

Step 3

Listening and learning through consultations



How to organise Community Consultations

- **Recruit groups of older men, older women, younger men and younger women to take part in the Community Consultations.** Explain that, in agreement with community leaders, you are starting a dialogue process between the generations, and between men and women in the community, to improve relationships and understanding. Participants will listen to one another as they talk about the communities' traditions and values. Together they will identify important community traditions and practices that they agree should be preserved, as well as others that should be changed because they cause harm. The Community Consultations are the first part of this process.
- **Two to three Consultations should be held with members of each group,** each with up to 20 participants. You will need to recruit 40 to 60 participants from each of these four population groups (160 to 240 people in total).
- Make sure to **invite individuals who play important roles in the community,** such as religious leaders, teachers, health workers, presidents of local clubs and associations, youth leaders etc.
- **Find two rooms or meeting areas** which are suitable for men and women to meet in separately for their respective Consultations. Schools and village halls are often good options. Set up the rooms in such a way that people can sit comfortably and engage in a group discussion. If you arrange chairs or mats in a circle, for example, everyone can see everyone else. Organise tea or cool drinks for each Community Consultation.
- **Schedule the Consultations** and invite up to 20 community members of the same generation and the same sex to take part in each one. Pick times for the sessions which are convenient for each of these groups, bearing in mind the times when younger and older people are most likely to be available. If you are well organised, and male and female teams work in parallel, you can meet and listen to two or three groups of each sex and each generation over the course of two days.

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- **Agree which facilitators will lead the different Community Consultations.** Keep the following in mind:
 - At least two facilitators lead each Consultation.
 - Women facilitate the women's Consultations; men facilitate the men's Consultations.
 - For the Consultations with older community members, at least one of the facilitators should also be older.