



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition • FSN Forum

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Call for submissions No. 202 • 09.10.2024 – 27.11.2024

➤ <https://www.fao.org/fsnforum/call-submissions/community-engagement-rural-transformation-and-gender-equality>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Community engagement for inclusive rural transformation and gender equality

The objective of this call for submissions is to collect good practices, experiences, and lessons learnt on the use of community engagement for inclusive rural transformation and gender equality. The initiative, organized by the [Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division \(ESP\)](#), seeks to gather insights from a diverse range of contributors, both within FAO and from external stakeholders. Its goal is to share knowledge, foster learning, and guide the scaling up of community engagement and community-led collective action to leave no one behind. The call builds on FAO's past efforts in this area, such as the [Community Engagement Days](#) series of webinars.¹



The call for submissions is open until 27 November 2024.

How to take part in this call for submissions:

To take part in this Call for submissions, please [register](#) to the FSN Forum, if you are not yet a member, or “sign in” to your account. Please review the **topic note** to understand the criteria we are considering for this call. If you wish to learn more about community engagement, you may refer to the [background document](#). Once you have completed this submission template, upload it in the box “Post your contribution” on the [call webpage](#), or, alternatively, send it to fsn-moderator@fao.org.

Please keep the length of submissions limited to **1,500 words** and feel also free to attach relevant supporting materials.

¹ The call for submissions is directly aligned with the thematic components of collective action within FAO's Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), specifically Better Life 1 (Gender Equality and Rural Women's Empowerment), Better Life 2 (Inclusive Rural Transformation) and Better Life 3 (Agriculture and Food Emergencies).

Template for submissions

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| Contact person | Name: Josephine Klein Organization/Unit: MAGENTA/Programmes Country: Tunisia Email address: josephine@magentaconsulting.org |
| Name/title of the good practice | Promoting positive masculinity in rural northern Côte d'Ivoire among populations targeted by violent extremism |
| Where is the good practice taking place? (Multiple selection allowed) | <input type="checkbox"/> Europe and Central Asia <input type="checkbox"/> Latin America and the Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> North Africa and Near East <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sub-Saharan Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Asia and the Pacific <input type="checkbox"/> North America <input type="checkbox"/> Global |
| Affiliation | <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer and producer organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union <input type="checkbox"/> Informal community-based, farmer-based or self-help group <input type="checkbox"/> Research and academia <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Local/traditional authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Society Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental Organization (e.g. UN system, World Bank) <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Partner/Donor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) MAGENTA is an independent organization specialized in SBC, providing our partners with 360-degree behavioural research, design, implementation and evaluation services. MAGENTA partners with a variety of international actors such as International organizations, CSOs, NGOs, Governmental agencies, private organizations, etc. In the context of our Positive Masculinity project, MAGENTA worked on a USAID funded program, but was contracted by Equal Access |

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| | International that is an NGO, which was itself contracted by the Intergovernmental Organization USAID. |
| In which sector(s) and context (s) have you used this community engagement good practice? (Multiple selections allowed) | <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Sanitation <input type="checkbox"/> Food production in agrifood systems (please also tick the sub-categories) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Crop cultivation <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries and aquaculture production <input type="checkbox"/> Livestock <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Agroforestry <input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture <input type="checkbox"/> Apiculture (beekeeping) <input type="checkbox"/> Agroecology and sustainable farming practices <input type="checkbox"/> Soil and water management <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Post-production in agrifood systems (please also tick the sub-categories) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Processing and value addition <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing and retailing <input type="checkbox"/> Transporting <input type="checkbox"/> Food loss and waste <input type="checkbox"/> Packaging <input type="checkbox"/> Storage <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Equality <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Action <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Social Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian and protracted crisis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution, peace and resilience <input type="checkbox"/> Digital innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Other sector (please specify) _____ |

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| | |
| Who are the financial partners supporting this good practice, if applicable? | Equal Access International (EAI) and USAID |
| <p>1. In a few sentences, summarize your community engagement good practice.</p> <p>To support Equal Access International's Resilience 4 Peace (R4P) program (funded by USAID), MAGENTA launched an initiative to foster positive masculinity in rural communities of northern Côte d'Ivoire where violent extremism has increasingly threatened social cohesion and stability. This project is designed to address harmful gender norms and promote healthier, more inclusive expressions of masculinity that contribute to peaceful and resilient communities. To this end, MAGENTA developed tailored capacity-building activities, including a comprehensive training curriculum and an intensive interactive and participatory workshop, with the target audience (frontline workers). These activities encompassed a range of topics, including deconstructing gender stereotypes, exploring diverse forms and expressions of masculinity, managing emotions constructively, and engaging in reflective exercises. Participants also created individual engagement plans, outlining realistic actions they intended to implement post-training. These exercises aimed to deepen their understanding of positive masculinity, foster empathy for gender-transformative approaches, and raise awareness of how social gender biases constrain communities—including men—while encouraging proactive change.</p> | |
| <p>2. What problem(s) or challenge(s) does your good practice aim to address through community engagement?</p> <p>In Côte d'Ivoire, especially at the northern border with Burkina Faso, in a region called Bouna, rising cross-border crime and violent extremist groups have worsened security, amplifying gender-related issues. Women and girls face significant challenges, with 36.7% of women aged 15 to 49 experiencing female genital mutilation and 58% of girls under 15 married in some areas. These inequalities, including a literacy rate of only 36.3% for women compared to 53.3% for men, restrict women's autonomy and economic opportunities. The positive masculinity capacity-building intervention led by MAGENTA aimed to tackle these challenges.</p> | |
| <p>3. Describe your good practice in more detail. Include the main guiding principles, the desired changes or outcomes you aim to achieve (<i>Theory of Change</i>), and the key phases of implementation.</p> <p>Positive masculinity shifts gender equality from being solely a women's issue to a collective responsibility by fostering men's self-awareness, questioning rigid norms, and promoting constructive behaviors. Bringing men around the table to discuss gender equality is an important best practice that empowers men to actively contribute to gender equality, fostering collective accountability and driving long-lasting changes within communities.</p> <p>MAGENTA developed the following ToC for its work in Bouna: If R4P staff, partners, and target group members participate in gender-transformative workshops, THEN participants' beliefs about positive masculinities will be reinforced, and their self-efficacy in promoting change will increase, AND THEN the presence of change agents for positive masculinities is increased in communities, AND THEN an environment that supports the fight against GBV and violent extremism is strengthened.</p> <p>To implement this, MAGENTA began with a preliminary situational analysis which included a literature review and informal consultations with EAI's local staff. The next phase involved developing draft iterations of the curriculum and receiving feedback from the EAI team. MAGENTA</p> | |

conducted a 4-day Training of Enumerators (ToE) under the Resilience 4 Peace (R4P) program, complemented by capacity-strengthening sessions and a finalization workshop where champions shared experiences and curriculum feedback. The approach, grounded in social norms theory and behavioral science, was participatory and designed to ensure local relevance and long-term impact.

4. Who are the **key actors and stakeholders** involved in the design and implementation of the good practice, and what are their respective roles? *Consider local partners, government, local authorities, community radios, civil society, research, the private sector, etc.*

MAGENTA's programmatic team partnered with EAI's local teams to design a robust capacity-building curriculum. The process began with a literature review and informal consultations with EAI's local staff to conduct a preliminary situational analysis. Draft iterations were shared with EAI's headquarters and local teams to gather comprehensive feedback, which MAGENTA meticulously integrated into the curriculum. Once finalized, field workers, project coordinators, and officers were selected as champions to participate in an intensive 4-day training program.

5. How does your intervention ensure **inclusivity and equal and meaningful participation** within the **community**?

The programme equipped 10 enumerators from the R4P program with advanced knowledge on positive masculinity. These enumerators, active across multiple regions of the country, are empowered to integrate this knowledge into their work, ensuring that the R4P intervention reaches diverse layers of society and fosters community-wide impact.

The intervention is grounded in a gender-sensitive approach, incorporating capacity-building to mainstream gender considerations into existing programming. The curriculum is designed to be culturally relevant, leveraging traditional community roles to spark reflection and dialogue on gender norms. Interactive methods, such as roleplays and real-life scenarios, are used to engage all community members, fostering understanding and encouraging behavior change. By creating a participatory environment, the intervention ensures that all voices are heard and that community members actively contribute to reshaping gender norms in a way that is inclusive and meaningful.

6. By using community engagement, what **results and impacts** have your good practice achieved?

The evaluation of the project highlights significant progress among participants in developing knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes toward gender and masculinity, showcasing the effectiveness of the intervention. The evaluation included a baseline assessment and endline assessment to understand changes in participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a result of the workshops. Key findings include:

- **Knowledge improvement:** The average score (calculated from the total of right answers divided by the number of participants, based on participants' understanding of positive masculinity and its associated concepts such as gender, stereotypes, etc.) increased from 8.5 to 10.4 out of 13, with participants demonstrating a jump in understanding from 65% to 80%.
- **Emotional management skills:** Participants who obtained maximum scores in the assessment rose from 13% to 50%, reflecting stronger emotional capacities for promoting positive masculinity.
- **Consistent interest:** During the post-training assessment, all participants (100%) were committed to the themes of positive masculinity, with greater intensity in agreement after the training.
- **Self-efficacy:** Confidence in embodying positive masculinity (understood as the expression of male identity in ways that promote equality, respect, and emotional well-being for all, challenging harmful stereotypes) increased from 88% to 100%, indicating collective empowerment.

- **Rejection of harmful gender norms:** Attitudes rejecting harmful gender opinions improved uniformly from 50%-88% to 100%, reflecting a transformative mindset shift.

Participants expressed a strong commitment to sharing their learnings with others in their communities, with many highlighting transformative realizations about positive masculinity. On average, they rated their readiness to deliver the training at 4.38 out of 5, reflecting increased confidence and a willingness to drive change as a result of the trainings.

The individual transformations observed during the training workshops indicate the effectiveness of the training curriculum and the mode of delivery. As a result, there is now a higher number of change agents within local communities who have the skills and knowledge to effectively and sensitively shift attitudes and social norms around positive masculinities. As local champions, these individuals will be able to replicate these trainings in the future and continue the cycle of capacity-development for years to come.

On a broader level, a community-led shift towards promoting positive masculinities will contribute to greater shared responsibility for advancing gender equality in Côte d'Ivoire.

7. Among these results, has the good practice led to improvements in terms of **gender equality, women's empowerment, and/or social inclusion**?

The following results stem from the training sessions facilitated by enumerators who had benefited from the Training of Trainers (ToT), highlighting the impact of the capacity-building approach:

- **Knowledge improvement:** The average score increased from 5.5 to 6.2 out of 13, with participants' understanding rising from 37% to 47.3%. While modest, this reflects progress in bridging knowledge gaps.
- **Emotional management:** Although no significant progress was noted in scores, trainers observed active engagement in emotional management exercises, particularly among religious leaders, suggesting potential for deeper reflection and future enhancement.
- **Sustained interest:** All participants (100%) demonstrated continued enthusiasm for positive masculinity themes, reinforcing alignment with the training's core messages and a solid base for further initiatives.
- **Self-efficacy:** Confidence in embodying positive masculinity rose from 93% to 100%, indicating readiness to implement changes and champion gender equality within their communities.
- **Attitudes toward harmful gender norms:** Participants' rejection of harmful gender opinions rose significantly to 93% in some areas post-training, evidencing a shift in perceptions and alignment with gender equality principles.

Positive masculinity fosters behavioral changes that challenge discriminatory norms and promote gender equality by emphasizing agency, leadership, and inclusive participation in local governance. It encourages men to become allies in advancing equity, supporting women and marginalized groups in decision-making processes. By addressing harmful power dynamics and promoting psychological resilience, this approach enhances the well-being and inclusion of marginalized groups, ensuring their voices shape governance and community development. Through this transformative practice, men play a critical role in creating equitable, inclusive, and resilient communities. By integrating positive masculinity as a best practice into existing gender equality initiatives in Côte d'Ivoire, long-term and sustainable behavioral shifts can be ignited.

*Describe the **behavioral changes** in terms of gender that the good practice promotes, emphasizing agency, leadership, and participation in local governance. Include efforts to challenge discriminatory*

norms and unequal power dynamics. Highlight also how the intervention has supported the well-being (including psychological resilience) of marginalized groups and enhanced their inclusion and participation in decision-making processes.

8. What **key challenges did you encounter while implementing **the community engagement activities**, and **how did you address them**?**

Initially, the online format of the training was a challenge for enumerators' engagement. The online format was due to the project being a pilot, and therefore being a small project with limited resources and facilities, MAGENTA mitigated the challenge of low participant engagement by developing interactive and participatory exercises to ensure that participants felt engaged in the training. Interaction was made possible through the use of Miro boards and other simultaneous tools.

Include any resistance from communities, pushback, or issues related to unequal power dynamics, if applicable.

9. What are the key **lesson learned from your community engagement good practice?**

Engaging men in positive masculinity can be challenging, as they often position themselves as primary victims of gender inequality, which skews their understanding and perspective on gender norms and may lead them to overlook the comprehensive nature of gender inequity and its disproportionate impact on women. To create meaningful change, it is essential to guide discussions in a way that broadens their awareness while ensuring their involvement does not inadvertently reinforce gender disparities or place additional burdens on women.

10. Has this practice been **replicated in the same context or in different contexts?**

That specific tool developed in the Bouna context has not yet been replicated, but the idea is to adapt it to the different regions of Côte d'Ivoire where R4P is implemented. Ideally it could also be replicated to other conflictual contexts where gender dynamics are being exponentially affected by insecurity.

MAGENTA has implemented positive masculinities projects in other countries, such as Honduras where we worked with young men in local communities to co-design a campaign called '#EsdeHombres' (It's a men thing') and train local 'champions' who replicated the capacity-building workshops in their own communities.

One of the key conditions for positive masculinities training and capacity strengthening is to ensure that it works within, and complements, existing gender equality programming in the region. Furthermore, it's essential to conduct an initial analysis of local understandings of gender, gender quality, masculinities, in order to adapt the trainings to resonate with local cultural and social norms.

What are the required conditions to replicate and adapt the practice in another context/geographical area?

11. How **sustainable are the results achieved by this good practice?**

Positive masculinity fosters long-term benefits by redefining gender dynamics and promoting healthier, more inclusive relationships. By encouraging men to challenge rigid gender norms and develop self-awareness, it leads to improved communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. Over time, these changes contribute to shifting social norms, reducing gender-based violence, and fostering equitable communities. This transformative approach not only benefits individuals but also creates sustainable foundations for gender equality, collective accountability, and stronger social cohesion.

Describe the key elements that need to be in place to make the initiative sustainable, including enabling environment (legal and policy frameworks and institutions), local ownership, accountability, etc.

12. Based on the conversations FAO held during the Community Engagement days, a definition of community engagement for empowerment was proposed:

“Community engagement for empowerment and community-led collective action can be defined as an inclusive and participatory process that enables community members to become active agents of change in decisions affecting their lives, health, and environment. This process develops their capacity to achieve sustainable outcomes for improved rural livelihoods. Embracing a rights-based approach, it prioritizes the agency and participation of all community members, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, caste, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, migration status, or ability/disability. Indeed, inclusive approaches recognize the complexities of overlapping marginalization and discrimination that can exclude different community members from decision-making processes and implement strategies to foster their participation, agency and empowerment.”

We invite you to contribute to this definition. What would you add or change? Please share your thoughts, suggestions, and any additional elements you believe are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of community engagement approaches aimed at community-led collective action for inclusive rural transformation, people’s empowerment and gender equality.

An additional dimension worth exploring is the community’s perception and recognition of the benefits they can gain through their own engagement. This perspective is fundamental to the concept of empowerment, as it enables individuals to see how change can positively affect both their personal lives and the broader community. By cultivating this awareness, community-led initiatives can emerge, driving deeper commitment and collective action toward sustainable progress.

1. Based on your experience, what **gaps or areas for improvement** still need to be addressed **in the field of community engagement**?

Based on our experience, one area for improvement in the field of community engagement is to be more mindful to reach a balance between involvement of powerholders and gatekeepers to ensure buy-in and reinforcing harmful power dynamics and norms by granting them power of the process.

2. What do you think is **FAO’s role in the field of community engagement**? How can FAO support and enhance interventions like yours, if applicable? *Consider aspects such as policy advocacy, capacity development, funding, technical assistance, knowledge production and sharing, and fostering partnerships.*

Link(s) to specific references about your good practice (e.g. reports, communication products, videos, articles)

Please include attachment(s) or add here link(s) to documents/videos/podcasts/other with specific references.