



A GUIDE TO FACILITATING A

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE



When it comes to women's health, communication plays a key role in keeping you and your community informed. Accurately reporting on women's health issues is critical because rumors and inaccurate information can have devastating consequences. This facilitation guide is designed to increase awareness about women's health matters and your role as a community health advocate. Are you ready to be a facilitator?

NOTE: BEFORE PLANNING YOUR SESSION, REVIEW THE [AFRICA4HER WOMEN'S HEALTH WORKBOOK](#) AND PRINT OUT COPIES OF THE HEALTH TOPIC PAGES. THESE HANDOUTS WILL BE USED IN THE LAST ACTIVITY OF THIS FACILITATION GUIDE. IF YOU DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE HAVING GROUPS DISCUSS ALL FIVE OF THE TOPICS, YOU CAN CHOOSE THE ONES YOU WANT TO FOCUS ON- JUST MAKE SURE YOU PRINT ENOUGH COPIES SO THAT EACH GROUP HAS A COPY OF ONE OF THE TOPIC PAGES FOR THE ACTIVITY.

TOTAL TIME: 80 MINUTES

Introduce Yourself (3 minutes)

- Thank your participants for joining and introduce yourself. Be sure to mention that you are an interested YALI Network member who wants to start an important conversation about women's health in your community.
- Briefly share why you are interested in this topic and chose to organize a community dialogue on women's health.

Icebreaker: Common Ground (5 minutes)

- Have participants form a circle.
- Join the circle and state your name and one fact about yourself: what you like to do in your free time, your favorite food, your occupation, etc.
- Have the person to your left introduce him/herself and share a fact.
- Ask all participants who share the same fact or interest to raise their hand.
- Continue to go around the circle until everyone has provided a fact about him/herself. Remind participants to keep it short — you only have 5 minutes!

Watch Lesson Two of the YALI Network Online Course, “Effective Communication for Healthy Outcomes” (16 minutes)

- [Lesson Two: Health Communications: The Message, The Messenger, and The Audience](#)

Group Discussion (30 minutes)

The questions below are designed to encourage deeper, more thorough conversations with your participants about the importance of accurate health information.

- In the video, Dr. Demby notes that for health messages to have an impact on their intended audiences, they must be relevant, credible and verifiable.
 - Think of a recent women’s health campaign in your community: Was it clear to whom the message was directed?
 - What were some of the ways the message was crafted to reach the intended audience? In what ways did you think it was effective or ineffective?
 - Was it clear that the health campaign was based on reliable data from a credible source? If so, why?
 - How do you think the message could have had a bigger impact on the intended audience?
- As noted in the video, the health messenger is as important as the health message.
 - Who would you consider a credible women’s health messenger? Why?
 - What are the best sources of women’s health information in your community?
 - What are some of the reasons why you would not listen to a women’s health messenger?
- Crafting women’s health messages for specific audiences is critical. Those you’re trying to communicate with may have different backgrounds and beliefs, and different groups may receive and react to messages differently.
 - How many potentially different audiences can you identify in your community?
 - What are the similarities between the groups? What are the most significant differences?
 - What tools and tactics can be used to reach distinct audiences?

Additional Resource: If you are facilitating a session solely on gender-based violence (GBV), you can also use the [“What is Gender-Based Violence?” Facilitation Guide](#) to help you plan and run a successful session.

Group Activity (20 minutes)

Divide participants into groups of three to five people and ask each group to first select one of the following five health topics then brainstorm as many facts about the topic as they can over five minutes:

- HIV/AIDS
- Menstrual and Maternal Health
- Gender-Based Violence
- Mental Health
- Noncommunicable Diseases (Such as Ovarian Cancer)

Once five minutes have elapsed, pass out relevant health topic pages from the Africa4Her Women's Health Workbook and ask participants to take the next five minutes to review their handouts and compare their brainstormed facts against those in the guides. Invite participants to discuss the following within their small groups:

- What facts did you get right or wrong?
- What did you learn over the course of the exercise? What surprised you?
- Ask a representative from each group to share a few key observations with the larger group.

Wrapup (3 minutes)

- Thank participants for attending and briefly restate the importance of women's health.
- Ask participants to sign up for the YALI Network at yali.state.gov