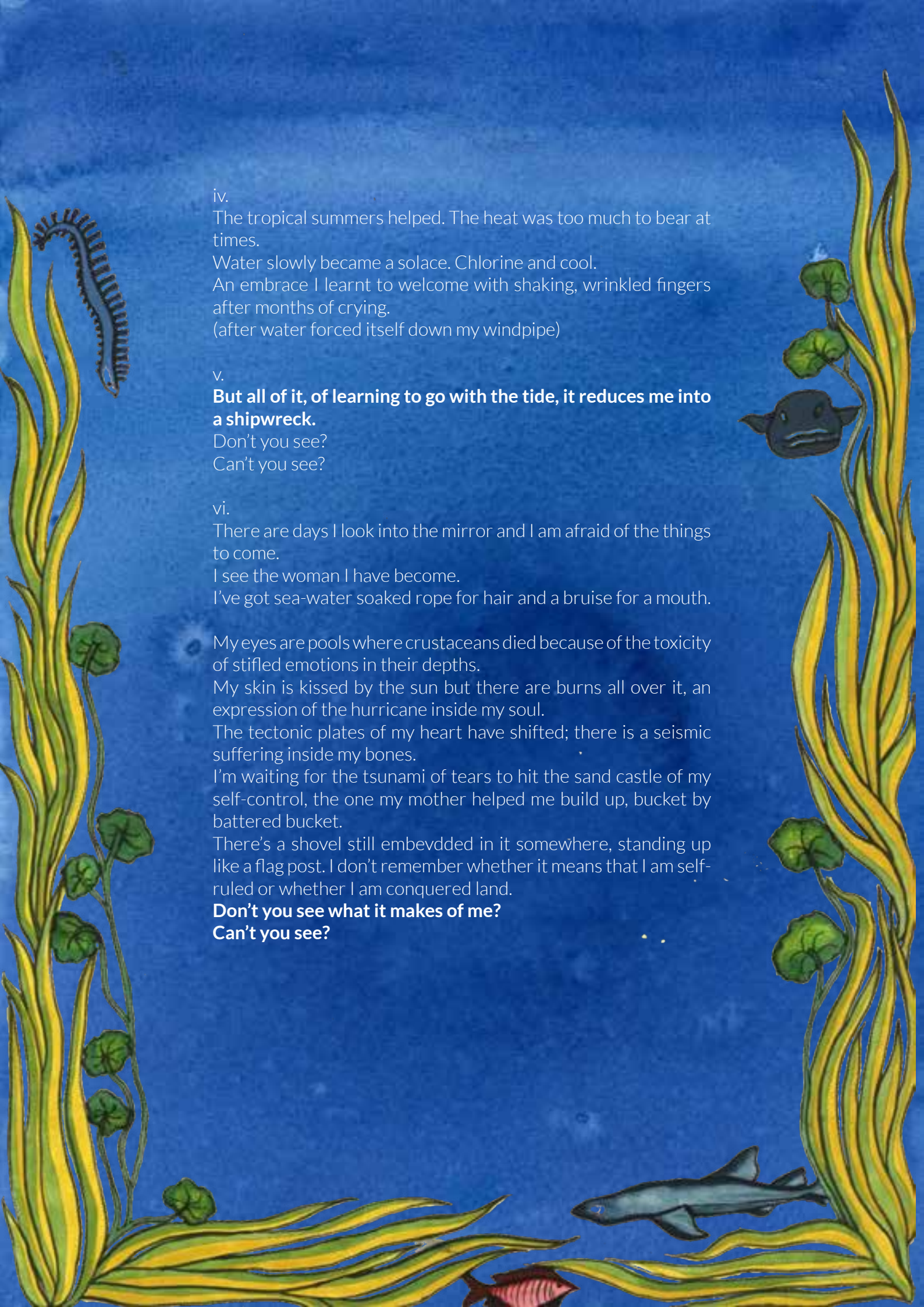
MERMAIDS

Some girls took to the water immediately.

i.
It took me an awfully long time to learn swimming. I don't really know why that was. Maybe it was because I was al ways a heavy girl. I had terribly heavy thoughts for someone so young. Or so they told me. All I had to do was let go. Stop fighting it.
Feel.
Fall.
Float.

ii.
Or maybe it was because floating made me fearful. The weightlessness that calmed others terrified me because that meant giving up control. That's what the seagull said anyway, from his height. He flew, he knew and he was revered for it.

iii.
I was thirteen when I learnt that people are not life jackets.
Especially girls who were my friends.
That fear of drowning made me weaker than the thought of giving up control did.
I also finally realized that hammerhead sharks cannot enter swimming pools. Pools were too small for them.
(And maybe, maybe too small for me.)



iv.
The tropical summers helped. The heat was too much to bear at times.
Water slowly became a solace. Chlorine and cool.
An embrace I learnt to welcome with shaking, wrinkled fingers after months of crying.
(after water forced itself down my windpipe)

v.
But all of it, of learning to go with the tide, it reduces me into a shipwreck.
Don't you see?
Can't you see?

vi.
There are days I look into the mirror and I am afraid of the things to come.
I see the woman I have become.
I've got sea-water soaked rope for hair and a bruise for a mouth.

My eyes are pools where crustaceans died because of the toxicity of stifled emotions in their depths.
My skin is kissed by the sun but there are burns all over it, an expression of the hurricane inside my soul.
The tectonic plates of my heart have shifted; there is a seismic suffering inside my bones.
I'm waiting for the tsunami of tears to hit the sand castle of my self-control, the one my mother helped me build up, bucket by battered bucket.
There's a shovel still embevdded in it somewhere, standing up like a flag post. I don't remember whether it means that I am self-ruled or whether I am conquered land.
Don't you see what it makes of me?
Can't you see?

vii.
The ocean might be beautiful and blue, but there is something about it that makes me sick to the stomach. I'm supposed to love the ocean, the salt, the washed-up shells.
But I don't.
I pretend I do. I smile. I lie. I walk barefoot on the beach.
I hide my pain when broken pieces of sea shell remind me that I do not belong here.

viii.
All the while, there's persistent voices in the air. Warning me that we've come from the sea, become what we are after years of mutation. But we belong to the sea and that one day, the sea will open its jaws and swallow us all.
And that is how I picture myself sometimes. Fishbone white. Body at the bottom, fodder for the sharks. My hair like stringy seaweed. Blurry vision. And so much blood.

ix.
To long for the fire is to burn.

The waves slap against the sand. Against my legs. Against every rational thought I've ever had. The sea makes me terrified at my own smallness. Makes me realize how fragile we are, with our lungs and nostrils.
The song of the sea plays in my ears. Salt and suffocation. Brine and Bones.
But I would have burned gladly, for there I would not have been alone.

x.
I pick up a conch shell as big as my fist and press it to my ear. The sea whispers assurances to me. Promises to keep me safe and inspired. Promises to carry my blood onward. Make me immortal through the generations that come after me.
The Sea glass is as colourful as my imagination. Made from broken shards and reshaped into something more beautiful than it ever used to be. It may take 20 years or 50. But the end result is worth a keepsake. A treasure to cherish forever. Like my forbidden memories.
A smile curls my salty lips. I press the shell to my cracked lower lip and kiss it.

SIRENS

For the girls who sang themselves hoarse and drowned themselves in their own sorrow.

xi.
I fear the sea and I crave it.
I crave the flames and I fear it.

Xii
The sea is a metaphor for the proper, the accepted.
And swimming is a metaphor for the falling in line, for staying where you are put.
The flames and the sea pull at me, claiming me.
I must choose, they say.

I can't be selfish, not so selfish to want both the warm and the cool.
(But I do)

SELKIES

There are girls in a far-off land who can seamlessly change from girl to seal and seal to girl again.
(And be accepted for being both.)
I wish I would ask the questions that keep me up at night.
Tell me, does the fear of someone burning your seal skin and trapping you in your human form not keep you forever paranoid?
Tell me, does having the thought of the sea being lost to you forever not torment you?
Would you miss the warmth of the hearth if you weren't welcome, if you were told you didn't belong there but in the depths of the cold ocean?
What would you choose?
Should you?
Must I?



Facilitator's notes

Encourage personal sharing; you can narrate an incident from your life. Consider an experience that will not reveal private details or malign any individual. Think of experiences that will not evoke emotional disturbance either to yourself or to the participants. Avoid very casual or gossipy language while narrating the experience. Inform participants of these parameters if they would like to narrate any experience. Be prepared to intervene if the sharing becomes too personal.

The facilitator should explore the intersectional dynamics that shape participant responses. Intersectionality recognises the ways in which different aspects of social and political identity overlap ("intersect") to create a complex dynamic of discrimination in which, for example, race interacts with gender and class to create a unique profile of social disadvantage. Explore - did people from the same gender share similar feelings? Did their family background make a difference? Did their caste or class make a difference? And so on.

The facilitator should acknowledge and promote a discussion of the ways in which patriarchy affects men and limits their choices in certain ways.

Activity 3
Video

Duration - 15 minutes

Watch the video:



"Anouk Bold is Beautiful: Pregnancy doesn't mean the end of the Career"
Duration of the video: 02:26
www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz5rAFAvqCs.

"Anouk Bold is Beautiful: Pregnancy doesn't mean the end of the Career"

A Summary

Duration of the video: 02:26

myntradotcom. "Anouk Bovld Is Beautiful: Pregnancy Doesn't Mean the End of the Career." YouTube, YouTube, 3 Dec. 2015
www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz5rAFAvqCs.

This video explores the preconceptions and prejudices that pregnant women face.

During a car ride back home from the office, Shaheen's co-worker Uma compliments her jacket. Uma also mentions how the jacket is nice enough to cover Shaheen's bump and this does not sit well with Shaheen. After a few minutes, Shaheen breaks the silence by asking if Uma has a problem with her 'bump' and if her pregnancy is the reason she lost her projects and promotion to another colleague at work. When Shaheen mentions all the hours she's put into the project, Uma brushes it off saying it's a management decision and apologises for not informing Shaheen sooner.

Shaheen complains that being pregnant has made others treat her as though she is handicapped and less equipped to handle clients. It angers her that her career potential is judged on her pregnancy rather than on the calibre of her work and her performances. Uma advises Shaheen to spend the year focusing on the baby and that she'll be considered for the promotion when she returns. Shaheen asks the cab driver to drop her off. When she gets out of the car, Shaheen admits that she knew about the management's decision and has decided to start a business of her own. When Uma emphasises that she's the best employee they have, Shaheen ends her trip by saying "[best employee they] had".

Facilitator's notes

Discuss the video with the group.

- How does a workforce/organisation look at a pregnant woman? How do you explain this perspective?
- Is it fair?
- Do you think a male employee will also face discrimination as a father?
- What did the wvwoman in the video choose? How do you foresee her future? Explain your response.
- Does this happen in our lives, where we have to alter our choices/options because of our gender?



Activity 4
Gender lens

(Adapted from : Gender equality in STEM – hosted on OpenLearn Create)

Duration – 20 minutes

Note
This activity needs to be adapted to the specific needs of particular participant groups. As presented, it is adapted to a group of high-school students. For a different group, the facilitator might have a similar discussion around the gendered perceptions of professions instead of subjects.

Process

Think of a gender lens as putting on spectacles. Out of one lens of the spectacles, you see the participation, needs, and realities of women. Out of the other lens, you see the participation, needs, and realities of men. Your sight or vision is the combination of what each eye sees.

Ask the group to put on their imaginary gender lens before starting the discussion.

Facilitator's notes

Introduce the concept of the gender lens and facilitate a group discussion around participants' subject choices and whether they feel that these are shaped by gender stereotypes, school/ classroom culture, and so on. What other factors influence an individual's choice of subjects?

Ask participants to consider whether and how boys and girls have different experiences of making subject choices.

Encourage questions from the participants and let their inputs guide the discussion.

Activity 5
Beyond the veil

Duration - 50 minutes

Process

- Distribute the printout of the poem to the participants; project the poem if a projector is available
- For the second part of the activity, the group will be divided into 4 smaller groups of 5 members for discussion.
- Allow the participants to read the poem silently and think for 5 minutes.

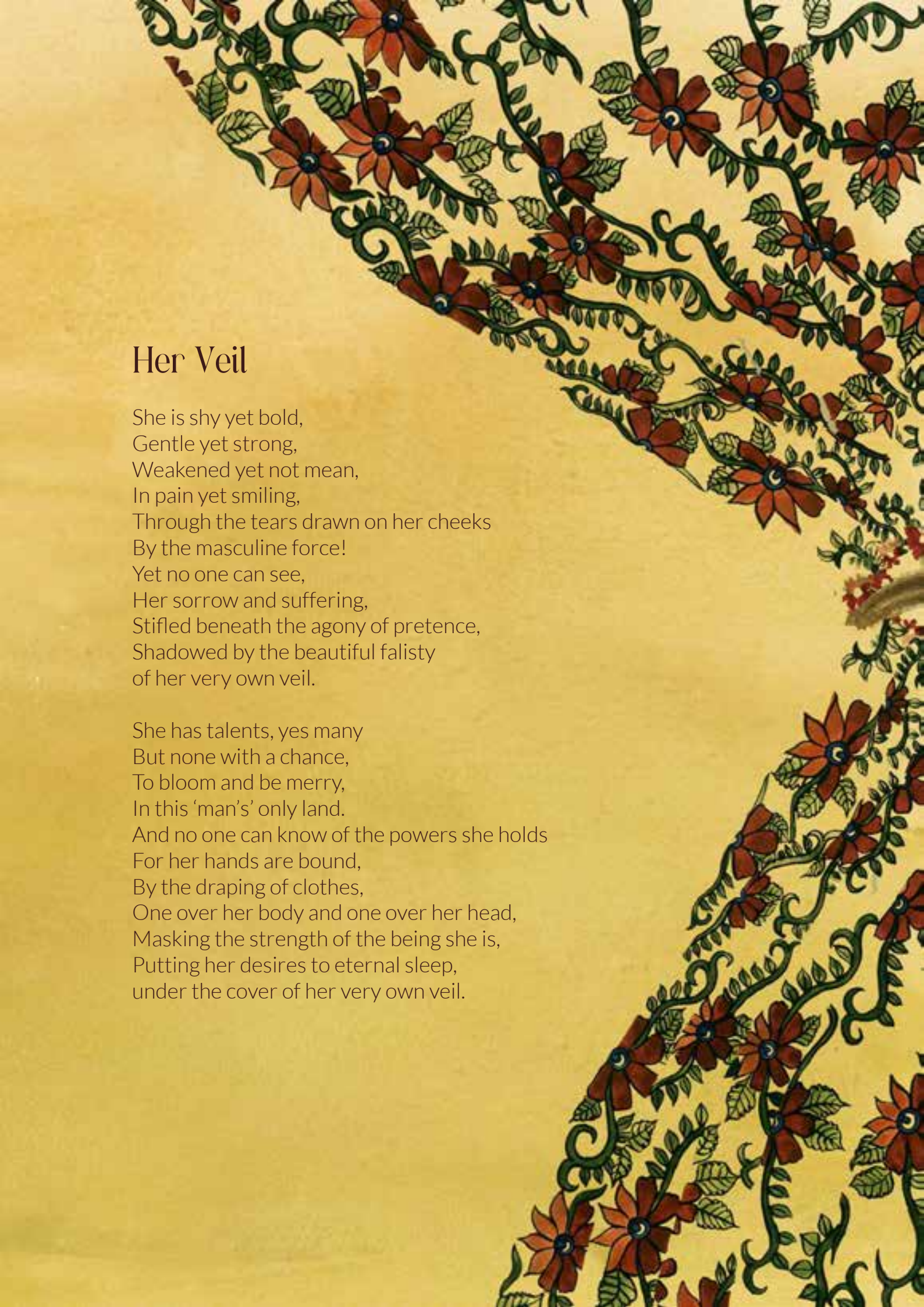
'Her Veil' is written by Stephy Noby

Facilitator's notes

The topic is very sensitive and controversial. So the facilitator can use his/her discretion to decide if this activity should be included or not based on the participant's socio-cultural background. If the activity is included because the participant details are unavailable then the facilitator should anticipate possible discussions/questions that might emerge during the session.

The discussion could revolve around the following questions:

According to the poet, how does a veil affect the woman? Underline words or sentences in the poem to support your answer.
'Forcing a woman to adhere to a veil is a violation of her rights, so is dragging her out of it' - Open the floor for a discussion on this statement.



Her Veil

She is shy yet bold,
Gentle yet strong,
Weakened yet not mean,
In pain yet smiling,
Through the tears drawn on her cheeks
By the masculine force!
Yet no one can see,
Her sorrow and suffering,
Stifled beneath the agony of pretence,
Shadowed by the beautiful falisty
of her very own veil.

She has talents, yes many
But none with a chance,
To bloom and be merry,
In this 'man's' only land.
And no one can know of the powers she holds
For her hands are bound,
By the draping of clothes,
One over her body and one over her head,
Masking the strength of the being she is,
Putting her desires to eternal sleep,
under the cover of her very own veil.

Watch the two videos:



"Purdah Hai Purdah"
Duration of video: 27:24
www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnghEOTFyjM.



"The Women Under the Veil"
Duration of video: 05:00
www.youtube.com/watch?v=uX-T_ZuXGhg.

Purdah Hai Purdah – A Summary

Duration of video: 27:24

Kidwai, Yasmin. PSBTIndia. "Purdah Hai Purdah." YouTube, YouTube, 8 Dec. 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnghEOTFyjM.

This video seeks to counter preconceptions about why women wear the veil by interviewing individuals who express very different reasons for their choice to wear or not wear a hijab. their experiences cross generations, socio-economic groups, and religions.

The documentary begins with a series of questions about what a veil means to the women who wear them. The speakers talk about their experiences of wearing the veil as part of religious customs.

The first speaker, Samiya, shows two pictures of herself, one before she started wearing a hijab and another after. She explains that she does not wear her hijab inside the house even when she has visitors; she claims her decision a personal choice. She challenges the notion that wearing a hijab makes her someone different, an outsider. She emphasises that she's just like any other girl her age. Hijab changes only the physical appearance, not the personal characteristics and other attributes. She emphasises that it is her choice to wear a hijab.

Samiya sees the hijab as a layer of protection. She asserts that she's "made just for one [man]" and that the veil has set a boundary keeping her away from the male gaze. It has earned her a lot of respect, where"good fences make good neighbours," she says.

Tabassum, a tailor, is the second speaker. She wears a veil because she believes it is demanded by Islam and that Allah has asked women to wear it. She also states that those who do not wear a veil bring shame to the religion and are not true followers of Islam. The community she lives in is like-minded and strongly pious. Therefore, she maintains a cordial relationship with people in her neighbourhood.

She prefers to stay unrecognised by wearing the veil because people would begin to comment and talk behind her back if she were to step out without a veil. She thinks that men would make fun of her because she is a single woman.

She says that Purdah is not just to cover the body, but to veil the voice as well. She feels that invisibility is what assures her safety. She wonders whether it makes her a sinner to talk this way.
A musical interlude follows. A woman sings a song that asks a woman to lower her eyes, guard her gaze; the singer comments that not covering her face makes the woman an offender. The verses mention wearing the veil the right way and helping those without the veil.
The next scene involves two women discussing the veil in relation to tensions vetween Hindus and Muslims.Sita Setalvad, an older woman, welcomes Muslim women into her house and worries about the hatred of a certain Hindu population wanting to eliminate the religion of Islam. Tabassum talks about how she would rather establish her identity by wearing the purdah during these communal riots. If she were to take off her purdah, she would be mistaken for a Hindu woman and killed by a member of Islam. Whether it is a purdah or a saree, the veils don't protect the wearer from violence and intolerance.

This scene is followed by the comments of three women within the same household: Ullhasiben, Nirupama (her daughter), and Swayam (her granddaughter). Ullhasiben is an elderly homemaker practising Jainism; she wears a veil on the top of her head with her saree. She reminisces about the expectations she face in her younger days. She once wore her veil so that it covered her face entirely. She was not allowed to speak to her mother-

in-law for over 20 years. A child would have to mediate if there had to be something communicated. She talks about how she had to cook and do all the household chores without taking off her veil. She could not even talk to her husband until the evening.
Swayam, her granddaughter, talks about the way her grandmother covers her entire face when she has to go out to eat or attends a family function. Her grandmother seems to stand out when she's veiled and Swayam thinks she should not have to see her grandmother's appearance spoiled because of the veil.

Nirupama, Swayam's mother, talks about crying over this strict regimen and suggests that living this way is another form of slavery. She had to seek permission from her mother-in-law before she could reveal her face. To this day, she covers her head with her saree's pallu. Nirupama is against her daughter wearing a ghunghat because she does not want Swayam to experience such difficulties as she did. Nirupama feels that individuals in the household should be respected, and objects to the power dynamics of wearing the ghunghat. She wears the veil to maintain peace in the family, but changes into pants and tees when she goes to the gym.

The next scene features Manini, an actor. She says that the male gaze is more provocative when women are veiled than when they dress in a way that is more 'revealing'. She displays her wedding photograph. In this she has a veil on her head. She associates the veil with the element of mystery and coyness about is behind the screen of clothing. She finds it okay to wear the ghunghat if it reaches her hairline. Anything below that seems to hamper her vision and she object to the limits this imposes. She says that she does not want to be led but wants to find her own way.

The final speaker is Shabanam, a marketing executive from Delhi. She donned a hijab when she was about 20 years old while in the United States because everyone around her wore one. In America, she had been told by her Imam that she would burn in hell if she were to show her hairline. When she returned to New Delhi almost two years later, she stopped wearing a hijab because she wanted, once again, to blend in with her peers and they did not wear one. In Delhi, she found that the veil brought prejudice and judgemental gazes. She had to consider the reality of not seeking a good employment position if she were to show up wearing a hijab. Nonetheless, she experiences immense guilt for taking off her hijab. She realises that both when she chose to wear a hijab and when she chose to take it off, the external environment had influenced her decision. She talks about the hijab branding her as very pious and not wearing a hijab demarcating her identity as being progressive. She talks about how, in her immaturity, her previous decisions were influenced by what others thought. Now, after more self-conscious reflection, she is considering wearing the hijab again in the near future.

The Women Under the Veil – A Summary

Duration of video: 05:00

Sanguedolce, Morgan. Campus Movie Fest. "The Woman Under the Veil." YouTube, YouTube, 13 Apr. 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=uX-T_ZuXGhg.

The documentary introduces an Adjunct Professor of Middle Eastern Studies and three of her students; it explores how Muslim American women establish their identity and define their use of the headscarf (hijab) in the United States. The hijab is ultimately a choice for women. It is important to acknowledge the role of personal notions about religious practice in conversations about faith.

Atiya Aftab, an Adjunct Professor of Middle Eastern Studies, notes that the hijab has become a symbol of Islam. As such, Muslim women who wear a headscarf face challenges in a society where Islam is the subject of some preconceptions and prejudices. These women are sometimes the target of discrimination and harassment. Atiya argues that the violence directed at women who wear the hijab has resulted in some men advising them to stay at home, separating the women from society. She finds this isolation problematic.

Islam, she notes, lets women put on a cloak or a garment to remain protected as they leave their homes. In Islam, the normative statute is based on religious texts. She argues that unlike issues regarding the method of prayer, fasting and the criteria of good character, clothing is not a core part of the dogma of Islam. Despite religion being personal, decisions are based on custom and "what is considered modest" at different time periods. She notes that Muslim women decide to wear a hijab for different reasons. Some do so to demonstrate their piety; others do so to make a political statement, establishing and affirming their ethnicity; and some wear the hijab because they are forced to do so by their family or nation.

Naureen Hameed, one of the three students interviewed, comments on letting her hijab characterise her belief in Islam; she thinks it is important to be identifiable as a Muslim. She has a "choice of wearing and showing the hijab," and sees her hijab as a symbol of strength. She comments that people wrongly assume that women wearing hijab are oppressed and discriminated against. Naureen identifies as an American who appreciates the United States because it has a balance, unlike the very oppressive Saudi Arabia or more liberal India. This freedom allows her to choose to wear the hijab. She emphasises that being a Muslim does not compromise the importance of her American identity, nor does being American place her Muslim faith in jeopardy.

Another student, Sadaf Bajwa, also emphasises that the headscarf is a symbol of strength and says that wearing it is a courageous decision, but that the need to do so is open to interpretation. She feels that she can be religious even though she doesn't wear the hijab. Sadaf says that in Pakistan a woman's choice to wear the hijab or not doesn't matter as it would in other countries. She finds it surprising to find so many Muslim men dictating how women in their household should act and what they should wear when the religion provides equal rights to women equal and men.

Mayar Abdelmeguid, the third student, says that she started to wear her hijab when she turned 12 because this was the norm. As she got used to wearing it, she found her own reasons for continuing. She grew into wearing her hijab. Her mother and grandmothers who came from Egypt wear it because it is encouraged and acceptable to wear a hijab there. Nonetheless, she feels that it is personal religious growth that needs to be encouraged rather than decisions on pieces of clothing.

After watching the videos discuss the following questions:

1. After watching the two videos, divide the group into 4 groups - A, B, C and D.

2. Group A and C to discuss reasons why women wear or choose to wear a veil. Group B and D to discuss reasons why women choose to or wish to not wear a veil. Hand out chart papers for groups to record their discussion and points.

3. In the discussions, ask the groups to reflect on the practice of purdah across religions and nations. Encourage them to draw from their experience of wearing or giving up a veil and to share anonymized stories of people they know.

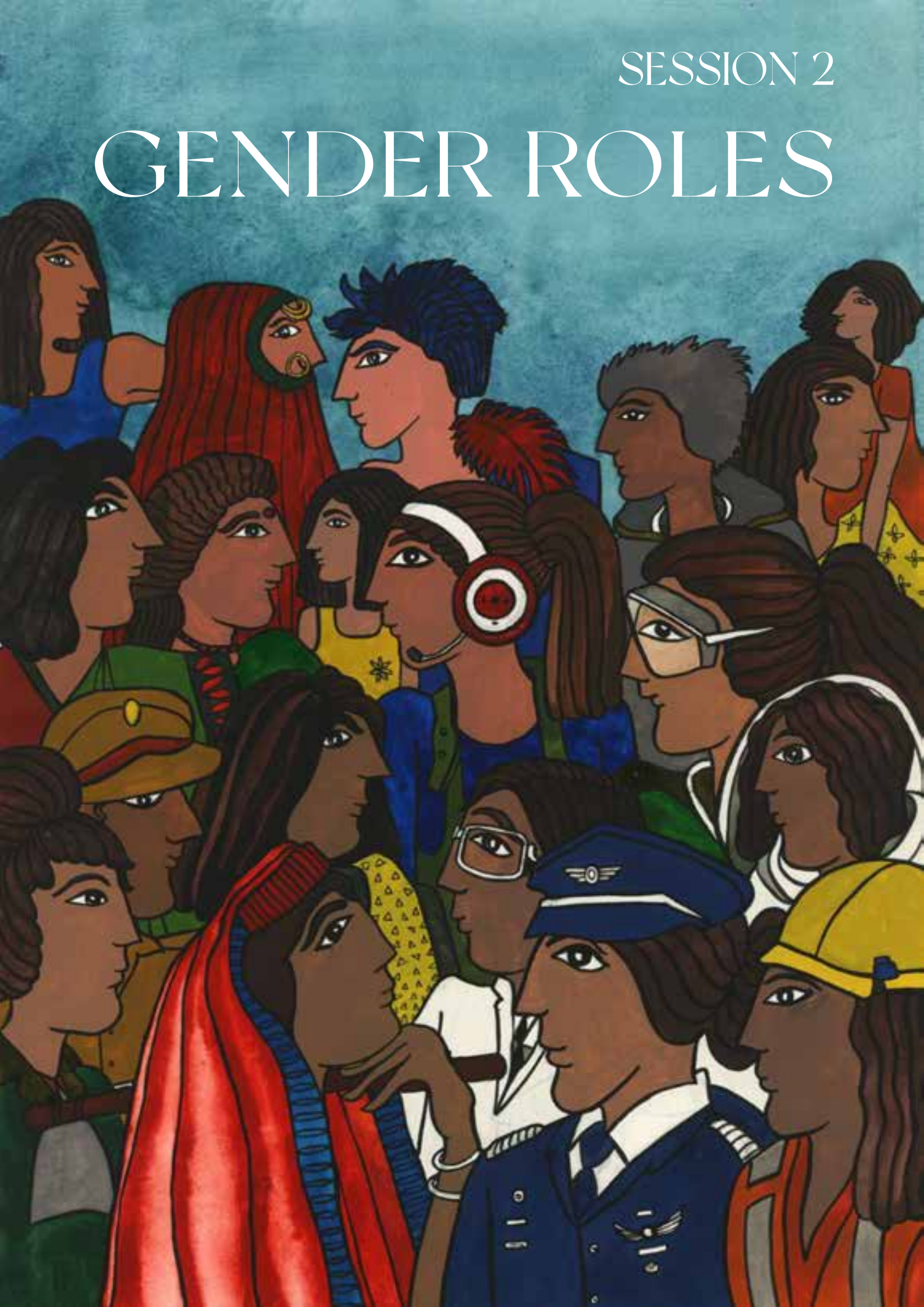
4. Once the groups have discussed the questions among themselves and noted down points on chart papers, ask a person from each group to share their points with the entire group.

5. Encourage discussion and debate while ensuring that the discussion does not hurt any participants' sentiments and does not disrespect a particular religion.



SESSION 2

GENDER ROLES



Gender roles define how people are expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct themselves based upon their assigned sex. Every society, ethnic group, and culture has gender role expectations that can change over time.

Social institutions such as the family, religious groups or caste systems, political and legal structures, economic and educational institutions, as well as the mass media are all permeated with norms and values that discriminate against women and legitimise and institutionalise social placements on the basis of gender.

For example, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine ways and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing. Men are generally expected to be strong, aggressive, and bold. Gender stereotypes act as a barrier for girls. Stereotypes dictate different expectations for boys and girls, such as completion of education and the fields of study deemed appropriate for them to pursue. Stereotypes about the role of women as confined to the domestic and family sphere underpin all obstacles to girls' equal access to quality education. Girls are often socialised to assume domestic responsibilities, with the assumption that they will be economically dependent on men. The stereotype of men as breadwinners leads to the prioritisation of boys' education.

This session will explore some such gender roles and stereotypes.





Objectives

- To apprise the participants of the gender roles expected of a man and a woman in a society
- To reflect upon the participants' own biases regarding gender roles
- To engage with the idea of how media-propagated gender stereotypes affect the opinions of the participants
- To encourage participants to think of alternatives to create a more gender equitable society



Outcomes

- Participants will be able to recognise the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a society considers appropriate for men and women
- Participants will also be able to understand the discriminatory nature of such gender roles.



Resources

1. Print out of the story
2. Sheet of papers
3. Pens or sketch pens
4. Projector
5. Computer or system to play the video
6. Speakers



Duration
115 minutes

- Activity 1 - Brainstorm : 15 minutes
- Activity 2 - Reading the story : 30 minutes
- Activity 3 - Solve the riddle : 10 minutes
- Activity 4 - Timesheet : 20 minutes
- Activity 5 - Relooking at sexism around us : 40 minutes



Activity 1
Brainstorm

Duration – 15 minutes

Process

- Divide the blackboard/whiteboard/chart paper in two vertical sections
- Write 'Man' on one side of the board.
- Ask the participants to say the first word that comes to their mind when they see the word 'Man'. Write down all the words/phrases that the participants say under that section.
- Ask the participants to say the first word that comes to their mind when they see the word 'Woman'. Write down all the words/phrases that the participants say under that section.

Facilitator's notes

- Reflect on the list that emerges. Discuss with the group about the differences that are biological and that which are social constructs.
- From the list of words shared under 'Man', ask the group - can a woman do/be this too? Repeat for the words under 'Woman'.
- Have discussions around the shared attributes, for instance: can a woman not be a breadwinner? Can a man not be caring? Can a man be a 'mother'? Can a woman drive a car? Why or why not? And so on
- The responses may depend on the geography, social-educational background of the participants. If the participants write more gender neutral possibilities then it is important that the facilitator initiate discussion to understand the reasons for such a list. At the same time the facilitator should keep in mind that the impressions expressed by the participants are not cancelled out but the discussion should focus on if such impressions are accessible to men/women of all social, economic, racial, caste groups.

Activity 2
Reading the story

Duration – 30 minutes

Process

Distribute the printout of the story and read it aloud to the participants.
'Mrs. Dasgupta Writes A Letter' is written by Prachi Chitre.

A short story, written in the form of a letter between two friends reveals the most profound experiences which women of India face even today. Written in Bombay, from an upper class household, it reaches out to Calcutta. Spanning two women and the differences in their lives, it addresses a very pertinent question- Are women really free, even today?



Facilitator's notes

The story describes friendship between two women who belong to different belief systems, Hindusim and Islam. Hinduism is supposed to be a liberal way of life compared to Islam, specially Hindu women are supposed to have less restrictions. However, the story presents a different picture. The facilitator should keep the social, religious implications, biases that might emerge during the discussion and be prepared to keep the discussion productive and meaningful.

If the story is being used in a multicultural context or the group has more participants from one race/ethnicity then the facilitator should make sure that prejudice against any of these groups does not dominate the discussion. Instead introspective questions could be posed to think about the commonalities of the women's position historically and in contemporary times.

The story hints at domestic violence, its impact on the relationship and resulting changing equations within the household. The facilitator should anticipate multiple eventualities. It would be difficult to know personal details of the participants. Hence, the facilitator should explain the content of the story, issues that will be discussed and allow the participants a choice to either participate in this activity or not. If the facilitator is equipped to discuss the psychological issues around domestic violence then perhaps assure the participants of the support available and encourage them to be part of the activity.

Questions for discussion: (questions are indicative; the facilitator can choose or change the questions appropriate to the participant demography)

1. What does the letter tell you about the households of the two women correspondents?
2. The letter mentions the religion followed by Mrs Dasgupta and Tasneem. Does the mention of specific religion make you expect a particular way that these women's lives will be?
3. Tasneem designs 'burkha' and owns a boutique. Does Tasneem promote a traditional expectation of Islam from women by working with a supposedly restrictive garment? Or is there any other meaning of freedom associated within the story?
4. The letter highlights education, career for a woman as a means of freedom and achieving a sense of identity. If education and career facilitate economic possibilities, fail to change social equations, then will they operate as liberating forces?
5. Gender roles are socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. In pairs, underline at least 5 statements, phrases or words in the story that convey gender-roles, for each of the characters in the story.
6. Is the story familiar? Have you or someone you know felt like Mrs Dasgupta at any point of time in life?
7. Mrs Dasgupta lives in Mumbai, a cosmopolitan city. Should the city and its cosmopolitan nature have an impact on the thinking of the characters mentioned in the letter?



114 Goodluck apts,
Shiv Ram Colony,
Churchgate,
Old Bandra,
Mumbai- 411060

Dear Tasneem,

I am sorry I haven't been able to write before. Things have been so busy here with Sagar's exams and Ridhima's engagement. I am so delighted to hear that you have been blessed with a baby boy! What an utter delight. Your families must be very proud and I am happy for the both of you. I hope you are recuperating well. I have been watching the news and listening to the radio and I hope the floods have not affected you too much. Calcutta is becoming like Bombay now- one rain and it floods.

I asked Sagar's father the other day about "you know what." But he got so angry I even mentioned it that he started yelling. He told me that a good Brahmin woman from such a wealthy family has no need to work. He kept saying how could I even think of this, that my first duty was towards my children and did I not love Sagar and Ridhima? When he spoke about the children, my heart melted and my eyes were filled with tears. Of course I love my children. The worst part was that all his yelling got Maaji involved. As usual, she came rushing in to see what the matter was, what had upset her precious son. As soon as she heard about the matter, her face clouded over and her eyes flashed, and Tasneem I must say, I have never felt more afraid in my life. Of course she chided me. I expected her to. And then she said that they would not take the matter to Dadaji as long as I let go of this foolish fantasy of mine.

When Sagar's father mentioned that I had sent in my CV to the Times of India and gotten accepted as a journalist, she almost lost it. I thought she would stab me to death with the kitchen knives. (How dramatic I sound!) But oh, Tasneem, no matter what they say, even if I am not allowed to work, at least the joy of being accepted will forever remain mine. It is a precious diamond that I carry with me in my heart- that warms me even during my coldest and darkest days. For you know Tasneem, working as a journalist was always my dream!

Anyway, let bygones be bygones. Dadaji's health is getting worse. We are slowly losing him, I can tell. Sagar's father, of course, refuses to accept the fact. They have taken him to all the doctors, but the time is very near now. I was just wondering last night, what would happen if Dadaji dies? I can never utter these blasphemous thoughts out loud of course. But lately this thought has been haunting my mind. Of course Ramesh Bhai will take over I assume. He is the oldest son after all. But still, there is an undercurrent of anxiety, as if things are about to change. I do not like Ramesh Bhai. There's something not right about him. Sometimes, the way he looks at me- I feel very uncomfortable. And he always quarrels with Sagar's father! Property, wealth, jewelry- the usual squabbles. How I detest all this Tasneem. My heart yearns to be in a meadow somewhere far away from all this, in communion with nature.

Yesterday I was recalling the time when I was expecting Sagar. He's fourteen now and almost as tall as his father. I can't believe how quickly time flies! When we were in the hospital (against Maaji's wishes of course) she kept praying and doing puja's begging that it should be a boy. Ridhima's birth had been a disappointment. No one wanted a girl in the house. But I loved her! What a beautiful, darling baby she was! And secretly, in my heart I was overjoyed that I had given birth to such a wonderful miracle. But Sagar; that's a different story. I never wanted a second baby, Tasneem. May god have mercy on me for even uttering these words. Ridhima had filled my heart completely. And since I had such a difficult pregnancy the first time, I was quite scared of the entire concept of going through labour and childbirth again. It was so painful the first time. And they stuck so many needles in me. I was always scared. And there was no one with me, except the grumbling presence of Maaji.

When I look back on those days, sometimes I wonder, how did I ever have the strength to get through it all alone? After delivery too, I was constantly bleeding for a very long time. I had become so weak and the demands of a newborn infant sometimes nearly broke my spirit. During my labour pains when all I wanted to do was scream out to God for mercy, all I got was my mother-in-law's admonishment that a woman should not make any fuss and that she herself had birthed four children painlessly. Because of all this, I never wanted another child. But both my in-laws and the numerous relatives kept pressuring me into having a son. The age old battle. I had vowed not to give in to this duress. I wanted to be back on my feet after Ridhima and was anxious to apply somewhere for a job, even back then. When I found out I was pregnant for the second time, I locked myself in the bathroom for fifteen minutes and silently wept.

I even did something unspeakable. I was driven to desperation. I had visited one of those government abortion clinics. There's one right in the lane behind our house. All our family members keep their eyes averted when they pass this place. Even Sagar's father has openly criticized them so many times. But I silently went. One day, when the house was surprisingly empty and Maaji was in bed with a bad cold, I went. Oh the dread, the fear, inside of me! I will never forget that day. I had just fifty rupees with me, tied in the knot of my saree. Wringing my hands, I went there. All I wanted to do was to find out some information. But I could not even cross the threshold of that place. Its grimy walls, tobacco stained corners, the shuffling women and the mysterious stench all drove me away.

I must've stood outside the entrance for at least half an hour, my mind and heart debating against each other. Desperation and disgust battling to the end. The woe of another baby! Don't consider me a monster Tasneem. I love Sagar with all my heart and my motherly affection swells with pride when I watch him now growing into a man.

You will be glad to know that the bruises are healing very nicely now. Every night, I apply Soframycin cream on them. They're almost not even visible. But one or two are still sore when I touch them. After that night, he has never raised his hands on me again. I think he is ashamed of even looking at me. Do you recall when I wrote to you that night? It seems so long ago. We had a fight.

I was against marrying Ridhima off so early. I had disclosed my doubts to him. Somehow we started arguing, I don't know how. In the last twenty years of marriage, never have I argued with him! But this! I do not want my daughter to lose her life, the way I lost mine. I want her to go to college. And she's so smart in studies! She wants to become a teacher- she secretly confided in me one day. I had told him to give her a few years more and that she was just a child. Finally, he told me to remember my own place in the household and that I could not dictate anything to him. I still remember the stinging sensation on my face when he slapped me, the burning on my arms when his fingers closed like steel bands upon my flesh and the salty tears of bewilderment running down my face. Cruel humanity!

I had immediately written to you. Just a few lines. My tear splotches were the first of the many correspondences you received early in our friendship. The worst part after that episode was the fact that I wasn't allowed to go outside of the house. Not even to buy vegetables. The maid was sent for grocery shopping and Raghu was instructed to do whatever chores I asked of him. I could not even go out to buy anything for myself when Ridhima's engagement was announced. I have been a prisoner, Tasneem; a prisoner in my own house. A prisoner for so long that I have gotten used to these walls of confinement as my world and I have learnt to make peace with it. I am still not permitted to step outside the house. There are very few and rare occasions when the entire family goes out, and I tag along, a blind sheep bleating for its master's instructions.

I received the photos you had sent me of the new burkha designs in your shop. They are lovely! Congratulations on your own fashion line. Your husband must be so proud. I definitely am. If I ever do come to Calcutta, I will definitely buy some chikkan saree material from your shop. Tasneem, as a friend and as a mentor, I must say this to you, my dear friend. You are blessed. You have a loving husband whose main aim in life is to fulfill all your desires and who treats you with respect. You now have a gorgeous baby boy to demand all the affection in your heart, but most importantly what you have Tasneem, is freedom. Freedom to have your own business, freedom to choose to have children, or not to have children, freedom to travel, freedom to love your family and friends as fiercely as possible. Cherish these blessings my dear, for our lot is rarely the recipient of such good fortune. As you would say, Allah is with you! I send all my love and best wishes to the young one. I look forward to your trip to Mumbai next month when I can meet my oldest and dearest friend. Do take care.

With all my love,
Mrs. Dasgupta



Activity3
Solve the riddle!

Duration – 10 minutes
(Adapted from Gender Sensitivity training manual, UNESCO, 2002)

Riddle

A young boy and his father are on their way home from soccer practice when a distracted driver crosses the centre line and hits them head-on. The injured boy and his father are transported in an ambulance to the hospital, where the boy is taken immediately into surgery.
However, the awaiting surgeon steps out of the operating room and says, "Call Dr. Baker to the operating room. I can't operate on this boy. He's my son!"

The question: Who is the surgeon?

The answer: The surgeon was the boy's mother.

Facilitator's notes

This activity could be conducted for the entire group simultaneously. But it is important to collect at least 4 responses from the participants. Then the participants could be asked to discuss the reasons for the responses of the participants.

Be careful to not deviate from the text or refer to the surgeon in a way that reveals her gender. Once the participants have guessed the answer, lead a discussion on how we stereotype some professions. Ask - would the story still be a riddle if the unknown parent was a nurse instead of a surgeon?

Activity 4
Timesheet

Duration – 20 minutes
(Adapted from - Gender Equity Movement in Schools – Workbook for Children, 2011)

This activity is divided into two parts. It is an individual activity. So it is important that every participant completes both the parts of the activity in the stipulated time.

Part I : Process

- Each participant will be asked to draw a clock such as the one in the illustration provided, with all hours from 1-24 on a blank paper.



Source – GEMS - Workbook for Children, 2011

- After drawing the clock, participants are asked to note down activities against the time slot given in the clock with examples provided as illustrations on a demonstration diagram For example, 6 -7 AM might involve cooking breakfast or getting ready for work.
- Participants to complete their own clock diagrams with their usual activities noted.

Part II :Process

- Participants will be asked to draw a similar clock for a member of the opposite sex in their families.
- In the same way as they filled their clock, participants will be asked to note the usual activities of a spouse, parent, or sibling of the opposite sex.
- If the group consists of men and women, then the clocks could be exchanged and reflective discussion could take place. This strategy will be effective if all the participants are comfortable to exchange their worksheets. If the participants are not comfortable then they can compare the clocks and summarise their impressions.



Facilitator's notes

- The facilitator should be sensitive to the personal nature of the activity. If the participants hesitate to openly discuss their worksheet then the facilitator might have to discuss the implications of traditional work distribution.
- Participants can be asked to discuss which activities have taken up the biggest portion in their clocks and which the lowest?
- How do their clocks differ from those of someone of the opposite sex?
- Do participants discover that they need to add activities omitted that have become apparent after comparing clocks? What activities were omitted and why do they think this happened?
- Does a female participant or family member devote a larger proportion of time to particular activities, such as housework, than a male?
- Do they agree with this difference?
- Do they want to change anything in any clock? If yes, which clock and what would you like to change?

Activity 5
Relooking at sexism around us

Duration – 40 minutes

Process

Watch the video:



"Huggies Dad Test"
Duration of the video: 00:32
www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7kX8ZKylD4.

Huggies Dad Test

Duration of video: 00:32

"Huggies Dad Test." YouTube, YouTube, 1 Sept. 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7kX8ZKylD4.

This is an advertisement for a brand of disposable diapers. It suggests that fathers are naturally less capable of coping with childcare than mothers.
Huggies, a diaper brand for babies, created a "test" of their product, a five-day challenge in which several fathers were left alone in a house with their babies. The mothers were given time off as a result; this is suggested by a series of images of relaxed mothers going for a morning jog, a manicure appointment, or just having some alone time. The fathers are shown as inadequate. 'Daddyhood' is characterised by visuals of messy plates and scattered toys. The fathers are shown as incapable of knowing whether their babies need a diaper change, and not capable of feeding their babies without spilling food all over.









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https://mylegotalk.blogspot.com/2016/08/5-greatest-lego-advertising-campaigns.html
https://marilinabedros.wordpress.com/2016/02/24/gender-analysis-of-mr-clean-advertisement/
https://www.huffpost.com/archive/ca/entry/canadian-mens-health-foundation-ads_n_5794190
http://newsactivist.com/en/articles/gendered-world-views-fall-2016-section-9/advertisement-will-_make-you-look-again

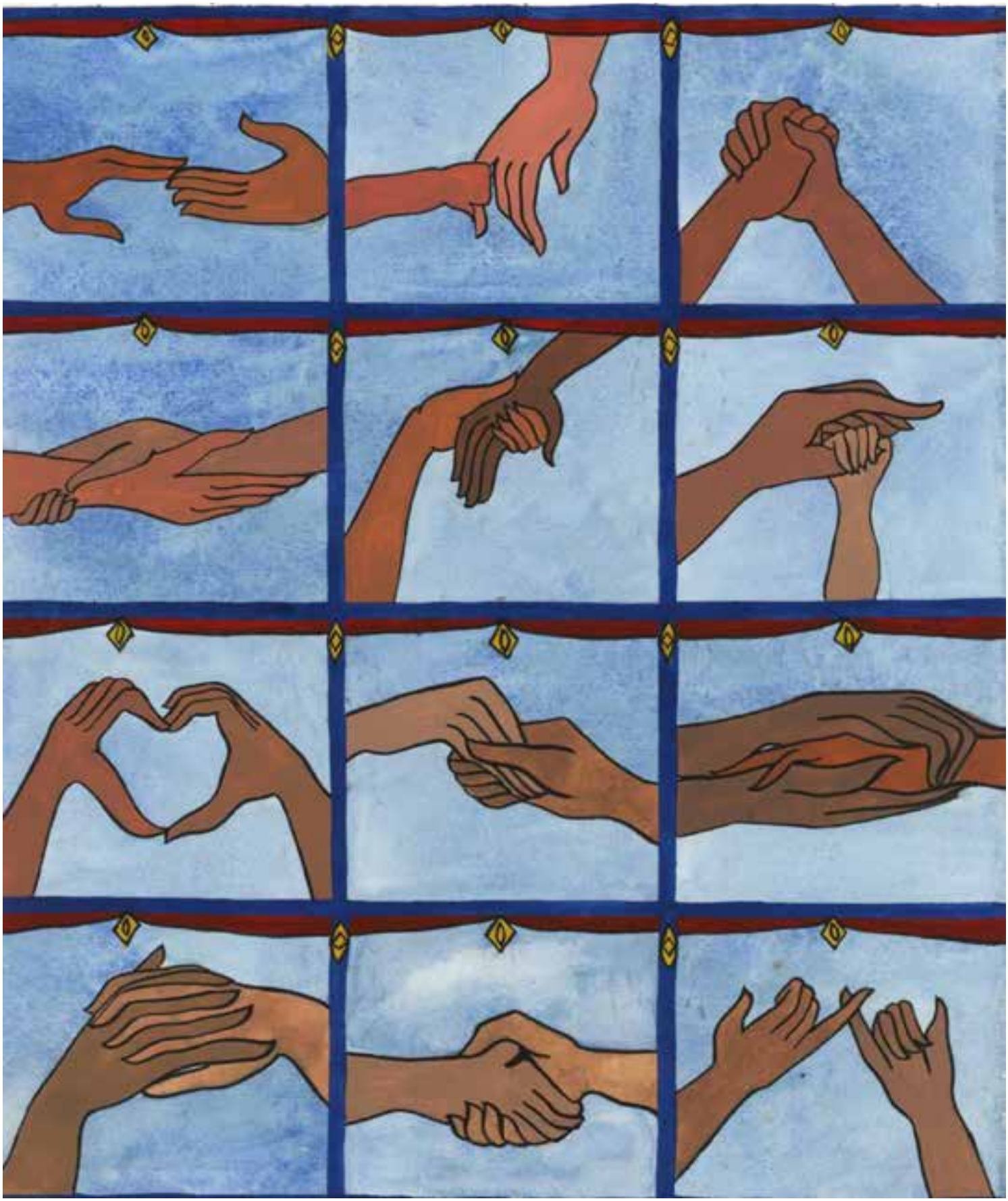
Facilitator's notes

- Examine the ways in which gender stereotypes are being reinforced in these images.
- What gender roles are emphasized in the ads?
- Can you think of any other ads, movies or forms of media that you felt reinforced gender stereotypes? Discuss.
- Do you think ads and media around us impact the way we look at gender?
- What are some things you hear from your family, friends, or people around you about the expectations associated with your gender?

SESSION 3

RELATIONSHIPS

MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND MOTHERHOOD



Gender and gender roles affect the economic, political, social and ecological opportunities and constraints faced by both men and women; they have a direct impact on the nutrition, health and access to opportunities for girls and women. This session focuses on how such gender roles play out within relationships and marriage, especially when it comes to decisions concerning motherhood.

Studies[4] vshow the unequal involvement of women and men in household chores, and that the expectations of a woman are higher. When it comes to reproductive rights, women sometimes have little agency to decide.

This session seeks to initiate a discussion and encourage the facilitator to create a safe space for debates about the power dynamics that become evident in intimate relationships.

Prior knowledge for the facilitator:

The facilitator should know the difference between 'gender' and 'sex'.
The facilitator should have information about the pro-choice and pro-life debates around the issue of abortion
Facilitators should update themselves with recent debates around reproductive rights.

4.Cerrato,Javier,andEvaClifre.GenderInequalityinHouseholdChoresandWork-FamilyConflict.2018, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6086200/.



Objectives

- To explain the difference between 'gender' and 'sex'
- To reflect on the gender roles in relationships, marriage, and parenting
- To apprise the participants of the broader issues around the reproductive rights of a woman
- To discuss 'motherhood'



Outcomes

- Participants will be able to recognise the socially constructed roles and behaviours that exist within relationships, marriage, and parenting.
- Participants will be able to engage with debates around women's freedom to choose motherhood, abortion, and so on.



Resources

1. Print out of statements for Activity 1
2. Print out of Poem and Prose for the participants
3. Computer or system to play the video
4. Projector
5. Speakers
6. Chart papers
7. Sketch pens/markers



Duration
160 minutes

- Activity 1 - Sex and Gender: 20 minutes

<u>Marriage</u>

- Activity 2 - Poem reading: 20 minutes
- Activity 3 - Video: 25 minutes
- Activity 4 - Reading the story: 30 minutes

<u>Reproductive rights and motherhood</u>

- Activity 5 - Discuss the statements: 40 minutes
- Activity 6 - Video: 25 minutes



Activity 1
Sex and Gender

Duration – 20 minutes

(Adapted from a training module on gender issues in development (sponsored by GOI and UNDP) in the Institute of Management in Government, Thiruvananthapuram, and Gender Sensitivity Training Manual, UNESCO, 2002)

The facilitator will give the participants a handout of statements, some referring to 'sex' and some to 'gender'. Participants will be asked to identify whether the statement is about gender or sex. (G/S) Participants will then be encouraged to defend their responses to those with a different view.

A list of illustrative statements are given below:

- Women are better at caring for children than men
- Body hair is ok for men but women should remove it
- Women are more emotional than men
- Women breast feed babies
- Post-mortems are done by male doctors
- Male voices break at puberty
- Women are better cooks
- Men are sexually more aggressive than women
- Women menstruate and also undergo menopause
- Men are soldiers because they are brave and fight with weapons
- Men are breadwinners and head the family
- Women have broader hips than men and so their gait is more attractive
- Women have bigger breasts than men
- Women's illnesses are mostly psychosomatic
- Women are better at multitasking
- Women give birth to babies
- Women earn less than men
- Men do not cry
- Girls dress in pink, and boys dress in blue
- There are more male leaders than female leaders



Facilitator's notes

Answers -

1. G
2. G
3. G
4. S
5. G
6. S
7. G
8. G
9. S
10. G
11. G
12. G
13. S
14. G
15. G
16. S
17. G
18. G
19. G
20. G

Remind participants that sex is biologically determined and is the biological difference between men and women. Gender is a culturally specific set of characteristics that explains the social behaviours of women and men and defines the relationship between them. Gender is socially constructed.

Activity 2
Marriage
Poem reading

Duration – 20 minutes

Process

Distribute the printout of the poem to the participants.
'Be Woman' is written by Van Couver Gracias L Shullai.

Facilitator's notes

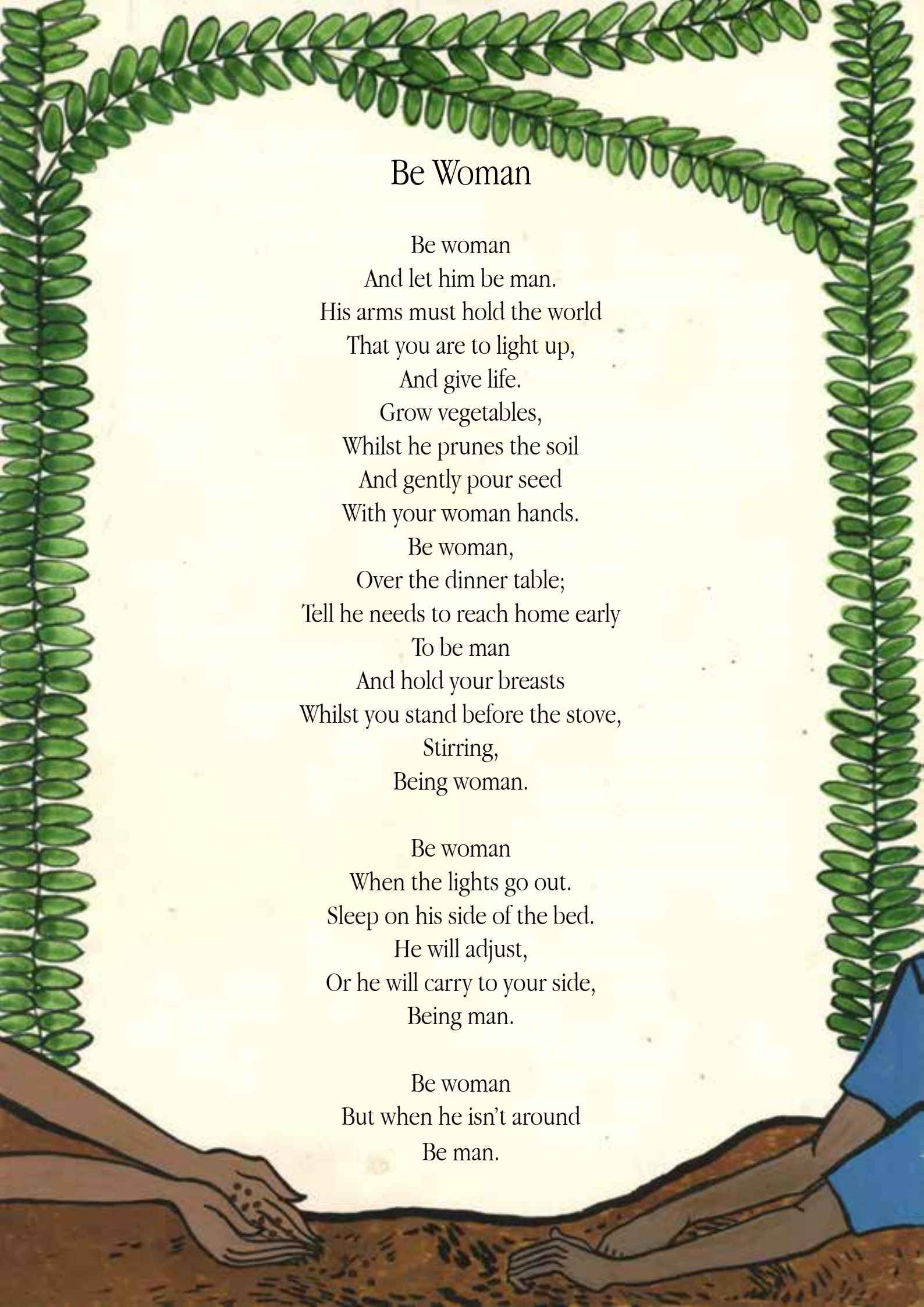
Discuss -
In the poem, what are some roles that are meant to be fulfilled by the man and what are those that need to be done by a woman?
In a marriage-like relationship such as the one depicted in the poem, what do you think are the expectations of a husband and a wife?
What does 'Being a woman' mean to you? What does it mean to 'Be a man'?

Be Woman

Be woman
And let him be man.
His arms must hold the world
That you are to light up,
And give life.
Grow vegetables,
Whilst he prunes the soil
And gently pour seed
With your woman hands.
Be woman,
Over the dinner table;
Tell he needs to reach home early
To be man
And hold your breasts
Whilst you stand before the stove,
Stirring,
Being woman.

Be woman
When the lights go out.
Sleep on his side of the bed.
He will adjust,
Or he will carry to your side,
Being man.

Be woman
But when he isn't around
Be man.



Activity 3
Video

Duration – 25 minutes

Watch the video:



"The Impossible Dream (1983)"
Duration of video: 8:11
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2JBPBIFR2Y&t=6s

The Impossible Dream (1983) – A Summary

Duration of the film: 08:11

United Nations and Kratky Films. "The Impossible Dream." YouTube, YouTube, 22 May 2009, www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2JBPBIFR2Y&t=6s.

This is an animated film that depicts the unfair burden on women of gender roles where the husband's paid employment is all that is required of him whereas the wife must do all the domestic chores and childcare as well as a paid job that is itself subject to unequal wage rates. It is shared domestic and childcare responsibilities and more equal educational opportunities that are depicted as the "impossible dream".

'The Impossible Dream' begins with lights switched on as the alarm rings sharp at seven in the morning. The woman of the house dresses up and tends to all three children. While the father plays with the baby, the mother cleans, cooks and washes up with the help of the daughter. The husband and their son bang the plates while waiting for the food to arrive and do not move an inch when the infant needs to be cleaned.

The wife packs the lunch for her spouse and he leaves for his work without clearing the table or taking care of the children. The son and the daughter leave for school. The woman finishes the household chores, carrying the baby on her back. She scurries to catch the public transport on time and rushes with her children to board a packed bus. She leaves the baby at day-care and goes to work.

At work, the husband does not seem to break a sweat because his job is machine-enabled. He's sitting on the crane, moving things around happily. The woman works at a labour-intensive garment factory with a group of similar women. The male supervisor is arrogant and yells at the protagonist to stitch more quickly. At the end of their shifts, the woman earns only half as much as her husband.
After work, the husband spends his daily wage on drinks with his friends. The wife rushes to buy groceries and collects her baby at the nursery. She meets her two other children at the bus stop and gets into the crowded bus. The husband gets home leisurely and drops his clothes on the floor. Both the son and his father watch television while the mother cooks dinner and the daughter puts away groceries and takes care of the baby.

The mother feeds the baby before she eats, then takes care of the day's laundry. The daughter does the dishes while the mother tends to the baby. Even when she sits, the mother knits. The daughter retires to bed while the son stays up watching television. The husband gestures to his wife for another drink without even glancing her way.
The television program they watch is about a mother working on the farm with her two children. The females do hard manual labour while the man drives the tractor.

After retiring to bed, the woman dreams of a world where her husband helps with cooking, laundry, and childcare, where her son is trained to help with the chores, and where her daughter does school work alongside her son. Her thoughts extend to her husband allowing her to rest while he takes care of the children, of him buying her flowers, and of her son expressing love and appreciation. The dream ends with their morning alarm and the film ends with the question: if the dream is truly impossible.

Process

- Watch the video 'Impossible Dream' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2JBPBIFR2Y&t=6s
- Divide the group into smaller groups of three people; the number of people in each group will depend on the group size.
- Ask group 1 to discuss among themselves Q1 given below, group 2 to discuss Q2, and so on.
- Hand out charts to each group to record the points from their discussion.
- At the end of their discussion in smaller groups, ask these groups to take turns in presenting their ideas to everyone using the points they put together on the chart paper.



Facilitator's notes

Based on the video, discuss the following questions in smaller groups.

- In the home, what are the man's tasks and what are the woman's?
- Examine the different kinds of work men and women do professionally, and the different nature of the time men and women spend on leisure.
- What do the children learn from their parents, as depicted in a video like this?
- Reflect upon the title of the video. Is this really an impossible dream or can it be a reality? What are some steps that both men and women can take to make the 'dream' (as shown in the video) a reality?

Activity 4
Reading the story

Duration – 30 minutes

Process

Distribute the handout of the following story and read it out loud. 'The Bride' is written by Aadishree Dixit

Facilitator's notes

The following questions are indicative. The facilitator can modify the questions to suit the needs of the participants. If the group consists of both men and women then impressions about marriage might differ. So it is important for the facilitator to be prepared to address any conflicting conversation which may not lead to a balanced understanding.
If the group consists of mutli-ethnic, multi racial, multi-generational participants then the facilitator should anticipate possible divergent views and perhaps strategise to make sure every one's impressions are heard during the discussion.

Possible questions for discussion:

- What do you think the protagonist feels?
- How do people around her feel about her marriage - contrast and compare her feelings with that of others.
- What is the irony that the protagonist talks about?
- What do you think marriage means to the protagonist?
- What does marriage mean to you?
- Do you have a choice when it comes to your marriage? Does everyone have a choice?

The Bride

The women around her were smiling; their carefully applied lipstick coated lips curving up in contrast with her mood. It was headed down. Into the drain, with all her hopes and expectations from life.

The ring on her finger glittered brightly in the presence of all the light, the laughter and the soft strains of music that filled the room. It was mocking her, a cold band of metal entrapping her, the diamonds promising to be her best friends. But then, she had no friends or family. They were dead to her the moment they'd told her she was lucky to have landed such a good rishta.
The mehendi artist was perhaps a couple of years older than her, and she had not stopped praising the way the bride and the husband complimented each other. She knew the groom of course, everyone knew the groom.

And they told her repeatedly that she was lucky he wanted anything to do with a rebellious woman like her. Her reputation had preceded her and she often saw the women glaring at her and shaking their heads when they thought she was not looking.

She was used to those kinds of accusations. It was sad, but true.
She inhaled as the fragrant brown paste touched her palm. Cold.
Like her married life promised to be.
Flowers and leaves came to life on her skin. A peacock, symbolising pride, looked up at her.
Pride.
Where was hers?
It had taken a severe beating when his name was put on her skin, hidden with expertly drawn swirls.
She was glittering, glowing and dazzling.
But inside, she was burning.
The brown paste would dry, leaving behind a trail. The colour, it was said, would determine how much her soon-to- be husband would love her.

They applied lemon and sugar water to keep it on longer.
And then the mehendi started falling off in little flakes, russet and aromatic.
The colour left behind on her dusky skin was the shade of Bournville chocolate.
'How fitting, more dark and bitter than sweet' she almost laughed to herself.
The women around her 'ahhed' and 'ooohed' at the sight of the dark coloured patterns on her hands and feet the next morning.

"The darker the mehendi, the more he loves you! You are so lucky!" one of the younger girls squealed.
"Of course, he must love her, she is gorgeous. A little dark skinned but gorgeous. No wonder he wants to marry her." an older aunt offered her opinion.
The dark-skinned comment did not hurt her. Not Today.
She was more concerned about the fact that every time she looked at her hands, she could see the irony of it all.
Yes, her hennaed hands had his name hidden in their creases.
And her marriage to him would cover up everything

Activity 5
Discuss the statements
Reproductive rights and motherhood

Duration – 40 minutes

Process

- Divide participants into 4 groups.
- Give each group the following statements to discuss. If the facilitator would like to offer locally rooted case studies, they can adopt the questions accordingly.
- After 15 minutes of discussion within the group, ask each group to do a 5 minute presentation of the topic given to them.
- Participants are free to use any medium for presentation - it could be a debate, a discussion, a short play, or storytelling.

Statements

- Alabama Abortion Law - Under the Human Life Protection Act, a doctor who performs a banned abortion in the state of Alabama (USA) would be guilty of a Class-A felony and could be sentenced to life imprisonment.
- The issue of abortion is one of consent.
- Maneka Gandhi (former Women and Child Development Minister of India) said that she would like a system that includes the compulsory determination of the sex of foetuses and the 'tracking of attempts at female foeticide by the parents'.
- Today's fathers are more involved in parenting children than ever before.

Facilitator's notes

Reproductive rights and motherhood tend to invite responses that are culture specific, rooted in religious values. Hence it is important for the facilitator to impress upon the participants the need to be open minded, tolerant. The facilitator also should have strategies to mitigate any aggressive, biased discussion.

Activity 6
Video

Duration – 25 minutes

Watch the video:



"The Costs of Idealizing Motherhood | Julie de Azevedo-Hanks | TEDxOgden"
Duration of video: 13:28
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIC8XqTSLUE

The Costs of Idealizing Motherhood | Julie de Azevedo-Hanks | TEDxOgden – A Summary

Duration of the video: 13:28

TEDxTalks. "The Costs of Idealizing Motherhood | Julie De Azevedo-Hanks | TEDxOgden." YouTube, YouTube, 22 July 2019, *www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlC8XqTSLUE.*

This is a TED talk by a therapist about the personal and social costs of the idealised view of motherhood promoted by religion and culture in the United States. Audience reaction to the points made is prominent.

When Julie Hanks' kindergarten teacher asked her about her ambition, she said she wanted to "be a mommy". She has spent 28 years raising four children and admits that motherhood can be challenging. Julie, a therapist by profession, has noticed that most women who come to her express feelings of guilt about childcare, conflict about working, and shame and inadequacy about whether they are a good mother.

Julie grew up in the conservative religious community of the Mormon Church. With her religion advocating conventional gender roles, she had to reflect on how religion, culture and history collectively impact the expectations set for women. She shares her resulting experience of insecurity about parenting and motherhood.

Julie looks back to the agrarian communities where children worked alongside both of their parents on the farm. It was not until the mid-1800s "cult of domesticity" that motherhood was put on a pedestal. Middle and upper-class women were told to create a sanctuary at home for their family, one where women's influence was to be "pure and morally superior". This was the start of the idea of separate spheres for men and women.

In the years after World War II, Julie notes, the 'female homemaker-male breadwinner' model was seen as the norm. It was this model that shaped Julie's socialisation; she was admonished not to seek employment, that prioritising motherhood would bring her joy and fulfilment. Her religious education also promoted this model as did her parents. Her father was a musician and lay clergy; her mother was a full-time homemaker-mother with nine children. Julie was told that she was inherently nurturing and selfless. Her desire for a college education and ambition to be a singer-songwriter made Julie doubt herself. She found it difficult to fit into the accepted template of motherhood and considered herself to be fundamentally flawed.

Struggling to accommodate aspirations outside her home and family, Julie developed depression and an eating disorder. Therapy helped her to reflect on what choices she had as an adult, and she became aware of her personal strengths. Understanding that she had choices helped her to break from the gendered norms. Although she married at the age of 20, Julie managed to go to graduate school, toured and recorded as a performing songwriter and built a career as a psychotherapist. She published two books, established herself as a speaker, and was appointed as a college professor.

Julie remained an active member of her church. She believes that it is because of her partnership marriage that her goals have been realised. In her family, each member contributes to maintaining the household and supporting one another's goals.

Julie addresses motherhood as something that needs to be valued and not idealised. She believes that the idealised view of motherhood promoted in the entertainment industry, in books, and on social media constructs a norm that suggests that there is a single, right way to be a mother. Julie denies that this is the case. She draws an important distinction between defining motherhood as a role with certain expectations and promoting motherhood as an important and valued relationship between mothers and their children.

Instead of buying into the standards set by external sources, Julie urges mothers to redefine what mothering means to them in terms of the quality of their relationship with their child. She also advocates engaged fatherhood and a balanced partnership. She notes that the contributions of women without children are in no way less valuable, claiming that motherhood is not a status but a choice.

Facilitator's notes

Discuss some ideas and issues of motherhood that the speaker talks about.

- Is caregiving just a woman's role?
- What happens when one idealises motherhood? What are some of the pressures that idealising motherhood imposes on women? (Encourage participants to draw on examples from their own experiences).
- More and more people are choosing to be child-free. What do you think about this preference? Can motherhood be a choice?

End the session by showing the participants the picture given below. This picture was being circulated widely on social media during Mother's Day.



SESSION 4

WORK



This session looks at the opportunities and restrictions imposed on women in relation to work. Women are currently relegated to low-paid and low-skilled jobs. Across the globe, women are engaged in work that includes unpaid work at home, child-care, labour on the family farm, and work that is currently not valued by society.

Rapid globalisation has not only impacted national economies but has also promoted forms of industrialisation in agriculture that are more exploitative of both human and natural resources. As the poor of the world become poorer, women face a double burden. The "feminisation" of poverty is a reality in the contemporary world. Women need protection from sexual harassment in the workplace, trade unions, and labour organizations. Better infrastructure and provisions are needed to support women in the workplace such as paid maternity leave, nursing breaks for breast-feeding mothers, crèches and day-care centres, and toilet facilities. Attitudinal shifts to encourage and sustain women in the workforce are also needed, both more generally and in relation to the recognition and mitigation of menstruation related health problems as these affect working women.





Objectives

- To discuss persistent gender stereotyping with its wage and status implications, in terms of career opportunities
- To engage with social biases that restrict the choice of professions
- To reflect upon the biases held against domestic and farm work



Outcomes

- Participants will recognise the gender stereotypes they hold regarding certain professions.
- They will also be able to identify issues and discuss possible alternatives to break free from biased assumptions.



Resources

1. Printouts of occupation checklist for Activity 1
2. Computer or system to play the video
3. Projector
4. Speakers
5. Printouts of poem handout
6. Plain sheets
7. Sketch pens/coloured pens



Duration

155 minutes

- Activity 1 - Men's work or Women's work: 40 minutes
- Activity 2 - Let's create new words: 10 minutes
- Activity 3 - Maze: 45 minutes
- Activity 4 - Domestic work: 40 minutes
- Activity 5 - Draw the farmer: 20 minutes

Activity 1
Men's work or women's work?

(Adapted from "Don't flounder get off the hook - Consider non-traditional occupations", Gender Equity Activities, Alaska Department of Education)
Duration – 40 minutes

Process

Using the Occupation Checklist at the end of this activity, participants will match jobs and careers to gender.

- Hand out copies of the "Occupation Checklist" to individual participants.
- Read off the listed occupations.
- Describe any jobs with which participants might not be familiar.
- Have participants fill out their checklist, matching jobs and careers to 'Male,' 'Female,' or 'Both' by circling what they see as the appropriate response.

Facilitator's notes

The group, with the facilitator's help, answer the following questions:

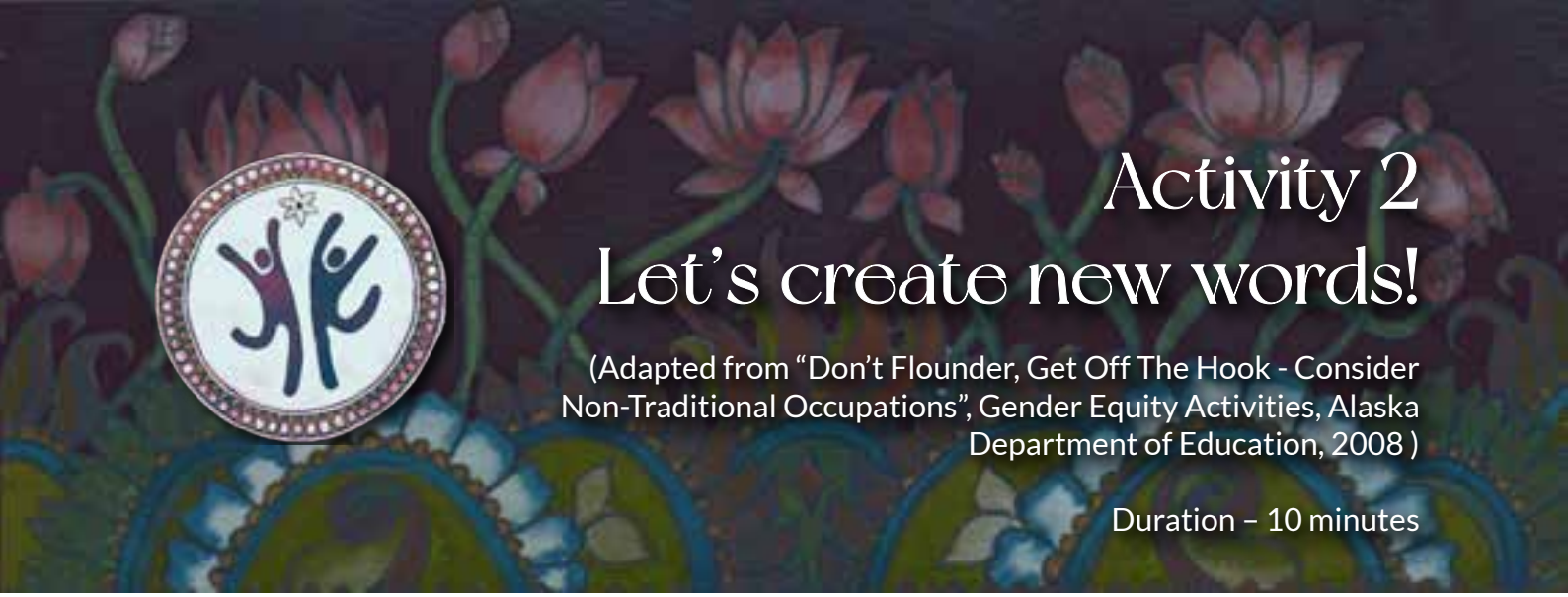
- Which group - "male" or "female" - had the largest number of assigned occupations?
- Which jobs require working with people? Were "male" or "female" assigned the larger number of such occupations?
- Which jobs have the most "status," and, of those, how many are designated for "males" and how many for "females?"
- Which jobs offer the most salary potential, and, of those, how many are designated for "males" and how many for "females?"
- Which jobs require the most/least amount of education, and of those, how many are designated for "males" and how many for "females?"
- Did you assign some professions to a gender based on physical appearances? What are some negative impacts of stereotyping someone's profession based on appearance?
- Which professions were assigned to "both"? What was the reason?

The group should discuss any issues concerning gender as they arise. The focus should always be on "WHY?" Why are some jobs traditionally gender designated? Why does inequality of wage and status occur along gender lines? Encourage the group to think about the consequences of occupational gender stereotyping? How do gendered expectations, preconceptions, and stereotypes work to limit an individual's choices?

Occupation list

Check whether you believe it is a male's occupation, female's occupation, or both.

Construction Worker	Cook
Pharmacist	Librarian
Flight Attendant	Photographer
Baby - sitter	Dietician
Social Worker	Nurse
Newspaper Editor	Doctor
Secretary	Computer Analyst
Cashier	Accountant
Teacher	Software Engineer
Mechanical Engineer	Homemaker
Hair stylist	Dental Assistants
Astronaut	Pilot
Model	Artist
Professors	Carpenter
Store Clerk	News Reporter
Police Officer	Cab Driver
Veterinarian	Telephone Operator
Politician	Lawyer
Physical Education Teacher	Scientist
Plumber	Physician



Activity 2
Let's create new words!

(Adapted from "Don't Flounder, Get Off The Hook - Consider Non-Traditional Occupations", Gender Equity Activities, Alaska Department of Education, 2008)

Duration – 10 minutes

Process

Here are some words and job titles. Can you think of ways you would change these titles to make them more gender fair or neutral?

- Foreman
- Repairman
- Fisherman
- Congressman
- Actor
- Manmade
- Manpower
- Housewife
- Weatherman
- Policeman
- Men in uniform
- Mailman
- Sportsmanship
- Anchor-man
- Maid
- Cleaning Lady
- Freshman
- Manhole
- Landlord
- Tomboy
- Chairman
- Mankind

Activity 3
Maze

Duration – 45 minutes

Process

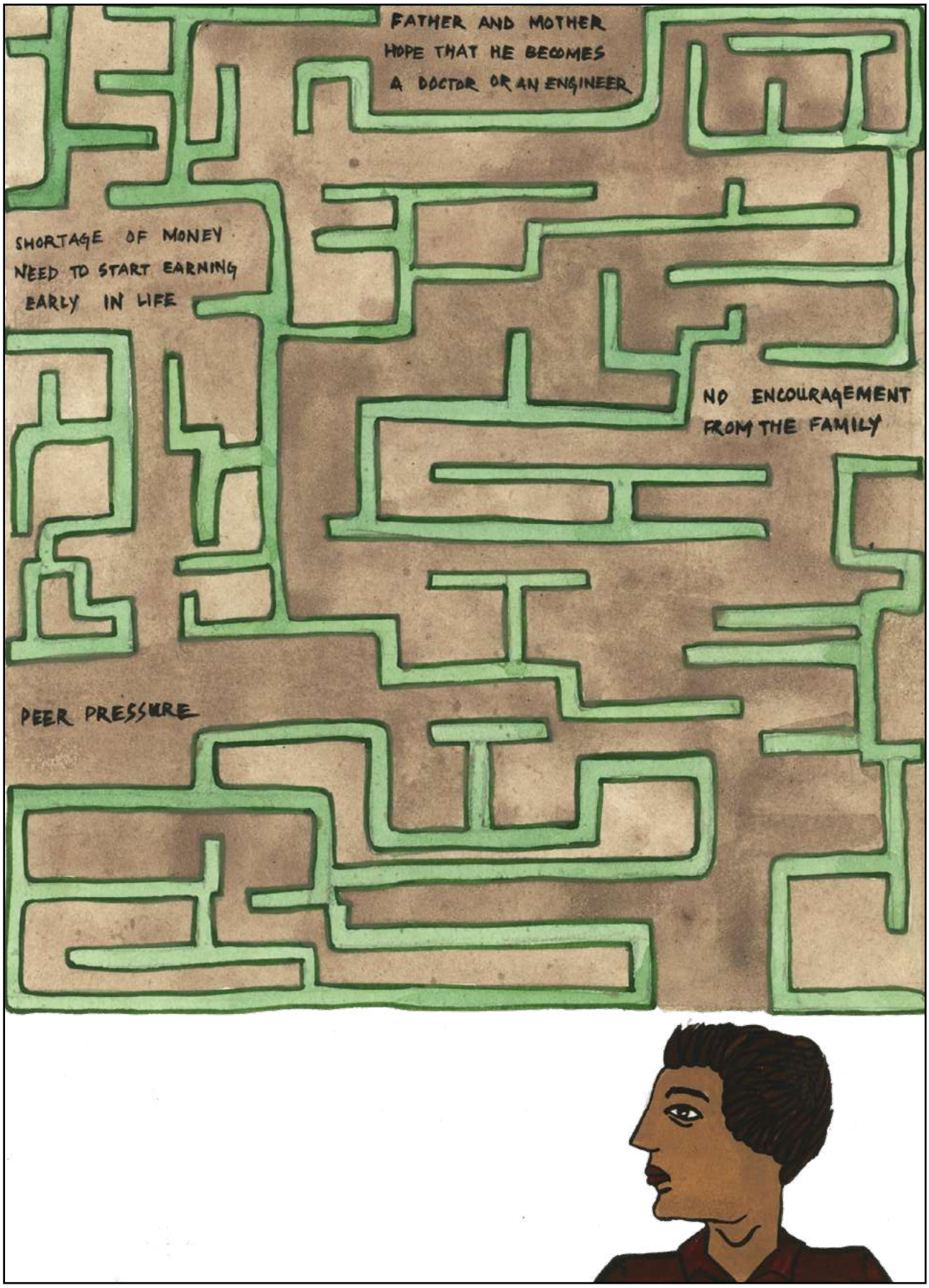
- Project the maze for the participants. In case the projector is not available then xerox the maze as handout and distribute to the participants.
- Tell them the situation - Simon wants to grow up and become a film hero, singer and dancer. Alisa wants to become a doctor when she grows up. What are the difficulties/hurdles that they may face on their way to achieving their goals?
- Ask two volunteers to come forward and trace the mazes on the screen.

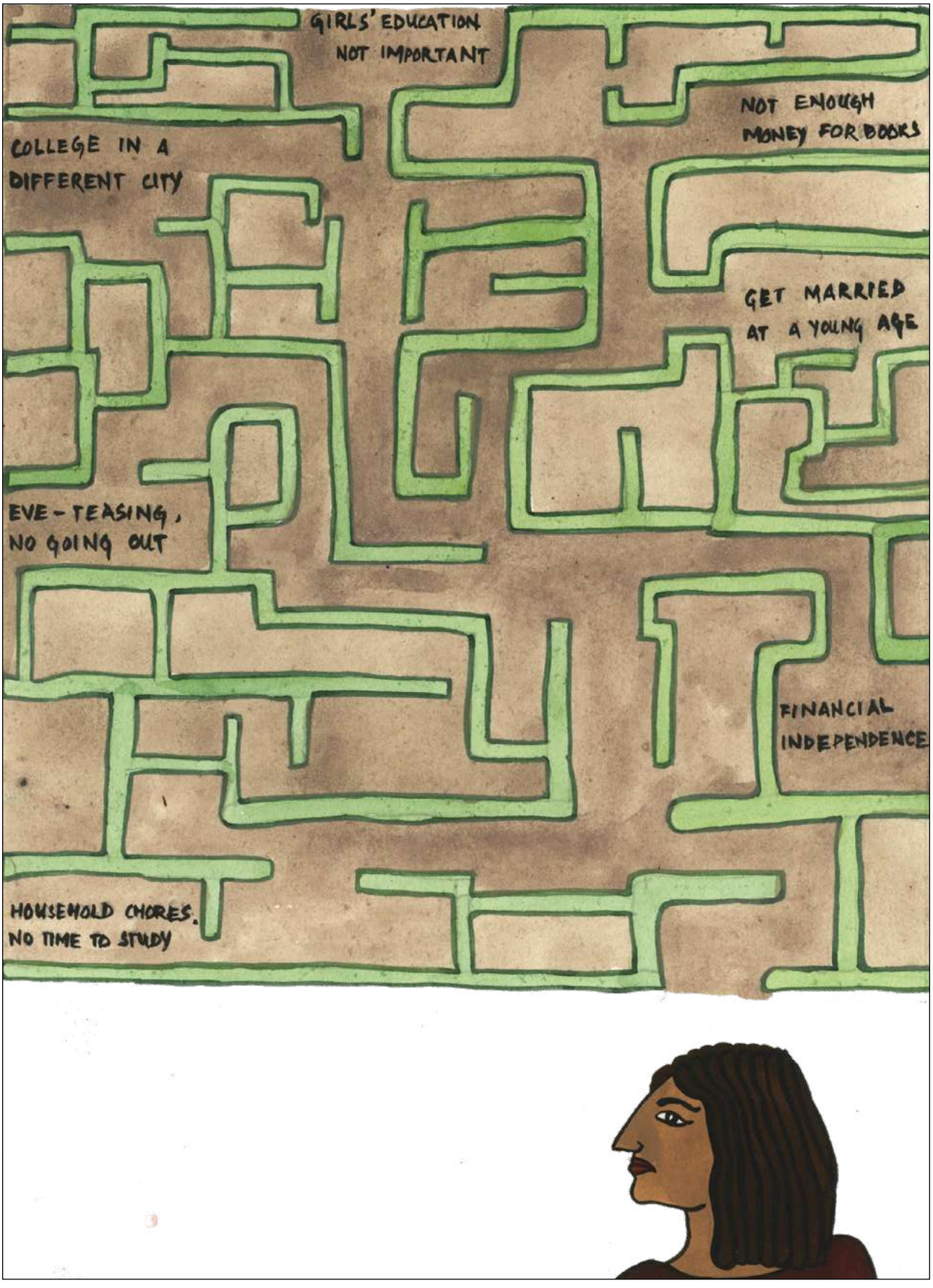
Facilitator's notes

The obstacles mentioned in the maze are indicative. The facilitator can add more obstacles appropriate to the social, cultural dynamics of the participants.
During discussion focus should be on the impact of work on limiting the choice of achieving dreams, especially in the context of a girl's life.
If the group consists of both men and women some of the responses might not be according to the mainstream understanding of gender stereotypes. It is important that the facilitator makes sure that no one group dominates the discussion and proposes a victim position.

Questions for discussion:

- What other obstacles might Simon and Alisa face in working toward their goals?
- Compare Alisa's progress in the maze with that of the women around you. Are there similarities between their life and what is happening in Alisa's life? What do you think would be Alisa's life if she is able to reach the end point of this imaginary maze?
- Discuss with the group the societal and familial pressures that a girl and a boy face on their journey to achieve their dreams.
- What are some obstacles that you faced in preparing for the profession that you are in currently?
- Did you have to give up a dream for some career because of your gender?


FATHER AND MOTHER HOPE THAT HE BECOMES A DOCTOR OR AN ENGINEER
SHORTAGE OF MONEY NEED TO START EARNING EARLY IN LIFE
NO ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE FAMILY
PEER PRESSURE


GIRLS' EDUCATION NOT IMPORTANT
NOT ENOUGH MONEY FOR BOOKS
COLLEGE IN A DIFFERENT CITY
GET MARRIED AT A YOUNG AGE
EVE-TEASING, NO GOING OUT
FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE
HOUSEHOLD CHORES. NO TIME TO STUDY

Activity 4
Domestic work

Duration – 40 minutes

Process

One set of images present women involved in domestic work.
The other set of images present a possible situation where the entire family, irrespective of sex, involved in domestic work.

Present the images either on a projector or as a handout.
Allow the participants to look at the images for 5 minutes. Then present the newspaper headlines mentioned below.







Now read the following headlines in some of India's leading newspapers and other publications.



Facilitator's notes

The facilitator needs to be sensitive to the personal nature of the activity. Some participants may not want to bring in their personal experiences. On the other hand some might be very open about their impressions about domestic work. So the facilitator may have to steer the discussion in a balanced manner - avoiding too many personal experiences and complete avoidance of engagement with the issue.

- Compare the above images with the headlines. What do you feel are the issues that need to be considered?
- What is your opinion about domestic work? Ask the participants if it is acknowledged, recognised, and appreciated?
- Spend some time discussing the work done by domestic help, which is mostly done by women. The headlines highlight the unregulated and exploitative nature of the work they do. Why do you think domestic help remains a thankless and poorly paid profession?
- Why do you think the economic contribution of housework is overlooked, with women considered "non-contributors"?
- What do you think needs to change in the situation of domestic workers?

Some facts that the facilitator can discuss about the nature of domestic work done by women. (Points taken from Gender Sensitivity Manual, UNESCO, 2002)

1. Very energy-intensive, with low rates of return
2. Tedious tasks
3. Longer working hours than men
4. Invisible and thankless domestic work
5. Seen as non-remunerative activity
6. Rural women in most countries, who are responsible for a higher percent of food production, receive little or no agricultural training
7. Women have limited opportunities for learning new skills
8. When traditional work is mechanised, men take it over, women lose their jobs, and their work tends to become obsolete

If participants want to read some articles domestic workers, here are the links -

https://www.epw.in/engage/article/domestic-workers-rights
https://feminisminindia.com/20181/07/04/domestic-workers-india-law-policy/
https://www.lawyerscollective.org/the-invisible-lawyer/situation-domestic-workers-india-needs-change
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/why-domestic-help-continues-to-remain-a-thankless-job-in-india/articlesshow/68442844.cms?from=mdr
https://thewire.in/rights/domestic-helps-abuse-exploitation

Activity 5

(Adapted from Gender Sensitivity Manual, UNESCO, 2002)

Duration – 20 minutes

This activity draws attention to the understanding of agriculture participants in the process of agriculture. Drawing is the first step before beginning the discussion. Assure the participants that drawing should help the participants to inform the group what they have witnessed or they assume an active agricultural land will look like.

Resources required:

Chart paper
Pencils/Colour Pencils
Handout of written instructions (optional)

Process

- Inform participants that this is a drawing activity.
- Distribute written instructions to the participants.
- Ask them to read silently and draw as instructed.

Written instruction -

- Think of a farming community you know - your countryside or your own village, a place you have visited.
- Now imagine a farmer working on a farm or a field. Draw the farmer with the background scenery as you like.

The instruction must refer to the person to be drawn only as “the farmer”. Be careful not to refer to the farmer as “he” or “she”, or by any other pronoun or word that might imply the sex of the farmer.

Facilitator's notes

- Discuss with the group how the drawings represent the participants' subconscious views about farm work and farmers.
- How many of the drawings show the farmer as a man and how many as a woman?
- Discuss participants' attitudes and preconceptions about farmers. Do they feel they have gender-based views?
- What other professions do they immediately associate with men and which with women? Why?

SESSION 5

AMBITION



This session looks at the structural inequalities women face when they enter the workforce, especially when employed in high-income and managerial positions. This session focuses on the double burden placed on women who are expected to perform a larger share of the household tasks while also performing competitively in the workplace.

The session also looks at the theme of ambition, encouraging participants to examine the ways in which gender shapes women's dreams.





Objectives

- To reflect on the concepts of equality and equity
- To acquaint participants with the concept of the glass ceiling
- To encourage participants to think about the structural discrimination that women face, making it difficult for them to fulfil their ambitions



Outcomes

- Participants will be able to acknowledge the structural barriers faced by working women
- Participants will also be able to conceptualise the attributes of a gender equitable workplace



Resources

1. Print out of the poem and story for the participants
2. Chart papers
3. Markers/sketch pens
4. Computer or system to play the video
5. Projector
6. Speakers



Duration
120 minutes

- Activity 1 - Glass ceiling: 60 minutes
- Activity 2 - Reading the poem: 20 minutes
- Activity 3 - Videos: 20 minutes
- Activity 4 - Reading the story: 20 minutes

Activity 1
Glass ceiling

Duration – 60 minutes

Process – Show the group the following image.



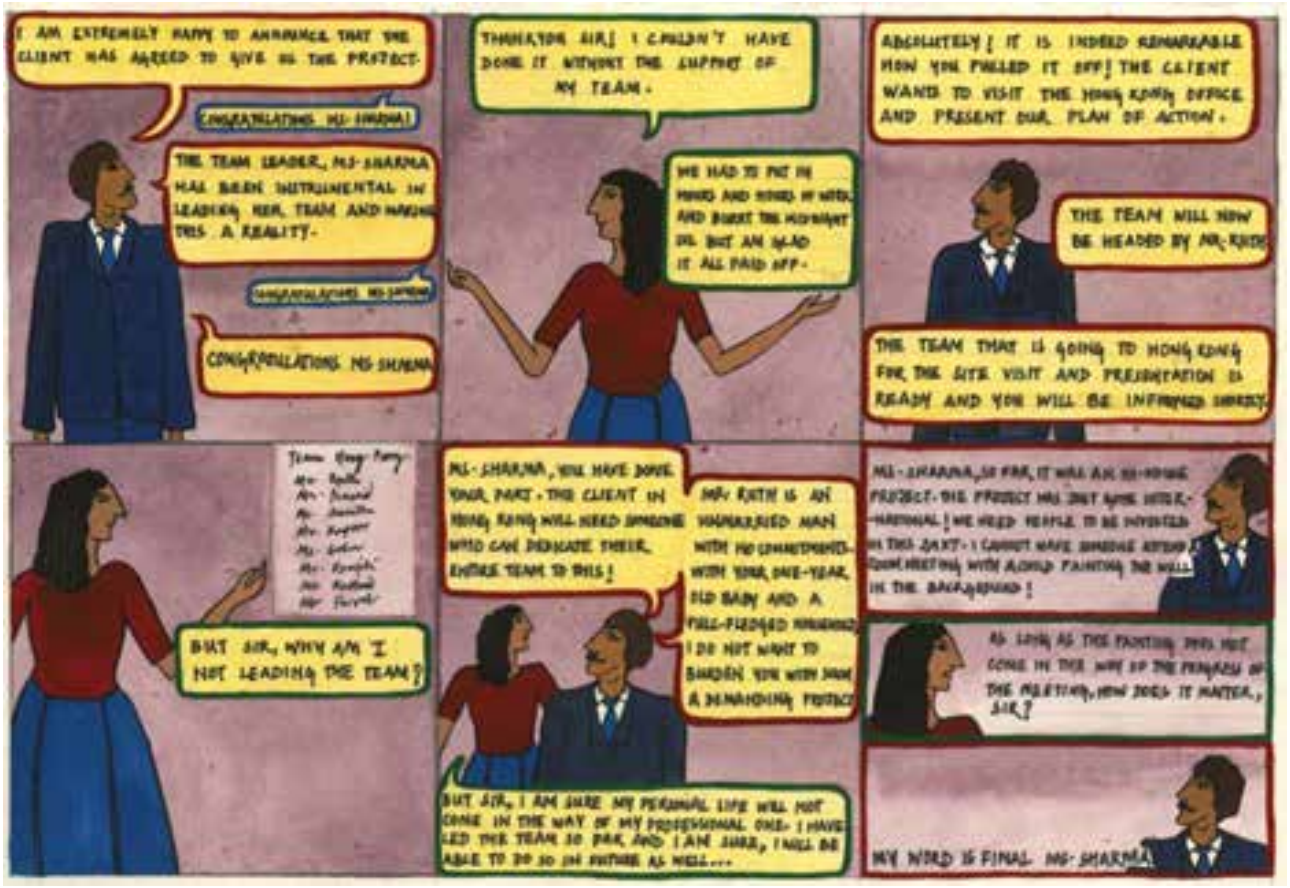
Illustrating Equality VS Equity

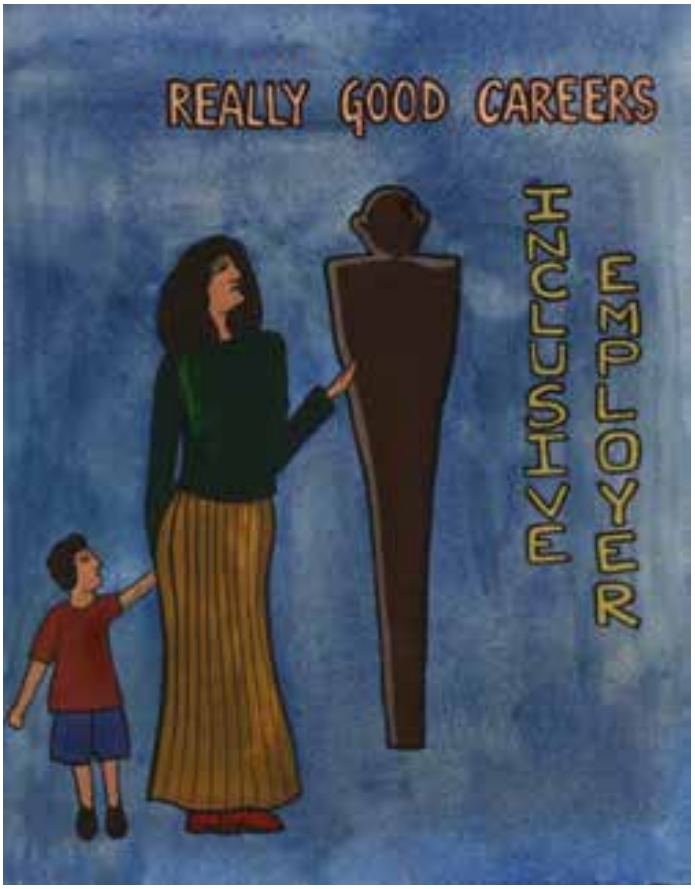
Facilitator's notes

Allow the participants to be open about their impressions. In the beginning, the participants need not be very critical. Instead, the description of the above image can help to break the ice about the theme. The facilitator can make note of the keywords used by the participants to lead the discussion using the cartoons later.

Discussion questions:
Ask the group what equality means to them? What is equity?
Then show the group the above image.
What is the artist trying to convey? What is equality and equity as depicted in this image?

Now look at the following two comics -





(Inpsired by 'Really Good Careers' - April 3rd, 2012 Barry)

Facilitator's notes

- After having seen the images, ask the participants to share their thoughts.
- Do women have equal opportunities on the career front?
- A glass ceiling is a metaphor used to represent an invisible and unacknowledged barrier that keeps women from rising beyond a certain level in a professional space. What barriers do you think are represented by the glass ceiling?
- What are some reasons for the glass ceiling?

For the second part of this activity, divide the group into smaller groups, 5 people in one group.

- What needs to be done to make career progression fair, just and equitable for women?

1. Each group should list down people who they think can bring about a change. Encourage the groups to identify those involved who could make a difference: family, community, policy-makers, politicians, employers and so on.
2. Under each type of individual listed above, what changes could these individuals make to bring about greater equity. Identify at least one change per head.

After the exercise, the smaller groups can present their ideas for wider discussion by everyone.

- What provisions would be required to establish a gender equitable policy for a workplace?

1. In the same smaller groups identified for the earlier discussion, discuss the above question.
2. Ask the groups to develop a structure for the policy they design, setting out objectives, outcomes, and other relevant components.
3. All groups to discuss their ideal gender equitable workplace policy with the entire group.

Activity 2
Reading the poem

Duration – 20 minutes

Process

Distribute the printout of the poem and read the poem aloud. 'The Forbidden Dream' is written by Hyma Francis

Facilitator's notes

If the participants come from different age or multiracial or multiethnic groups, the facilitator should be conscious of the responses rooted in social, educational, political contexts. It is important to make sure that no one age group or a choice gets to dominate the discussion.

Questions:

Read the poem aloud to the participants or one of the participants can read it to the group.
Ask the group to reflect upon the discussion in the earlier activity and highlight what some barriers are that the protagonist is facing in this poem.
Have you or do you know someone who has faced a similar situation in their lives?
What did you/they do?
What would you/they have liked to do?
What kind of support did you/they need to achieve that?

The forbidden dream

Her mom said things which referred to
Things that adults talk about,
those which are not usually talked about to her.
Was mother hinting at things that were expected of her
when she grew older and became a Mother and a wife?
Was that a hint at her future... hmm... she wonders

But her Mother never appreciated,
when she admired the romantic movies
The movies in which the man and the woman are so happy together.
Wasn't she trying to feel like being
that what her Mother hinted?
She is so confused. Whawt is shown to me and what is it that I should see?

She saw herself written out for her,
She does not have to worry who she is
That is already taken care of.
She will be what they want her to be,
and they know what She is to be,
Just like the many others who came and went before her.

But She had a dream you see,
She dreamt of love and romance,
And wished, that the little part that she is to play,
Will be one of dreams and romance
And she yearns that such a life is woven for her.
That is all she wanted you know, a little bit of happiness for the way.

So in a book she wrote,
Of her dreams
The love that she would share,
Coloured the little moments of everyday life with their love.
The days she wrote for herself,
The way she saw her part.

Too sad for her because she did not know,
That her dreams were far from Mother's
It does not happen in real life you fool!
Do you not see that? That is no reality
You talk of career and family, both at the same time?
He can have that, and you are to help.

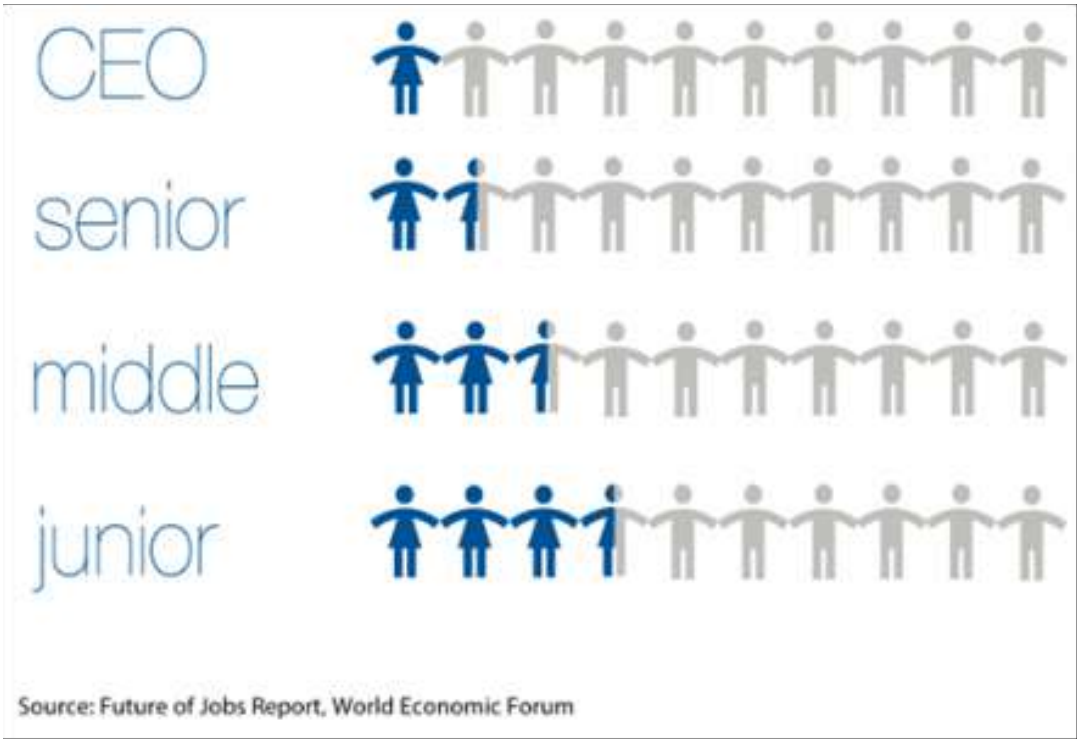


Activity 3
Videos

Duration – 40 minutes

Process

See the image below and watch the video.





"Why we have too few women leaders | Sheryl Sandberg - A Summary"
Duration of video: 15:28
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18uDutylDa4

Why we have too few women leaders | Sheryl Sandberg – A Summary

Duration of video: 15:28

TEDtalksDirector. "Why We Have Too Few Women Leaders | Sheryl Sandberg." YouTube, YouTube, 21 Dec. 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=18uDutylDa4.

This is a TED talk by the Chief Operations Officer of Facebook; it addresses the changes in behaviour that women need to make sure that more women become leaders in their fields. She suggests that women need to ensure that they "take a seat at the table" where decision making happens, that they recognise and promote their own successes; that women need to make their partner a full partner at home; and that women do not anticipate a career break before it is dictated by circumstances, that until that moment they do not "take their foot off of the pedal" that will move them up in the career race for promotion and opportunities.

Sheryl Sandberg cites statistics to demonstrate that not only are women not fairly represented at the top of their professions anywhere in the world but also addresses the global disparity in terms of equity and basic civil rights for women. She notes that the numbers have not changed significantly since 2002; indeed, they are moving in the wrong direction. Even in the non-profit sector, only 20% of the leaders at the top are women. She acknowledges the conflict that women face, trying to balance professional success with personal fulfilment. This difficulty is illustrated by the fact that male

senior managers are twice as likely to have children than female senior managers.

Sheryl offers women three ways to tackle this situation as individuals. Sit at the table. Sheryl suggests that women underestimate their own abilities. Women often keep quiet and do not negotiate for themselves in the workforce; be it their first salary or celebrating their success. She tells a story against herself illustrating that she had failed to notice that while giving a talk, she took more questions from men than from women. She also points to a Harvard Business School study that demonstrates that while successful men are seen as likeable, successful women are treated warily.

Make your partner a real partner. Sheryl is convinced that women have made more progress in the workforce than in the home. She notes that in two income households, women are more likely to do more childcare and to take on more domestic responsibilities and labour than men. She mentions how women are the first to drop out when someone is needed at home. She attributes this, in part, to the greater pressure placed on boys to succeed. Even if a stay-at-home dad is happy to support his wife, other mothers with children do not include him when their babies play together. Working inside the home is the hardest job, Sheryl says; it should be recognised as of equal importance to any other profession. Studies show that households with partners who bring in equal earnings and share responsibilities have a reduced divorce rate and greater marital satisfaction. Don't leave before you leave. Too often women anticipate childcare issues well before the prospect of motherhood makes any adjustments necessary. As a result, women stop seeking new projects and promotions, quietly leaning back as they ask themselves how they will fit new family responsibilities into everything else they are doing.

Because motherhood is itself rewarding, it is important to have a challenging job to provide the motivation for going back to work. Sheryl urges every working woman to continue pursuing the opportunities and promotions that will ensure she has a fulfilling job when she returns.

Sheryl remains hopeful that the upcoming generations will see women at the top of their working industries. She dreams of a world where half the companies are run by women; this, she suggests, would make for a better world. She wants to see a world where her daughter can not only be successful, but also be liked for her achievements; where her son can decide whether to contribute to the workforce or to stay at home.



Facilitator's notes

If the participants want to talk about the video, a discussion should be facilitated.

Activity 4
Reading the story

Duration – 20 minutes

Process

Read the following short story.

'Arti, A Small Entrepreneur Embodying A Big Change' is written by Ankita Gambhir

Facilitator's notes

What would have been different in the story if the protagonist was a man? What makes the story different and more noteworthy when the protagonist is a woman?
What are some hurdles that Arti had to face? Are these an impediment for men too?
Discuss: women who work face a double burden as the demands of place of employment are added to household stressors.

Arti, A Small Entrepreneur Embodying A Big Change

In a patriarchal society such as ours where working women or women as entrepreneurs are always frowned upon, this is a real life story of a woman who stood up for herself, and despite all circumstances made a mark in her village and is setting an example for the present and future generation of their village, or perhaps for the whole country.

Here, I am talking about a woman entrepreneur in a village near Varanasi city. She is a woman who has not completed her high school, has no formal training prior to starting her venture, was married at an early age, belongs to a low socio economic background, has children, and has successfully managed to build a business with profits. This was exactly what researchers Anu and Pallavi of The Change Designers were looking for. Anu and Pallavi went to meet a group of 25 women in the same village; while having a conversation with the women, they asked if there is any such woman in their village who faced the odds of early marriage, lack of education, from a poor family but was successful in running her own business. Arti, a bold, confident woman who radiated a myriad of shades of her personality just like her ombre pink saree, said, "I am the woman you are looking for. I run my own chaat shop, earn for my family and take care of all their needs all by myself". Arti radiated confidence through her body language, her deep gaze and more importantly by the words she spoke which expressed her unique strength of character.

As they reached her chaat shop, she courteously made them sit right next to her shop, which she operates from her house. She took a moment to check if there had been any customers in her absence, glanced over her cart to see if everything was in order, and took an update of how the day was progressing with the sales and customer inflow. She showed them around and revealed that she ran three businesses at once. Beamingly, she presented to them her fruit and juice stall and her cold drinks shop, both of which she ran besides the chaat shop. 'I have a business for all seasons. It helps me maintain my income all through the year and never run out of customers'.





Humbly, Arti took to the chulha (wood stove) that was placed in the same premises as her shop and without wasting any time began stirring the vegetables as she prepared for lunch while keeping a lookout for customers. She dashed to her fruit shop as she identified some potential buyers. Arti greeted her customers and welcomed them to her shop. She asked her customers if they were looking for anything in particular. Recognising her customers' needs, she showed them the ripest of fruit and advertised her fruits as 'super fresh'. As some customers fanned themselves using their scarves and handkerchiefs, Arti jumped at the opportunity and offered to make them some fresh fruit juice, a service she offered in addition to just selling fruit. She did not feign from luring customers to her chaat shop as well and said with a slight smile on her face, 'it's the best chaat you can find in the entire locality. You must try it'.

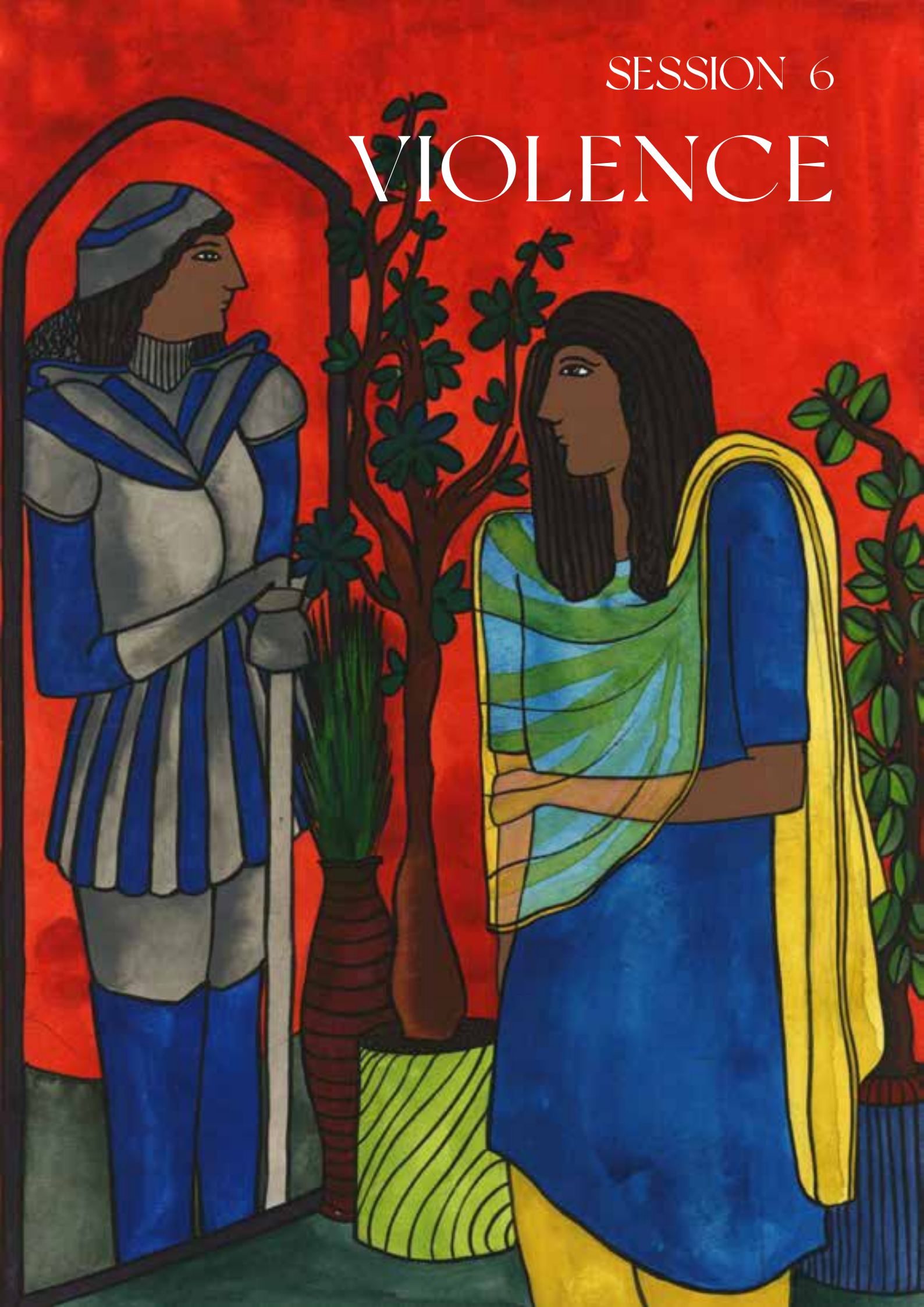
Arti, a woman of few words, paid no less heed to her children while continuing to carry out her three ventures. She simply said, "This is not where I stop. My maternal uncle trained me early on in business; I have a very seasoned pair of eyes now. I plan to do the same with my children and gift them the shop in the corner that I've bought for them, once they prove their mettle as entrepreneurs."
Arti knows how to make her customers buy her products; she treats them hospitably to keep them in her shop longer, offering them a cup of tea or 'chai', and does not forget to have a pleasant conversation and invites them to come again! Arti proudly owns 'Arti Chaat Corner, Arti Fruit Shop and Arti Cold Drinks'. Arti takes the loose end of her Saree, and cleans the sign that bears her name in red outside her shop with love.

"This is one story that drove this Positive Deviance inquiry in Uttar Pradesh, India with women entrepreneurs who are successful despite the extreme odds they face," said Anu.

*This story is a part of a positive deviance inquiry carried out in Uttar Pradesh with women entrepreneurs done by The Change Designers.

SESSION 6

VIOLENCE



Gender-based violence, a phenomenon deeply rooted in gender inequality, is a human rights violation. Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of their gender. Both women and men experience gender-based violence, but the majority of victims are women and girls. Sex determination at birth, female foeticide and infanticide, child marriage, bullying and other forms of discrimination at school, female genital mutilation, sex trafficking and prostitution, child-sexual abuse, intimate-partner violence, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and cyber-violence are a few examples of the forms of gender-based violence.

The numbers are staggering:

- 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.
- Globally, 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner.
- Globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner.
- 200 million women have experienced female genital mutilation/ cutting.[5]

It is not an understatement to say that violence against women has huge social and economic costs; it impacts children, families, and society. It is important to talk about gender-based violence and this session initiates that conversation.



Facilitator's notes

Gender Based Violence is a sensitive topic. The facilitator must make an effort to know the participants' background before deciding to use this module. If the facilitator is unable to get the information about the participants, then it is important that the participants are given a choice to be part of the discussion, if the topic/activities trigger painful memories leading to emotional or psychological consequences.

It is important for the facilitator to think about her own responsibility to create a safe space before conducting this module. The demands of creating a safe space might differ in different circumstances. Hence it is important to plan this module keeping all the implications in mind.

5. Violence Against Women and Girls. Worldbank.org,
https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/violence-against-women-and-girls



Objectives

- To reflect upon the role of gender in experiences of violence
- To discuss the forms of gender-based violence
- To engage with the concept of consent



Outcomes

- Participants will be able to reflect upon the role gender plays in increasing the risk of facing violence
- Participants will be able to discuss various forms of violence faced by girls and women and to identify the role of individuals and systems in preventing such violence
- In the session, participants will be encouraged to discuss the meaning and importance of 'consent'



Resources

1. Blackboard
2. Projector
3. Printouts of story handout
4. Speakers



Duration
170 minutes

- Activity 1 - What is violence?: 20 minutes
- Activity 2 - Keeping myself safe: 30 minutes
- Activity 3 - Short story: 60 minutes
- Activity 4 - Understanding consent: 60 minutes

Activity 1
What is violence?

(Adapted from Gender Equity Movement in Schools - Training Manual for Facilitators, ICWR, 2011)

Duration – 20 minutes

Process

- Ask the participants what the first thing that comes into their minds is when they hear the words "Violence" and "Harassment".
- List their answers on the blackboard.
- Ask participants which of their answers refers to sexual violence, physical violence or emotional violence; help them by defining the differences between sexual, emotional, and physical violence.
- Ascribe each listed response to one of the three categories, noting the category on the board.
- Ask the participants to come up with a definition of violence that is broad enough to incorporate the full list.
- Help them to come out with a definition that encompasses all the points.

Facilitator's notes

- What is violence according to you? One might define it as any act that will cause harm (mental, physical or emotional) to another person against whom the act is directed. Denial of rights that a person has is also violence.
- What are the forms of violence? - sexual, emotional, physical violence
- Why do people use violence? People with power use violence as a means to control the powerless or people with less power
- What forms of violence are most and least common? Why? - Physical violence is more noticeable, but silent emotional violence is more invisible. Similarly, sexual violence is not discussed because of various restrictions that the society places on women.

Activity 2
Keeping myself safe

Duration – 30 minutes

Process

- On the blackboard, make two columns - Men and Women.
- Ask both men and women in the group what they do daily to prevent themselves from being sexually assaulted.
- Write down the points under the column.

Sample responses - Always carry a cell phone with me; register numbers of people I depend on speed dial; do not go out at night; carry pepper spray; take different routes everyday to and from work; make sure my family knows my routine

Facilitator's notes

- Reflect upon the final list. What are some things that men do and what are some things women do? Ask the group why there is such a difference between the two lists?
- Whose responsibility is it to make women feel safe? You should probe the roles played by the woman, her family, society, policy, infrastructure and so on
- What are some changes needed to make women feel safer?
- As an exercise to do at home, draw a similar list for what you keep in mind and what actions you take when in situations such as the following: -

  When looking for someone on an online dating site
  When going shopping
  When going for a walk at night
  When dressing up for work
  When going out for a party

Activity 3
Short story

Duration – 60 minutes

Process

Distribute the handout to the group and ask them to read the story. 'Unbroken' is written by Surabhi Unni



Facilitator's notes

- What are the different contexts and relationships in which the women in the story are facing violence?v
- The story largely talks about sexual violence. What other kinds of violence do women face? What are some forms of violence that girls or young adults have to face? Probe forms of gender-based violence like female foeticide; discrimination faced at home, workplace and society; dowry; child marriage; and the physical, emotional and financial violence faced in marriages.
- Discuss with the group reasons for gender-based violence.
- What are the consequences of violence faced by women? Probe into the physical, mental, and sexual health of women. Explore the consequences of violence to self-esteem and in the conditioning of children.
- What role can men plan in preventing violence against women?

Unbroken.

Chapter 1

- Nisha typed.

Centralized the text.
Made it Bold.
There were times when she felt like a pianist. Her hands flew effortlessly over the keyboard in perfect synchronization to the music in her mind. The music, which was her thoughts.
At other times, she clenched and unclenched her hands, placed her fingers lightly on top of the different keys, ready to type, but the words remained unformed.
This was one of those times.
Inhale. She took a long drag out of her cigarette.
The smoke filled inside her, and tranquillity opened its arms wide.
Exhale.
The smoke spiralled out of her mouth and diffused into the room, slowly, deliberately.

2 floor down.

Steam enveloped Devi's face.
Her existence too.
But at this moment, just her face.
As she stood there, she was suddenly very aware of every breath she took. A bead of sweat formed on her forehead and began traversing down her face.
She blinked furiously. The steam was making her eyes water. The sweat and the tear. How curious. At a glance, they both look the same – they're both water after all. Similar. And yet so different.
She blinked away another tear. The sounds of her own body were causing her immense frustration. She could hear her eyelashes meeting each other; even if it was only for a fleeting moment, and then go apart. She could hear the bead of sweat rolling down her neck, as clearly as a marble rolling on a wooden floor.
She looked out the closed window.

Wasn't the whole purpose of a window, for it to open out into something?
"A window of opportunity".
She smirked.
She stared out the closed window, and the grey wall beyond the window stared right back at her.
The tear that fell now was not because of the steam.

Behind Closed Doors

Mahi awoke with an intense pain in her lower abdomen.
Her eyes flew open.
Wait. Was this a dream? Was she even awake?
It could be possible that she was awake, but still dreaming.
Her hands blindly searched the room for some aspect of reality. For something solid that could prove to herself that she was awake.
She gave up and ran her hands through her hair. Soaking wet.
Her hands, through their own accord, clutched at the hair and tugged it.
Déjà vu.
This had happened before; but the hands were not hers.
She rubbed her eyes tiredly. Soaking wet.
She had felt the pain. The pain was far too real. Far too raw.
And far too familiar.
This had happened before, and previously, it wasn't a dream.



Devi

With each step she took, she realized how much she detested this apartment.
The walls were unpainted, the stairs were falling apart, and every other day she would find a used condom right where she sat on the terrace every day, to find some peace.
She smiled shyly to herself when she mused that the owner of the condom also probably found a very different kind of peace at the same spot too.
As she opened the metal door and let herself out, she realized she was holding her breath.
And the breath was held until she reached her spot and spotted that spiral of smoke that she had now grown so accustomed to.
That familiar spiral of smoke set her free every day, even if it was only for a few moments.
She smiled at Nisha, and Nisha stared back.
Months of this daily rendezvous had passed and Nisha still couldn't bring herself to smile when she saw Devi. But then again, Nisha hardly smiled at anyone.
Devi looked at Nisha, and for a second, she saw a confident, modern woman. The complete opposite of her. Nisha, who cursed like her life depended on it. Nisha, who held her cigarette with the same sensuality that one would hold their lover's face. Nisha, who transformed her complex web of thoughts into beautiful writing – writing that pierced your heart and opened your soul.
Nisha, who despite her cussing, cigarettes, short hair and her independence, was abused by her boyfriend.
Devi's eyes finally rested on Nisha's bruised right eye that she had so artfully tried to cover with makeup.



Nisha

It had been years since Nisha cried.
Her mind could be screaming in agony but her body wouldn't betray a single tear.
She had screamed into a pillow, she had hurt herself, she had let others hurt her but the eyes just would not tear up.
She glanced at Devi.

Devi, with her kind eyes that cried every day. Suddenly, she was incredibly envious of Devi. How cathartic must it feel to be able to cry whenever one wants to.
Months had passed. Every evening, they sat in silence.
And yet, multitudes were spoken.
Devi – a true goddess. In her plain cotton saree, and greying hair that was always in a bun, Devi's presence for those few moments every day was the only time that Nisha breathed freely.
Devi wore her scars as a reminder to herself and to every other individual that tolerance is just as bad as abuse.
In Devi, Nisha saw a version of herself that would probably never come true.
Because she enjoyed the pain. When it wasn't Riteish hurting her, it was she, herself who did so.
The pain helped her write. And writing helped ease the pain.

Devi had walked away. She had said 'ENOUGH'. Enough, of the abortions. Enough, of the rape that was not really rape, because it happened within the institution of marriage. Enough of everything that she tolerated simply because she was married to the man.
One day, she just left and never looked back.
Nisha saw strength. Immense courage, and also immense frailty.
Devi had walked out of one nightmare, and into another one.
Money - that piece of paper that governed every aspect of everyone's lives. Devi barely had any. So, her dreams were smothered in the kitchen by the steam that rose out of the food she cooked for a Tiffin Service.
Ironic, that even when a woman consciously leaves the relationship that restricted her to the kitchen and the bedroom, she is eventually brought back and enclosed within the same four walls.
Freedom is an illusion.

Mahi

She was running. But she couldn't tell if she was running away from something or towards something. She didn't know why she was running, but she knew she couldn't stop.
There was one thing that both fascinated and terrified her about running. When you start running, it's a beautiful feeling – you are pushing the earth behind with your legs and cutting through the air. But once you begin getting tired, the legs do strange things. Your mind is screaming at your body to stop, your lungs are burning, and there is a tight pain in your chest – but you cannot stop. Every muscle is tense, every cell in your legs is tight with pain, and you can feel the breathlessness in your chest. Surprisingly, you can feel the breathlessness in your legs too. It's not just your lungs that need to breathe; it is every part of your body.
She had to tell someone. But who?
As she looked around frantically, she saw two women sitting, in silence, looking sometimes at each other, and sometimes at the setting sun.
She walked towards this scene that looked so peaceful that she feared shattering it.
"I was raped." She said, her voice cutting through the silence. The word hung in the air, taking its time to diffuse into the air. It had taken years for her to admit this to herself, and she could feel the weight of the word against the silence on the terrace.
She had expected more surprise from two women who were disturbed from their reverie by such a crass deliverance of something that was meant to be spoken about only in hushed whispers.
But they just looked intently at her.
She didn't know that when abuse becomes so integrated into one's life, it becomes mundane, there is no surprise when they see someone else in the same situation; there is just a mutual recognition and respect for another survivor.
She sat down.
And just like that, the silence that existed before she came, cloaked her.
She suddenly lost the urge to speak. To explain herself. To provide an introduction of herself.
They understood. Even without words, they understood.

Peace.
The setting sun set fire to the sky.
The sky was a canvas, raging with the colours of fury. Red, orange, yellow - they all blended into a beautiful fiery chaos that, instead of burning, placed a cool hand on the hearts of the three women.
Eventually, they rose. And walked quietly back into their prisons – both mental and physical.
An acknowledgement before they shut their doors.

Tomorrow.

Activity 4
Understanding consent

Duration – 60 minutes

Process I

Ask the group what they mean by consent.
Ask them situations where consent is needed.
Then show them this short film called Suno -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNekk07Qt2g



"SUNO | Sumeet Vyas & Amrita Puri | TTT"
Duration of video: 11:42
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNekk07Qt2g

“ SUNO | Sumeet Vyas & Amrita Puri | TTT “
A Summary

Duration of video: 11:42

Yogi, Shubham. “SUNO | Sumeet Vyas & Amrita Puri | TTT.” YouTube, YouTube, 21 June 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNekk07Qt2g.

This short film focuses on the issue of what constitutes domestic violence and emphasises the importance of communication and consent within a marriage.
TW: The following report may be triggering to certain viewers.

In SUNO, the short film on consent, a couple reflects on their relationship and lack of communication. After an experimental night in bed, the female protagonist gets back from the hospital and gets into the car. She has told the doctor that she was hurt when her iPad fell on her face and is upset that he assumes she is a victim of domestic abuse. The husband does not listen to his wife’s remarks and the conversation dies down as he drops her at her office. He tries to get her to take the day off, but she refuses.

At the office, her colleagues ask how she got hurt and immediately conclude that her husband was physically violent. She is tired when she gets back home and looks at her bruise in the mirror. Her husband has made the ‘daal’ she likes and asks her to come and taste it. The wife seems dazed and slowly asks him to listen. She narrates how everybody at work has asked if she is all right. Her husband brushes it off, asking her to say they were wrestling. It bothers her that everybody thinks he beat her.

She brings up Mrs Dawar, who cornered her in the elevator and questioned her. Her husband gets annoyed that a person who put the wrong fuel in her car is asking questions that do not concern her. He senses that she’s bothered and asks her to take a few days off. She says she has a lot of work to do and leaves the kitchen.
The next evening the wife tells her husband that Mrs Dawar has invited her to a support group for victims of domestic violence. Even after three weeks, everybody at work still thinks it’s true. On Thursday evening, she says she has a headache and her husband does not listen when she talks about attending the support group meeting post-work. As she continues, he asks how the ‘Delegation of Damsels in Distress’ goes and learns about one victim who does not take her TB medication so that her husband will stay away. The pepper spray that she was given at the meeting bothers her husband. When she refers to it saying, “Visibility acts as a deterrent”, her husband asks her to keep it inside.

She gets serious and says she wants to share something. She says that she told them he hit her. Her husband is angry when he questions why she did that. She tells him to not get upset before explaining that despite it being an accident, she did get hurt. When he asks her to share how she got hurt, she quotes Mrs Dawar saying,’ that is the oldest way to get hurt.’

The husband begins yelling and starts to defend himself saying he did not rape her. She keeps asking him not to scream and he leaves the bedroom, telling her to stop meeting those women. She is angry that he thinks he can make her decisions because he is her husband. He is angry and accuses her of lying about him. She tries to communicate that she did not lie because he did hit her. He comes closer to her and even after she asks him not to touch her, he holds her by her shoulder and angrily apologises that she got hurt.
The wife asks him to stay away because he is scaring her. He says her fear is because of the stories from the meeting, not because of him. He convinces her that she’s not a victim and that he would never hurt her.

She calmly asks whether he asked for her consent that night. He says she didn’t say no. She says she did but he didn’t listen.

Facilitator's notes

- What do you think happened in this film?
- What were some of the feelings of the woman and the man?
- The couple seems happy and understanding - why then did the man hit her?
- Are they both in denial that violence happened? Why?
- Marital rape is normalised to the extent that women don't even realise that they are being violated by their husbands. Even if they do recognise the abuse for what it is, they find it impossible to come to terms with it. What is your opinion about marital rape?
- In the film, why do you think the woman found asserting consent in her marriage confusing, difficult, and unclear?
- What support systems helped the woman in the film? Can you identify some other support systems or strategies that women in her place can use?
- What other institutions need to coordinate their work to support the woman facing violence?
- What is the responsibility of other institutions to support a woman who has faced violence?
- If you had a chance to speak to the two characters in the film, what would you tell them?

Process II

Now watch this video - *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8*



"Tea Consent"
Duration of video: 2:50
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8

"Tea Consent"
A Summary

Duration of the video: 2:50

Brian, Rachel. Blueseatstudios.com. "Tea Consent." YouTube, YouTube, 12 May 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8&t=1s.

This is an informational, animated video that explores issues around consent. It uses offering a cup of tea as a metaphor for seeking consent for sex.

This informational video on consent draws parallels between initiating sex and making a cup of tea for somebody else. To know if someone really wants a cup of tea, one needs to ask. If the person responds by saying "I would love a cup of tea! Thank you!", then it is a clear indication that they want it.

If the person responds by saying "I'm not really sure", then regardless of whether one makes the tea or not, it is important to understand that the recipient might not drink it. One person must not force another to drink the tea just because it has been prepared.

In the third scenario, if the response is "no, thank you", then it is important to acknowledge this preference and not to make the tea at all. There are a few scenarios when they might initially say "yes please" or "sure!" but do not want the tea once it is made. Despite the effort put into making the tea, the person is under no obligation to drink it after it is brewed. People can change their minds and should not be forced to consume the tea made.

In another case, if the person is unconscious, they should neither be offered tea nor made to consume it. Even if they were conscious when they responded initially, their current unconscious state means that they are no longer in a position to consent or enjoy the tea. Thus, they should not be forced to drink tea.

If they began drinking and suddenly passed out, it is important to ensure that they are safe; they should not be offered or forced to drink the remaining tea. Furthermore, just because they said yes to tea once, does not mean they would want a cup of tea every day. A person should not be forced to drink a cup of tea just because they fancied it once. Nobody expects one to barge in unexpectedly with a cup of tea and force them to drink it.

Whether it be tea or sex, clear, verbal and timely consent is important.



Facilitator's notes

Discuss any thoughts that the group might want to share after watching this video.

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