

A Day in the Life of a Smallholder Activity

Process

The process involves dividing a large group into four groups: young women, older women, young men and older men. Each group is given a large sheet of paper with each hour of the day (from 5am to 10pm) written down the side. The group then enter/record their activities on a typical day. Each group is then given a new piece of paper with the hours of the day and asked to record what they see as the typical day of the opposite gender i.e. the young women then record a typical day of a young man.

The two sheets from a group are then displayed to the large group - for example all participants view the typical day of young women as seen by young women themselves alongside the typical day of young women as seen by young men.

Facilitation

Facilitation of the discussion is very important. If this activity is part of a whole day on gender roles, the facilitator can probe and challenge, knowing that other activities will follow. However in the case of a general community workshop such as in this context, the facilitator ensures that the discussion acknowledges different perceptions but does so in an introductory way.

In the introductory model, the facilitator asks each group to comment on the others' perspective and share what they think. The question can be 'Is this true?' 'When might this happen?' or 'When does it not happen?' - an approach that surfaces the gender disparities. The facilitator needs to monitor the reactions and with the use of humour people can laugh at the differences as they begin to think about them. For example, one male group said they sit down in the evening and plan the family's activities for the next day; the women strongly disagreed saying that rarely happens. The facilitator defused the situation by pointing out that the group had written the words 'family planning' which has a totally different meaning regarding contraception. Everyone laughed with great hilarity.

In concluding this type of introductory analysis, it is important that the facilitator explain that this is a first look at different roles and that we will work together again at a later date. People can be invited to think about the new insights they have with a focus on how family members can share skills, time and workload.

Feedback

Feedback from this activity indicated that most people had not thought about different gender loads across the day and many men affirmed that women work very hard. Overall, people felt this was a good way to learn rather than being told what they should change and why.