

## Section 2: Note to Users

---

*Effective training of facilitators is best done by or with people who have first-hand experience in using community-led approaches.*

*This section makes extensive use of participatory role-plays, with group reflection on the process and how to improve the facilitator's skills.*

*A useful approach, however, is to intermix these activities with the reflective activities promoted in Section 1. For example, if a person who is learning how to facilitate a community-led process shows during a role-play a need for additional practice regarding empathy or asking probing questions, one could have the participant complete that evening the relevant tools on empathy (FAC 4) and asking probing questions (FAC 6).*

## TRN 9. Keeping One's Boundaries

---

The facilitator's main function is to support the communities in making inclusive decisions about which harm(s) to children to address through community-driven action. To serve this function, facilitators live in the communities and spend extensive time building trust, listening, learning, asking questions that trigger reflection and dialogue, supporting an inclusive process, observing, dialoguing, and accompanying the community in a spirit of solidarity. Doing these things involves being with the people and not creating too much social distance from community members.

At the same time, though, facilitators are not community people and have an independent role. This tension can create conflicts and ethical challenges, as illustrated in the scenarios below. Consider each, one by one, and write down some ideas about how you as facilitator would deal with the situation.

**Scenario 1:** You (the facilitator) are sitting in an open meeting of community A, three months into community discussions about which harm(s) to children to address. Through discussion, three issues have surfaced repeatedly—early marriage, out-of-school children, and child-beating. The community discussions are respectful, yet community people continue to differ in regard to which harm or harms they want to address. Getting weary of discussions, the leader puts you on the spot and presses you by asking, “What would you do?” How would you respond in a way that is consistent with the facilitator role, even if other people as well press you for your views?

---

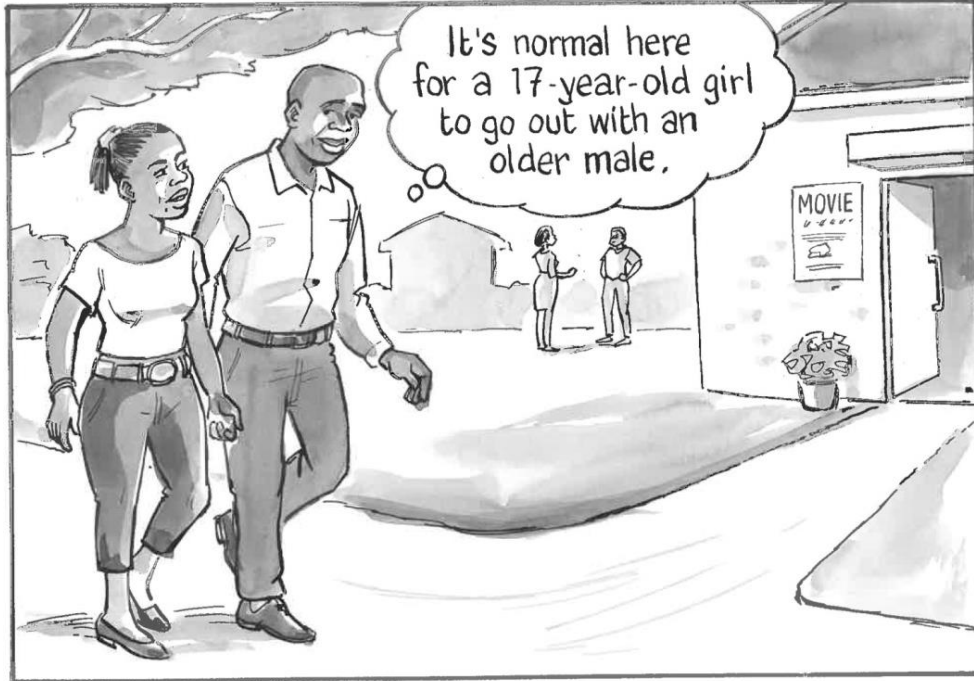
---

---

This one is relatively easy. Did you consider reminding people that it's natural for different people to have different views, and that ongoing dialogue will likely help community members reach a clear idea about which harm(s) to children they want to address?

Also, it might be helpful for you to point out that what is really important are community people's ideas—not your ideas. If they continue pressing you, you could more directly point out that this could compromise your role as facilitator and move the community away from the community-led approach that you are there to support. You could also note that you signed a contract saying that you would stay true to your role as facilitator.

## ETHICS



**Scenario 2:** Please assume you are a male facilitator. After spending much time in Village B and talking with teenage boys at length about the harms to children in the community, you have become friends with the boys. One evening they invite you to come talk with them, and when you arrive you observe that they are drinking a beverage containing alcohol but they do not appear drunk. One of the older boys offers you a drink, and the other boys urge you to take it. You think to yourself that drinking is so normal in this village that it could be seen as disrespectful to refuse the drink. Should you take the drink—what would you say to the group? If you took the drink, what would be the likely implications? If you did not accept the drink, what would be the likely implications? How would you manage this situation?

---

---

---

This one is more complex and may require choosing the least bad of two relatively bad options. One option would be to take a very small sip as a symbolic gesture of solidarity and a means of building trust and relationship with the boys. You might see this as a respectful thing to do, and as facilitator, you are eager to avoid giving any appearance of judging their behavior. This minimalist approach could significantly increase your ability to get the boys more engaged in the community-led process and to learn more deeply about their situation, values, aspirations, etc.

Significant drawbacks of this option include that taking a sip could support and even legitimate an activity that harms children. Some people would say it's unethical to drink with the boys. Also, it could break down the role boundaries in a way that reduces your ability to facilitate, as the boys might come to see you as one of them or as somehow on their side.

A second option is to kindly refuse the drink but do it in a way that does not seem to pass judgment on the boys. You could reiterate your interest in talking with them and ask whether they could talk with you tomorrow morning. A significant drawback of this option is although you have obeyed the law and not condoned a harmful activity, the boys might feel disrespected and judged, leading to reductions in their willingness to engage with the community-led process.

Of course, there are many other options for responding to this situation. Like many issues related to ethics and roles, there may be no tidy answers regarding the "best way to handle it." In view of these complexities, it can be useful to discuss this scenario on going out with an underage girl with your mentor or a larger group in the workshop to prepare facilitators.