

Transforming Masculinities

Maintaining the essential elements

Purpose of this document

This document explains the critical elements of the approach which cannot be changed. It also explains which elements can be changed and adapted. This is to ensure that the approach remains effective in all the contexts in which it is implemented, regardless of the implementing organisation.

How to use this document



This document should be used after the [Transforming Masculinities: Quick guide](#) which gives a broad overview of the approach.



Read it before and with [Transforming Masculinities: Implementation guide](#) which includes in-depth guidance on preparing, budgeting and implementing Transforming Masculinities.

Transforming Masculinities has been shown to reduce sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). In one study rates of intimate partner violence (IPV) dropped by more than half after two years of intervention and there was also a more than five-fold reduction in rates of non-partner sexual violence (NPSV).¹

Transforming Masculinities is **evidence-based** – multiple implementations have shown positive shifts in rates of SGBV and the associated norms.

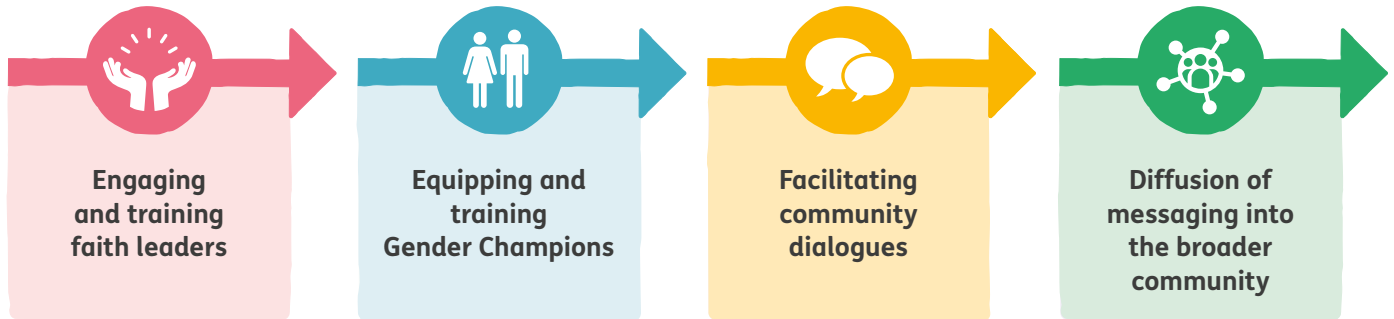
We are confident that when these core principles are retained there is a high chance of seeing these hoped-for results. When the core elements of the intervention are not adhered to it is very difficult to predict success. Tearfund is regularly asked about removing or changing core aspects of the intervention.

This document is designed to highlight the areas of the intervention that are considered essential, and to highlight the key considerations that should be taken when seeking to make changes to the approach.

¹ Palm S, le Roux E, Bezzolato E, Deepan P, Corboz J, Lele U, O'Sullivan V and Jewkes R (2019) Rethinking relationships: moving from violence to equality. What works to prevent violence against women and girls in DRC. <https://learn.tearfund.org/-/media/learn/resources/reports/2019-tearfund-consortium-rethinking-relationships-en.pdf>

Transforming Masculinities summary

The Transforming Masculinities approach features four essential components:



These steps are all **essential**. If any of these components are missing, then the intervention is not Transforming Masculinities and cannot be considered evidence-based.

Why Transforming Masculinities works

- **It recognises the role of faith practices and faith leaders in shaping social norms**
Transforming Masculinities deliberately refers to religious beliefs and texts, and works within faith communities. Religious teachings can contribute to both gender equitable and inequitable practices, and faith leaders have great influence to teach and role model change in order to end SGBV.
- **It mobilises the community on multiple levels**
Faith leaders are engaged at all levels – national, regional and local – to enable commitment to the programme aims. Local faith leaders and Gender Champions enable community level reflection and transformation.
- **It facilitates participatory and reflective dialogue**
Reflective community dialogues are essential for challenging existing harmful social and gender norms which devalue women. Combining scriptural reflection and participatory reflection, these dialogues enable participants to examine their own beliefs and practices.

Depth over breadth

The core principle of Transforming Masculinities is depth of transformation. While it is possible to scale up the approach, this must never take precedence over depth. Organisations using the Transforming Masculinities approach will see more significant, lasting change if they commit to working with fewer communities in more depth, instead of scratching the surface with many. The success of Transforming Masculinities depends on its authentic connection to real people and not only on the broad distribution of information.

Transforming Masculinities is therefore not recommended for:

- Short-term projects (less than one year)
- Projects which aim for high reach but low impact. Transforming Masculinities requires the staff time and funding to enable change.

For example, it is unlikely to be possible to work with 1,000 faith leaders in one year in a meaningful way unless there are high numbers of staff budgeted to support these faith leaders and Gender Champions.

Key considerations for implementation

More details can be found in **section 1 of the [Implementation guide](#)**, including mapping services and setting up referral mechanisms.

Timeframe

Shifting social norms, beliefs and practices takes time. Transforming Masculinities projects require two to three years for best results.

Months 0–6

Preparation time including formative research, stakeholder engagement, contextualisation or adaptation of the manual, setting up service linkages, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) development, baseline data collection and staff training on Transforming Masculinities.

Months 6–8

● Faith leaders ● Gender Champions

Trainings for faith leaders at different levels – national, regional and community – and Gender Champion trainings can take one to two months, depending on the number of people being trained. Faith leader workshops each last three days and Gender Champions last four days.

Month 9 to project end

● Community dialogues ● Diffusion activities

Community dialogues and diffusion activities should run in ongoing cycles for a minimum of 12 months and ideally 18 months. This is to reach as many people as possible in order to create community-level change.

Trainings of key actors



Training of trainers – for all key staff

Essential

- In every project, **the project staff must be trained by a master trainer on Transforming Masculinities**. Tearfund has a pool of qualified trainers.
- These staff will train the faith leaders and Gender Champions.
- Staff trainings are for a maximum of 16 participants.
- Direct project staff must participate. Ideally senior organisation staff will also participate.
- This training enables staff to make their own personal transformations. Transforming Masculinities is not just implementing activities, but engaging in transformation.
- The training also gives staff a comprehensive understanding of the programme.

Sections 1.4 and 1.5 of the [Implementation guide](#) give a detailed suggestion on how the project should be staffed.



National/regional level: Faith leaders

Essential

- National/regional faith leaders receive training in order to develop commitment and support for the programme, which enables greater community level uptake of the intervention.
- Although essential, this training is flexible – the training might be shortened – recognising that senior faith leaders may not be able to commit to the full three days.



Community level: Faith and community leaders

Essential

- Workshops for local faith leaders and community leaders last **three days** and are **ideally residential**.
- Workshops are for a **maximum of 24 people**.
- Aim for equal numbers of male and female participants.
- Women may hold leadership positions within the church without being ordained or in formal leadership.



Gender Champion training

Essential

- Gender Champions are selected by faith leaders and are **trained for four days** to facilitate the community dialogues.
- These trainings **should be residential**.
- Trainings are for a **maximum of 20 people**.
- An equal number of men and women are trained as Gender Champions.



Training considerations

Strongly advised, but not essential

- Aim for both male and female co-facilitators to deliver all of these trainings.

For more details on trainings and Gender Champion selection criteria, please refer to section 2.1 of the [Implementation guide](#).

Roles and responsibilities of key actors

In order to recruit appropriate Gender Champions, the eligibility criteria (see below) are shared with faith leaders. They identify and recruit men and women from the communities (local churches and mosques) in which they are based. The group of Gender Champions should be **50 per cent women and 50 per cent men**.



Roles and responsibilities of a faith leader

The responsibilities of a faith leader include the following:

- Reflecting on their own views and values
- Preaching sermons about SGBV
- Actively speaking out against violence and inequality
- Modelling positive behaviours within their families, churches and communities
- Selecting members of the faith community to become Gender Champions
- Supporting Gender Champions with logistics and biblical clarity on gender equality and SGBV



Eligibility criteria of Gender Champions

Gender Champions **must** fulfil all of the criteria in section 2.1 of the [Implementation Guide](#), including:

- Be interested in the issue of SGBV
- Be a member of, or affiliated to, one of the local faith communities where faith leaders have been trained in Transforming Masculinities

- Be willing to commit to the process of personal transformation
- Be willing to be engaged in SGBV prevention and response activities in their respective local communities
- Have good communication/oral skills
- Be willing to volunteer (with a small stipend if possible)
- Be willing and able to commit the time required for the six-week process (two hours to facilitate, plus two hours to complete forms and prepare per week)



Roles and responsibilities of a Gender Champion

The responsibilities of a Gender Champion include the following:

- Facilitating community dialogues and providing guidance to participants
- Demonstrating leadership in attitude and behaviour change
- Engaging with faith leaders to promote gender equality at the congregational level
- Providing feedback on the community dialogues, eg observing learnings and interactions with the participants (completing basic forms)
- Where relevant, providing awareness on various gender issues, including legislation to influence behaviour change, with the support of project staff. This could be facilitated during community dialogues, engagement with other stakeholders, and international events or celebrations.

Community dialogues

Community dialogues are more than community conversations. Community dialogues are separate discussion groups for men and women, facilitated by a trained Gender Champion of the same sex.

- Each group should have between eight to ten participants to ensure everyone can participate. There must be no more than eight to ten participants in each group.
- The same participants follow the six sessions together – once begun, the group is ‘closed’ to new members.

- Sessions must follow the community dialogues guide sequence.
- Ideally married couples should take part at the same time so they learn and make changes together.

Adapting Transforming Masculinities while maintaining core elements

To be effective, Transforming Masculinities needs to be contextualised to each specific context. More details on the contextualisation and adaptation process as well as existing adaptations can be found in sections 1.6 and 4 of the [Implementation Guide](#). In adapting and contextualising Transforming Masculinities it is important to maintain fidelity to the core principles in order to be effective.

Contextualisation

Small changes to enable local implementation

When we talk about contextualisation, we simply mean making changes to the presentation, terminology and activities within the Transforming Masculinities material to ensure it is as relevant as possible to the people who are participating. The core content of the trainings and community dialogues should remain unchanged.

For example, you could:

- Make the activities more culturally appropriate while keeping the core learning objective, for example using numbered pieces of paper for the Power and Status activity in contexts where playing cards are taboo
- Translate or re-design the material in a culturally appropriate way
- Select some alternative biblical passages, while retaining the majority of existing references

Adaptation

Making significant changes or adding new content

We refer to adaptation when adding in new topics and relevant content to address a particular issue or expression of SGBV.

Examples are:

- Adding thematic content on family planning, women's economic empowerment or female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C)
- Making significant changes to scriptural references, or using scriptural references and teachings from a different faith community, eg the Masculinities, Faith and Peace toolkit was adapted to be used by Muslims in Nigeria

The adaptation process is likely to also include contextualisation.

Social norms assessments, such as the [Social Norms Exploration Tool \(SNET\)](#), must be done for an adaptation and should be done for a contextualisation.



Adaptation and contextualisation traffic lights: Guiding changes for effective implementation of Transforming Masculinities²



Green Light changes are primarily contextualisation efforts which serve to increase Transforming Masculinities' relevance and effectiveness. These are changes that can be made but would be helpful to flag with Tearfund's Gender and Protection Unit.

- Updating and customising statistics, national laws and other contextual information
- Including culturally relevant stories, case studies and examples
- Updating images to suit the audiences better
- Using a more accepted, descriptive name than 'Transforming Masculinities', ie 'Transformed Relationships', 'Positive Masculinities'
- Translation into the mother tongue of participants



Yellow Light changes are changes that should be made in conversation with a technical specialist from Tearfund's Gender and Protection Unit.

- Adding activities to reinforce learning or to address additional risk and protective factors
- Adding in substantive new content to the trainings or community dialogues
- Implementing the programme with a new age group
- Removing faith-focused content and activities
- Adapting content for a new faith community
- Adapting the monitoring and evaluation system: this needs to be suited to the project and content but it is important to keep the core tools and indicators
- Working in a humanitarian setting



Red Light changes are unsafe and should be avoided, as they compromise or eliminate one or more of the programme's core components. Very close collaboration should be sought from Tearfund's Gender and Protection Unit if any of the following changes are being considered.

- Changing the session order of the community dialogues
- Removing or skipping content in the trainings or community dialogues
- Changing the sequence of activities
- Not including national or regional leaders in initial Transforming Masculinities workshops
- Not engaging local faith and community leaders as active participants
- Shortening the number of training days or community dialogue sessions
- Changing the overall goals of the intervention³
- Replacing interactive activities with lectures or individual activities (group activities are essential)
- Increasing the number of participants in a training or community dialogue
- Mixing men and women in the first five weeks of the community dialogues
- Not following the Gender Champion selection criteria (see above and in section 2.1 of the [Implementation guide](#))
- Paying Gender Champions more than a basic stipend

² Source: ETR and CDC (2012) General Adaptation Guidance: A Guide to Adapting Evidence-Based Sexual Health Curricula. <https://www.etr.org/ebi/assets/File/GeneralAdaptationGuidanceFINAL.pdf>

³ See section 3.1 of the [Implementation guide](#) for detailed goals.

Transforming Masculinities resources

View the resources referenced in this document by scanning a QR code below.



Transforming Masculinities: Core resources

learn.tearfund.org/tm



Transforming Masculinities: Implementation guide

learn.tearfund.org/tm-implementation-guide



Transforming Masculinities: Quick guide

learn.tearfund.org/tm-quick-guide



Social Norms Exploration Tool (SNET)

learn.tearfund.org/snet



learn.tearfund.org

+44 (0)20 3906 3906 ✉ publications@tearfund.org

Registered office: Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE. Registered in England: 994339. A company limited by guarantee. Registered Charity No. 265464 (England & Wales) Registered Charity No. SC037624 (Scotland) J1013-(0823)

tearfund