



SOLIDARITY CENTER

WREN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Middle East/North Africa Region

**Women's Regional
Empowerment
Network¹**

Workshop 1

**Building Skills for Women's
Empowerment**

2006

Working Document

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Educator's Notes and Curriculum Guide

The following workshop curriculum contains the information you need to conduct a 4-day workshop on “**Developing Skills for Women's Empowerment**”.

Sessions

The workshop is broken into 14 Sessions. Each Session is divided into the following components:

Goals – What we want to accomplish in the session.

Time – Approximate amount of time you should allocate for a session. In some sessions, we included time estimates for different activities in the session.

Handouts - Used to reinforce the learning in different sessions. Handouts should only be distributed during or at the end of the session they relate to, rather than distributing them as a packet, as they are intended mostly to reinforce learning that took place in the interactive workshop and serve as a resource for the participants and their future work.

Trainer's Tips - Information for the trainer that provide background and information helpful in preparing for and conducting an exercise.

How It's Done – Provides step-by-step instructions for carrying out the exercise or activity.

Reflection/Connection – Important points for: summarizing a session, showing how it connects to other sessions, and/or linking the lessons of the session to the overall theme of the workshop.

Daily Opening and Closing

In addition to the individual sessions, each day you should include the following information when opening and ending the training sessions for that day.

To begin each morning:

- welcome everyone;
- ask a volunteer (chosen the day before) to provide a recap of the previous day. This can be done in a variety of ways. Think creatively about how to involve participants in this task. For example, volunteers could write a song, using a popular tune, to present as a summary of the days events.

- ask if anyone has any questions from the last session that they need to have clarified before starting a new topic;
- ask if anyone has any impressions from the last session that they want to share before starting a new topic;
- review (very briefly) the prior day's learning and discussion, drawing the link between the activities and the overall objectives of the workshop.
- and review and post the day's objectives and agenda.

At the end of each afternoon:

- thank students for their participation, especially if particularly complex or sensitive issues have been discussed;
- remind them about any work they need to complete during the evening.
- Conduct an evaluation (see below).

Daily evaluation

At the end of the first day, tell students that daily evaluation is a critical part of the adult learning model. It requires a final analysis of the day's learning activities. The daily evaluation is also critical feedback for the trainers, so that they can assess the group's needs and determine if the training needs to be adjusted.

To conduct the daily evaluation:

- focus the group on the day's learning objectives, and summarize what happened during the day
- ask them if they feel that the objectives were met,
- ask them what was especially helpful,
- ask them what might need to be changed.

Facilitate the debriefing like a brainstorming session and tell the participants that you need them to be honest. In the first day or two of the training, as participants are getting more comfortable with the workshop and educators, it may be helpful to pass out evaluation forms that allow people to write their comments and evaluation.

Parking Lot

While you want to encourage class participation throughout the workshop, you also need to keep discussions focused. One effective technique that allows you to continue discussing the topic at hand, but also honors participants' questions is the "parking lot." Explain to participants that if someone should ask a question, or raise a discussion issue, that cannot be addressed at that moment, you will keep an on going list on the flipchart, called the "parking lot". All questions and topics will be listed there and you will return to the "parking lot" to address their concerns, when there is time.

Homework

We have developed 2 homework assignments for the 2-month period between the first and second workshop. The first assignment is designed to strengthen participants listening and facilitation skills and to help them gather information from their friends, colleagues and families on key issues affecting women in their country. The second assignment will enable participants to explore the larger context of women's lives, and how things are changing for women.

The results of these homework assignments will be shared and discussed in the second workshop, and will help shape the curriculum of that workshop as well.

Saving Participants' Work

At the end of every day, review all the flipchart paper to see what you will want to keep for subsequent days. Leave these posted around the room to remind you and the participants of all you have accomplished, and to serve as a "public recording and reference" for all to use.

Ice Breakers:

When you feel participants' energy lagging or people's focus start to fade, it may be time for an "icebreaker" or "energizer". This can be as simple as having everyone stand up and stretch, to more elaborate exercises such as the following:

"The best thing about you is...": Have everyone stand in a circle, and toss a ball to one of the participants. When they catch the ball, say "The best thing about you is..." and say something you like about that person. Then they throw the ball to another, and do the same thing. Go around the room until everyone has had a turn.

Sing a song - Ask one of the participants to teach the others a very simple song. Try and get everyone singing together.

Mimic – Have everyone stand and choose a partner, preferably someone from across the room. One person in the pair will be the leader, the other the follower. Tell the follower to mimic the movements of the leader. After 1 minute, switch roles.

Mime – Pick one participant and whisper a proverb in her ear. Ask her to act out the proverb, using no words. Give participants 3 minutes to guess the proverb. Repeat once or twice.

Remember:

Following is a list of things to remember during the training. It is helpful to review this list every day before you begin the training sessions.

Remember to:

- Prepare and understand the material/equipment that you will use prior to the workshop.
- Encourage participants by clapping hands, for example, and praising them for good work, positive interactions, and efforts that they make.
- Prepare ice-breaker and energizing activities beforehand, so that you have them ready when you need them.
- Pay attention to time!
- Adapt to time constraints, in order to adjust activities and sessions according to the remaining time.
- Make the link between the different sessions.
- Make the link between the content of the session and the goals of the project.
- Use non-verbal skills of communication, such as a smile!
- Use eye contact when communicating with participants.
- Indicate the passage from one thing to another or links by changing/using intonation.
- Make sure your questions and instructions are clear.
- Enunciate!
- Respect the feelings of participants and don't allow joking or kidding when participants are talking about their personal experiences.
- Rephrase people's questions and comments, so that they know you are listening, and you can be sure you have understood them.

- Be empathetic and, to the extent possible, be aware of people's psychological state.
- Keep the conversation open and inclusive, rather than limited to one or a few participants.
- Direct questions to the group for answers, rather than answering all questions yourself.
- Prepare and be familiar with all the materials and equipment you will be using ahead of time.
- Master the content of the material and the order of presentation on the agenda.
- Organize discussions, and make the link between ideas expressed during discussions.
- Stop in order to summarize and verify that participants understand.
- Ask targeted, yet open-ended questions.
- Respect different points of view.
- Avoid stereotyping participants.
- Avoid prejudgments.
- Establish a democratic decision-making procedure.
- Maintain a balance between the sessions or program's goal and the comfort of the participants.
- Start with people's lived experience as the basis for discussions and analysis.
- Give examples in the workshop that reflect people's reality.
- Gather as much information as possible prior to and during the workshop about their knowledge, needs, and perspectives.
- Be gentle and democratic when asking participants to abide by rules, procedures.
- Fend off critical comments from participants that are aimed at other participants, and encourage everyone to have a positive approach.
- Write the main points of discussion on the board.

- Use many different ways to break participants into small groups. For example, flowers, animals, or different words can be used.
- Also remember that:
- The level of motivation of the group is a reflection of your own motivation/enthusiasm.
- Enjoyment is an essential component of learning. Its absence causes deterioration in the level of learning.
- Nothing is 100% wrong. Look for the positive in every interaction and intervention by participants.
- Nothing is written in stone vis-à-vis the training. Everything can be modified to suit different workshop conditions and participant needs.

Session 1: Introduction and Reconnect

Goal:

- Welcome and introduce one another and the program.
- Establish an open and clear basis for working together over the next 4 days.

Time: 60 Minutes

1. Welcome the participants and introduce the team of trainers (15 minutes)
2. Participants introduce themselves (15 minutes)
3. Identify participant expectations and fears (15 minutes)
4. Establish ground rules (15 minutes)

Tips for the Trainer

- Smile and relax in order to ensure a positive participative environment for the participants from the very beginning.
- Pay attention to possible shyness or embarrassment on the part of any of the participants at the beginning of the workshop.
- Encourage the participants to participate fully by getting their assistance in setting the guidelines/rules for the workshop.
- Write the guidelines for the workshop on a large flip chart paper and keep it in a visible place on the wall throughout the workshop.
- Encourage all the participants to freely express their fears and expectations because this contributes to the process of “breaking the ice” between them, in the workshop and with respect to the whole WREN project.

How it's Done

- The Project Coordinator should introduce herself and her role in the program and workshop, welcome everyone to the workshop, and introduce the education team and their respective roles. The Coordinator should also give a very brief (no more than 5 minutes) overview of the whole WREN project, noting how the participants, and this particular workshop, fit into the program. This should be as inspirational as possible! Note that the education team will describe the workshop in full after the morning break, after everyone has gotten to know each other better.

- The participants should then introduce themselves by stating:
 1. their name;
 2. their union;
 3. their geographical region;
 4. what they are missing to attend this workshop (family, work, etc);
 5. one issue that is important to them as women workers.
- The facilitator should explain that because this is an educational workshop to develop the participants as activists and as educators, the participants will be working on two levels:
 1. participating as adult learners absorbing new content and taking new action;
 2. and practicing, observing, and mastering empowering educational techniques.
- Explain to participants the following:

“Throughout the workshop, you will find yourself balancing these two levels, and it may feel confusing for you at first. Don’t worry if you are confused at first. As we go through the workshop, we will evaluate and analyze the day’s activities, in order to ensure that the curriculum takes your needs, thoughts, ideas and perspectives into account.”

Expectations and Fears

Time: 15 minutes

- Ask the participants about their expectations from this workshop and their fears with respect to the following issues and levels:
 - a. The Women’s Regional Empowerment Network (WREN) project and to empowering women in general;
 - b. The current workshop;
 - c. On a personal level;
 - d. On a group level.
- Record their answers on the flip chart paper and keep it in a visible place for all to see. This will enable you to return to these items later and evaluate the workshop based on their expectations and fears.
- Remember that the participants are an essential part of this project and their expectations are very high in importance. And if you find that you need to adjust or change the workshop agenda to meet the needs/expectations of the participants,

do not hesitate to do this after discussion with the rest of the team of trainers to see what kind be done realistically.

- Now, please tell the participants that in order to begin to remove some of the fears we will develop and agree on the basic rules/guidelines for this workshop. These guidelines will help us throughout the sessions and we will refer to them regularly. In addition, these will help us with follow-up after the workshop and in our work world.

Ground Rules

Time: 15 minutes

- Ground rules are established and agreed upon by all of the participants. The rules establish the expectations for behavior during the training. Developing ground rules at the beginning of the 4-day program helps to avoid problems throughout the training.
- To facilitate the establishment of the rules:
 - * explain the use of ground rules to the group;
 - * ask for suggested ground rules;
 - * confirm that the participants agree to the rules;
 - * record the rules on a flip chart;
 - * post the rules throughout the 4-day training.
- If participants do not follow the ground rules at some point, remind participants of the agreed upon rules.

Session 2: Getting to Know One Another

Goal:

To enable participants to get to know one another better by talking and sharing their experiences as women and as union members.

Time: 45 Minutes

1. Individual exercise to answer personal questions (5 to 7 minutes)
2. Small participative working groups to discuss the questions & answers (15 minutes)
3. Presentation of small working groups' work (15 minutes)
4. Feelings & Emotions (5 minutes)

Tips for the Trainers:

- Make sure that the questions are clearly understood by all
- Determine the exact time for each activity
- Ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all to be able to express their feelings
- Ask for a "note taker" and a "facilitator" for each small working group and clearly & simply explain to them their roles.
- Have flipchart paper and markers available for each participant

How It's Done:

- Explain that this is an introductory exercise, for everyone to learn more about each other. Ask the participants to take a piece of flip chart paper and draw a large circle and divide it into three equal parts. Then ask them to number each part. Draw an example on a flip charter.

- List on a flip chart what should be included in each quadrant. Give participants 5 to 7 minutes to answer the questions individually. Encourage participants to use drawings to represent their answer. Following are the questions:
 - a. What was your first experience with a union?
 - b. Who is the person who has influenced you most as a woman?
 - c. Draw, or briefly state, your life's motto.
- Divide the participants into 4 groups, and ask individuals to share their answers with their group. Ask the group to choose a facilitator who will present a summary of the groups' work to the plenary.
- Reconvene the plenary, and ask group facilitators to present their group's work.

Summary/Reflection

- When each group has presented, ask participants what they learned in this exercise. Make note of interesting commonalities and differences. End the session by noting that listening and communication is one of the most important skills we can develop as activists and advocates, and we will be cover this area in greater detail later in the workshop.

Session 3: Program and Workshop Agenda Review

Goal:

- To learn about the goals and phases of the Women's Regional Empowerment Network;
- Review and discuss the agenda for this workshop, and understand how it fits into the overall WREN program.

Time: 45 Minutes

1. Review the program agenda and the overall goals of the project (10 minutes).
2. Detailed review of the goals and the program agenda of this particular workshop (10 minutes).
3. Feedback from the participants about the WREN project and discussion (15 minutes).
4. Handout on Empowerment (5 minutes)

Handouts: Agenda (not attached)

Tips for Trainers:

- Prepare a large illustrative drawing of the "spiral learning method" to present during the different phases of the project. The drawing needs to be clear, simple and organized so that the participants can clearly understand and can easily interact in order to be able to refer to the drawing throughout the workshop.
- Prepare a flipchart with the word "EMPOWERMENT" in large, bold letters at the top.
- Make sure you have sufficient copies of the handouts, listed above, for the participants.

How It's Done:

- Now that there is a little more comfort and ease in the room, it's time to discuss the overall WREN program, and the agenda for the 4-day workshop. Start with a very brief summary of the overall program, using the spiral concept and drawing to explain the approach used in the workshop. Then review the objectives for the workshop. Relate the objectives to what was said in the session on "Expectations and Fears".
- Then review the agenda, and ask if there are any questions.

- Note that since the ultimate goal of this project is the empowerment of women, we will stop for a few moments at the end of each session to see how we can benefit from the session to empower ourselves and the working women whom we are trying to organize. For this reason, we will hang this large flip chart paper on the wall and we will entitle it: Empowerment. At the end of each session, we will add skills and/or knowledge that we gained or identified during the training session that contribute to the empowerment of working women and women, in general.
- If there are other items that come up that the participants would like to add to or amend the workshop program agenda, please note these items and mention that you will review the requests and see where they can be added to the program. Note that you will tell them sooner rather than later whether these additions that concern them/or have requested can be added to the program agenda.
- Ask participants if there are any final questions or queries before moving to the next session.

Session 4: Social Construction of Gender²

Goal:

The goal is for participants to explore and understand the social meaning and impact of gender, and to distinguish the difference between the concepts of sex and gender.

Time: 105 minutes

1. Brainstorm on the words “man” and “woman” to identify the biological and cultural/social difference between men and women (15 minutes)
2. Define the word “gender” (15 minutes)
3. Individual exercise to recall an early memory that showed you that you were different than boys (5 minutes)
4. Work in pairs to exchange personal stories between the participants (10 minutes)
5. Present the work of the “pairs” and discussion and reflection on the issue of gender in women's lives (60 minutes)

Handouts: Definition of Gender

Gender and Sex

Gender Differs from Sex

Tips for the Trainer:

- Prepare beforehand a flipchart with 5 columns, with headings titled “age”, “people involved”, “where”, “what the incident was about”, and “feeling”. You will use this later in the session.
- Encourage everyone to participate in the brainstorming session.
- Do not discuss the ideas or thoughts at the first stage of the brainstorming sessions.
- This session is placed at the beginning of the workshop because it helps build a common understanding of the social, cultural, economic and political factors, which influence gender relations. It helps to bring out the traditional and modern cultural assumptions on what it means to be a man or a woman, how that can change over time, and the impact it has on men and women's lives. Given the

² This session is adapted in part from Module 1 of “Gender and Reproductive Health: A Training Manual”, produced in Iran in 2003 for training of senior planners and managers in government and NGOs who are responsible for improving the reproductive health of those they serve.

nature of gender discrimination in the world of work, it is essential that women's rights activists in unions and in the community understand these aspects of the problems they face. Without this understanding, it is not possible to fashion effective solutions.

- The concept of “gender” is relatively new. It does not even exist as a single word in many languages. For this reason, it is important to develop a shared language on how to talk about culturally determined power relations and role differences between men and women. The activities in this session should be used to develop a shared language and understanding among the facilitators and participants that can be expanded throughout the workshop.

How it's Done:

Brainstorm Activity

Time: 15 Minutes

- We begin with a brainstorming session on what it means to be a man or a woman. Start by dividing a flipchart paper into two columns, one entitled “man” and the other entitled “woman”.
- Ask the participants to say the first thing that occurs to them when they hear the word “man”, and then when they hear the word “woman”. Record their answers in the appropriate column.
- After 5-7 minutes, go through the list of attributes one by one, identifying with the participants which attributes are biological and can only be attributed to man or woman (for example, “giving birth” can only be attributed to women, whereas social attributes such as “kind and motherly” could be applied to both men and women), and which attributes relate to social or cultural difference. Circle biological attributes in one colour, and social/cultural attributes in another.

Definition of Gender Activity

Time: 15 Minutes

- Next, ask participants to work in pairs with the person sitting next to them. Take 5 minutes to write a short definition of “gender” and another of “sex”.
- Ask each pair to read out loud the two definitions they developed and write the main points on a flipchart.
- Once everyone has read their definition, use the ideas already expressed and recorded on the flipchart to bring out the definition of “sex” and “gender”.

- Then ask a volunteer to read out loud the definitions of sex and gender included in the handouts for this session.
- To conclude this part of the exercise, and begin to link the “definitions” to women’s lived reality, ask the participants the following question:

“In your daily lives, are you expected by others in society/community to behave in a certain manner because you are a woman?”

- After a few minutes of discussion, return very briefly to the definitions that were arrived at for “gender” and “sex”, and ensure that there is a general agreement among the participants about how you will use “gender” and its meaning throughout the rest of the workshop.

Social Construction of Gender Activity

Time: 75 Minutes

Trainer’s Tip:

- The goal of this activity is to understand how individuals experience the moment of recognition that they are a boy or a girl, understand that there are different values associated with being a girl or a boy, and to identify if and how society values manhood over womanhood, being a boy over being a girl, or vice-versa. We will do this by looking at how participants, as young children, were introduced to what it means to be a woman, and what it means to be a man. This activity is useful to help participants develop a shared understanding about how this process works, and the value attached to the different roles for men and women.

How It’s Done

- Begin by asking each participant to think as far back as possible in their lives and recall one incident when they first realized that being different from boys meant that they were expected to have different behaviors and they were treated differently. Emphasize that we are asking them to remember differences about **behavior**, not about physical differences. If they are thinking of things that happened when they were in their early teens, they need to think back even farther, before physical differences become so pronounced.

They must try to remember:

- a) what the incident was about;
- b) how old they were;

- c) who was involved;
 - d) where the incident took place.
 - e) how they felt about it
- Ask the participants to get into pairs to share their stories for about 10 minutes.
 - Call the group back together. On a flip chart have columns for age, people involved with, where, what the incident was about, and feelings associated with it.
 - Ask each pair to report on the other person's story to the large group, and write the essential details under the specific columns.

Tips for Trainers:

- Points to bring out in the discussion include the following:

Age: It is interesting to note the youngest age as it makes the point about how early socialization sets in.

People involved: Family members, religious leaders, teachers are usually the first groups of people who influence a child's life. To help make the link to people's lives now, ask the question "In your world today, who treats you differently from men, or has different expectations from you?";

Where: This often corresponds with the kinds of people involved. Later in life, the list of where the reinforcement of gender norms takes place are extended to include the workplace, social circles and the media.

What the incident was about: Usually this includes the division of labor along sex lines, for example the kinds of household chores that girls are expected to do. Ask the group what different expectations of different work for men and women do they experience in the current workplace.

How they Felt: Women may express negative feelings toward the specific incident. You may also want to ask what positive feelings women remembered feeling when they understood they were different from boys.

- Discuss the results from each column, and ask the group to identify similarities and differences, and make these clear if they do not come out.
- Finally, ask what the participants "What skills, knowledge or understanding have we developed here today that you feel is important to women's empowerment?" Note the responses on the empowerment flipchart.

Handout: Definition of Gender

1. Acquired Social Identity
2. Acquired norms of behavior through education, upbringing that is associated with the inherited cultural norms (habits, traditions, laws, politics, etc...)
3. Determines the roles of the two genders in social life
4. An understanding that changes with time and place

Handout: Gender and Sex

Gender is the biological difference between men and women. These sexual differences are determined by the ability of males to produce sperm and females the ability to become pregnant and deliver a child. Males have different body parts and hormones than females and are put together differently.

These differences are the same all over the world. But to be men and women, these roles are determined with the changing cultures. And to determine these differences as we have done previously by pointing out to the biological differences so this demands that we use the word: Gender.

Sex is truly connected with the way a human being is put together biologically. But gender has no relation whatsoever with this biological make-up.

Gender is known with much specificity: roles, and social activities that are connected with men and women in a particular society. It is connected/associated with the view towards men and women and what the society expects from each in their thinking or the way they behave based on the way the society itself is organized.

Gender can also be dependant on who has power in the community.

Handout: How Gender Differs from Sex

Sex	Gender
Biological	Determined by Society
We are born with this way	We are not born with it yet it is determined by society
Permanent –Does not change (Not always 😊)	Changing depending on time and place
Male or Female (two choices only)	Man/Woman
Determined by body parts and their functions	Roles and Societal Relations
Inherited Traits	Traits are affected by culture, habits, family, traditions, economy and politics
Individual	Society - Institutions

Session 5: Our Dreams for Women

Goal:

The goal of this session is for the participants to think about their respective dreams as women and to share them with the rest of the participants.

Time: 45 Minutes

1. Individual exercise to think about individual dreams and how to express them/describe them via drawings (10 minutes).
2. Sharing dreams with the rest of the participants (15 minutes).
3. A question on how one is able to make dreams come true (10 minutes).
4. The dream song (10 minutes).

Tips for the Trainer:

- This session is a chance for participants to express their feelings of hope, their concerns, their desires for positive change. It can help serve as an “antidote” to the entire problems women encounter. Staying connected to feelings of hope and a vision for a better future is a key motivating factor in adult learners and activists.
- The goal of the “dreams” drawing is not a test of participants’ talents but it is a way to encourage them to participate and be creative. The drawing can be very simple and even using symbols or stick figures and it will give an opportunity for all to explain the meaning of their drawing or symbols.
- Do not allow comments during each person’s presentation of their “dream” drawing.
- Listen carefully during each person’s presentation.

How It's Done:

- Give each participant a half piece of flipchart paper. Ask them to think for a few minutes about their dreams for women in their countries. What do they hope can change for women? What do they hope to preserve for women? What role might they play?

- Ask the participants to draw a picture or symbol or other representation of their dreams for women
- Have participants share their dreams and drawings with the rest of the participants

Reflection/Summary

- Ask the group, how is one able to make our dreams come true? What are some steps we can take to put these dreams in motion? Ask for volunteers to write some of the responses on the Empowerment flipchart.
- Lastly, please ask three or four of the participants to volunteer to write the lyrics of the “Dream Song” to a well-known tune/music that everyone already knows. The song’s lyrics should express the different dreams that were expressed/described during the session. Ask the volunteers to sing the song with all the participants at the next mornings’ opening session.

Session 6: Problem Identification

Goal:

The goal of this session is to determine/specify the problems that the participants are facing as women at the workplace and in their unions, and to identify & categorize the kinds of problems in order to analyze them later.

Time: 75 Minutes

1. Work in small working groups to think about the changes that have taken place lately in working women's lives and their impact and to identify specific "hot" issues (45 minutes).
2. Presentation of small work groups' work (15 minutes).
3. Bring out the main ideas and clearly stating the problems in preparation for the next session (15 minutes).

Tips for the Trainer:

- It is possible that the participants get embarrassed to express or describe their problems especially the sensitive ones such as discrimination or sexual harassment so you need to bring it out carefully, with empathy and sensitively for a free and courage expression on their part.
- Write the problems clearly on the flip chart for their use in the next session.

How It's Done

- Begin the session by explaining that in order to become part of the solution, we need to fully understand the challenges and problems we face as working women, as well as those faced by women in our "community (family, friends, co-workers, neighbors), especially in these times of great social, political and economic change. Explain that by the end of the next two sessions, we will have defined and prioritized a number of pressing problems for women workers, within the context of current changes in our country. We will also practice conducting in-depth analysis of one of these problems that will help lead us to solutions.

- Break the participants into 4 or 5 small groups, and ask them to discuss the following questions:
 - a) Describe 3 major changes that have taken place in the lives of women workers in the past 10 years.
 - b) How has your life improved as a result of these changes?
 - c) What are some of the concrete problems that you've experienced as a result of these changes?
 - d) What are some of the concrete problems you have faced as women in your union, workplace, and in society?
- Give the groups about 40 minutes for discussion. Back in Plenary, ask one group to volunteer to share their discussion of the first question only. Ask the rest of the participants to add to or debate their points. Do the same for the other points, a different group taking the lead for each question. Have one facilitator record the answers on flipchart, and save the flipchart for the last question to be used in the next session.

Reflections/Connections

- Conclude this session by validating the differences and similarities that came out of the discussion. Note that clearly identifying problems is the first step on the road to finding the solutions. The next step is to prioritize the problems and analyze their causes, consequences, and some solutions. This is what we will be doing in the next session.
- Ask the participants: how can we benefit from this session in the process of women's empowerment? Ask for a couple of volunteers to summarize the responses on the empowerment flipchart.

Session 7: Problem Prioritization and Analysis

Goal:

The goal of this session is to prioritize problems that were identified in the prior session and undertake a more in-depth analysis of the causes, consequences and solutions to one problem.

Time: 100 Minutes

1. General inquiry of the whole group as to the main problems faced by the whole group (20 minutes).
2. Small working groups to analyze the problems using the exercise of the “problem tree” (40 minutes).
3. Presentation of the small working groups' work (20 minutes).
4. Bring out the main ideas and ask explanatory questions to reinforce the information (10 minutes).

Handout: Problem Tree Exercise

Tips for the Trainer:

- Ensure that all the participants understand how to carry out the “problem tree” exercise and give an example.
- Emphasize that we are talking about problems specifically faced by working-women.

How It's Done

- Introduce this session as a means of prioritizing problems and using an analytical tool called the Problem Tree to undertake a more in-depth analysis of the causes, consequences and solutions to one problem. Note that participants can use this tool in their own work as emerging educator/activists.
- In plenary, take about 20 minutes to review the list of problems that came up in the last session, and open a free-flowing conversation about which are priority problems and why these would be considered priorities. Draw from the

conversation a list of characteristics of priority problems, creating a new flipchart for this information. Save this flipchart for use later on in the workshop.

- Once a list of 4-5 problems is agreed upon, ask participants to choose one of the problems they are interested in, and break into 4-5 groups, each tackling one problem. This may result in people only choosing 3 of the problems, which would mean only 3 groups. This is fine.
- Give a copy of the Problem Tree handout to each group, and ask them to apply the Problem Tree analysis to the problem they chose to work on.
- Once they are working in their small groups, make sure you are available to answer any questions. Give the groups about 40 minutes to work.
- Bring the small groups back into plenary, and ask each group to explain their tree. Leave time for clarifying questions. Summarize the main point. (30 minutes)

Reflection/Connection

- At the end of this session, note that problem identification, prioritization and analysis is one of the first and most important steps we need to take to be effective advocates for women workers' rights. Underscore the need to always start with people's experiences as the basis for education and action.
- Ask the participants: How can we benefit from this session in the process of women's empowerment? Record the answers on the Empowerment flipchart that is hanging on the wall.

Handout: Problem Tree

The Problem Tree is an exercise that helps us analyze the root causes of a problem and to identify the primary consequences. It is best handled in small groups so that each person in the group has an opportunity to participate.

How It's Done

The Facilitator should explain the Problem Tree. Point out the different parts of the tree and each represents

In small groups of no more than 4, have participants draw a tree on flip chart. The tree should clearly show three things – the trunk, the roots and branches.

Each part of the tree will represent the following:

- Roots = **Root Causes** of the problem
- Trunk = the **Problem**
- Branches = **Consequences** of the Problem

Write the problem on the trunk.

Then discuss in the small groups the like causes of the problem. Let each participant suggest a cause, and write it on a card and tape it to the roots of the problem tree. Participants should be encouraged to explore social, economic and political causes including attitudes and behavior.

Repeat the same process with the consequences.

In the small groups, discuss the following questions about the problem itself, then follow up with questions about the solutions.

1. What are the most serious consequences?
2. Which causes will be easier to address? More difficult to address? Why?
3. Which causes and consequences can the government help address? Where can agencies help? What can people do?

Session 8: Our Legal Rights

Goal:

The goal of this session is for the participants to learn about some of the aspects in labor law – local and international – that protect working women’s rights and helps to solve some of the problems that they face.

Time: 80 Minutes

1. Small working groups based on different economic sectors/workplaces to determine problems that women workers face at the particular workplace (25 minutes)
2. Presentation of small working groups work (15 minutes)
3. Play the “Rights” game to determine the particular local/national laws that cover certain problems in the sectors/workplaces (30 minutes)
4. Explanation of the relationships between international and local/national laws (10 minutes)

Handouts: Copy of the countries labor law (not attached)
Relevant ILO Documents (not attached)

Tips for the Trainer:

- This exercise takes quite a lot of preparation. Determine ahead of time the nature of the problems in the different workplaces/sectors and the applicable laws so that you are prepared to present the “Rights” game in a successful manner.
- You will also need to piece together 9 flipchart papers (connecting them so they make large rectangle of 3 flipchart papers per side) to make a large poster. On the poster, you will need to draw a large circle. Use a marker to divide the circle into many “slices”, as below.



- For the Rights Game, you need make individual cards, color-coded by different headings under the law, that spell out key laws that relate to women workers in your country. These will be pasted in the slices of the circle.
- Pay careful attention to the time because discussion of the laws could take longer than expected.
- Be satisfied with a simple explanation of the material/information and encourage the participants to read the laws at a later time.
- Keep in mind that the existence of the laws does not mean that they are implemented or enforced. It incumbent upon us to demand/ work hard towards their enforcement.
- Please add in the participants' packets in addition to the national labor laws, copies of the international labor conventions from the International Labor Organization (ILO) that cover workers, workplaces issues and trade unions. These conventions should force governments to comply with these international standards especially those that call for the respect for human rights, labor law and trade unions. In addition, there are international organizations such as the ILO that follows these issues regularly. It is our responsibility and duty to know how to engage such organizations and how we can benefit from their work, resources, research to help us to demand the protection of our rights and the enforcement of laws by governments and employers.

How Its Done:

- Begin the session by explaining the goal.
- Then quickly ask the participants about where women can be found in the work world – in which sectors? In which workplaces?
- Then divide the participants into small working groups, per sector or workplace. Try to ensure that in each working group there is a person who can talk about the specific problems encountered at a particular workplace. Have them discuss the specific problems they face, and write them on colored cards, using 1-3 words to describe.
- After about 25 minutes, reconvene the whole group and ask the small groups to share with the others the problems they face. During this session, one facilitator can be posting the Rights Game circle, noted above.
- Ask the participants to paste their cards in the right section/slice that they determine to be applicable. After they complete this exercise, correct the placement of these cards and explain why.

- Ask one of the participants to read the cards that are pasted into sections in the large circle drawing and to attempt to explain them to her colleagues in the workshop.
- Allow explanatory questions and answer them simply then ask for another volunteer to explain cards in two other sections of the “circle” drawing. And again, allow questions and answer them to clarify. Continue to do this until you have completed all the sections of the “circle” drawing.
- At the end of this session, it is expected that many questions may be asked about the national labor laws by the participants. Pass out copies of the national law, as well as ILO law, and tell them that you are available to answer any questions after they have had a chance to review these documents.

Reflection/Connection:

- Note that our knowledge of the laws and how they can promote our rights and protect us against employer violations is only part of the process of actually achieving labor rights. Ask the group – what else do we need? Prompt them to include “the power to write good laws, and have them enacted by the government and employers” as one of their answers, if it doesn’t come up in the discussion.
- Ask the participants: how can we benefit from this session in the process of women’s empowerment”? Record the answers on the Entitlement flipchart on the wall.

Session 9: Understanding Power

Goal:

To have each participant identify a personal experience with power and powerlessness, as an opening to larger discussions about power, its sources, and how to mobilize it in the service of workers.

Time: 2 hours

1. Individual exercise to identify and draw a situation where the participant felt powerful, and one where the participant felt powerless (15 minutes).
2. Conduct a “gallery walk” to discuss the pictures (30 minutes)
3. Discuss power and powerlessness in the group (15 minutes).
4. Identify different types of Power (60 minutes)

Tips for the Trainer:

- Up to this point in the workshop, we have discussed the issue of gender, and of women's empowerment, and what that means to the group, and women's rights. Underlying all of these issues is that of “power” – who has it, who does it serve, how can we avoid being stopped by power that is against us, how can we gather power and share it among women in a way that improves their lives. Despite its central importance, however, power is often poorly understood and analyzed. In order for us to help women become empowered, and to change power relationships in a way that benefits all women (as well as men), we need to understand power in its many faces. In the next two activities, we will begin that process of uncovering power's many faces, and better understanding it as both a positive and negative force that we need to marshal if we are to bring about change. This is why we are bring this issue up here – in the next workshop, we will look even deeper into key power issues vis-à-vis economics, politics, etc. In this workshop, we want women to begin thinking about power – their own and others – in a new way.
- Once again, you will be asking participants to draw. Reassure participants that you don't have to be an artist to do this exercise. The drawing can be symbolic and simple, as everyone will have the opportunity to explain their drawing.
- It's important to be very sensitive to participants in this exercise – don't allow any commentaries or jokes during individual presentations. Listen actively to all participants.

Handout: Types of Power

How It's Done:

Drawing and Gallery Walk Activity³

Time: 60 Minutes

- In this activity, participants will describe their personal experiences with power and powerlessness and then draw pictures of those experiences. They will discuss these experiences and analyze what they tell us about sources of power for workers.
- Give each participant a piece of paper and marking pens or something to draw with. Ask them to draw a line down the middle. On one side of the line, ask participants to draw a picture of a situation that made them feel powerful. On the other side ask them to draw a situation that made them feel powerless. Ask participants to use any situation in their lives, at work or at home, in their families or communities, or whatever else they think of as a good example of these feelings. Give them about 15 minutes to complete.
- When everyone is done, have participants hang their drawings up on a wall, and ask participants to walk around in a group to look at all the drawings. Ask each participant to briefly explain her drawing to the group.
- As each person explains their drawing, write down on a large sheet of paper or chalkboard the words and phrases that participants use to describe feeling powerful and feeling powerless, in two separate lists. Do not write down the details of what happens in the stories or the situations drawn. (If there are two facilitators, one can write on the large sheet of paper or chalkboard while the other one asks each participant to speak about their drawing.) See the “Educator’s Tip” below for examples of common responses.
- When all the participants have explained their drawings, ask for a volunteer to read the list of words and phrases that describe situations that make us feel powerful, and the list of words and phrases that describe situations that make us feel powerless.
- Ask the large group to discuss the following questions for about 10 minutes:
 1. What are some of the things that made people feel powerful or powerless?
 2. In what ways are our reactions to situations the same or different?
 3. In what situations could someone start out feeling powerless but later feel powerful? How does that shift or change happen?

³ Adapted from “A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation”, by Lisa Veneklasen with Valerie Miller, World Neighbors, 2002

Reflections/Connections:

At the end of the activity, summarize in your own words what the group has learned. Be sure to include the following points, even if they did not come up:

- The goal of this exercise was to learn that we are never completely powerless. Even in situations that are very difficult, people can have more power through organizing, working together, problem-solving, getting information, and making their best effort.
- There are many kinds of power that affect a situation – not only the power over other people that an employer can use, for example. Power is a dynamic force, and in any situation many people have some degree of power.
- An educator/activists job is to help workers to understand power, overcome feelings of powerlessness, develop strength and courage, and take action to gain more power over their lives at work.
- What does it tell us about women’s empowerment? Record the responses on the Empowerment flipchart.

➤ **Trainer’s Tip**

Following is a list of words often used to describe the things that make people feel powerful and powerless. These may be helpful as you discuss participants drawings.

Things That Make People Feel Powerless	Things That Make People Feel Powerful
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disrespect, insults• Being ignored• Stereotypes• Lack of control• Loss• Ignorance• Shame• Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• overcoming fear through action• recognition by others of what I did• finding a creative way to solve a problem• being able to handle a difficult task• succeeding as a leader• caring for and helping others• joining a group with others who have the same problem• joining a union• making others feel how powerful we are together.

Identifying Different Types of Power Activity^{4*}

Time: 60 Minutes*

- Explain to participants that the goal of this activity is to identify 4 different types of power and think about how these types of power relate to the organizing and empowerment of women.

How It's Done

- Ask participants to sit in 4 groups. Pass out the Handout entitled: Types of Power.
- Ask each group to read the Fact Sheet. Assign each group one of the 4 types of power to discuss in detail. Ask each group to discuss the following questions in relation to their one type of power.
 1. What does this type of power mean to you? Can you think of examples of this power in your own life?
 2. Who usually uses this type of power – workers or management? In what way?
 3. How might women workers and men workers use this power differently?
- Ask each group to look around the room and find one picture or object that can symbolize or represent the type of power that they have discussed. Give the groups about 5 minutes to choose an object as a symbol.
- Ask each group to report back to the large group by showing their symbol and saying why they think it represents that one type of power.
- Ask the group: How can men and women workers deploy all types of power to build a strong unity and to obtain respect for their rights? Discuss for a few minutes and write answers on empowerment flipchart

Reflections/Connections

At the end of the exercise, summarize in your own words what the group has learned. Be sure to include the following points, even if they did not come up:

⁴ Adapted from Module 2 in “Tools for Organizers in Export Processing Zones and Industries”, The Solidarity Center 2006.

- The goal of this exercise was to understand that there are many kinds of power.
- Some kinds of power rely more on unity and internal strength than on controlling other people.
- As women we can use many different kinds of power to build strength for workers.

Handout: Types of Power

POWER is the ability to have an intentional effect on oneself and others – that is, the power to get things done. Because there are diverse sources and types of power – both positive and negative – the following distinctions about power can be useful.

POWER OVER: This is the most commonly recognized type of power. “power over” means being able to enforce your will over others. “Power over” has many negative associations for people, such as repression, force, coercion, discrimination, and abuse. “Power over” is seeing power as a win-lose situation, where for some people to gain power, other people must lose it. When people are systematically denied access to important resources like land, jobs, fair wages, and healthcare, then someone (the government, or employers, or the wealthy) is responsible for using “power over” people to enforce inequality and injustice.

However, “Power over” can be used in some situations by working people to gain the upper hand and force the government or employers to grant concessions to workers.

There are 3 other types of power that are more collaborative.

POWER WITH: “Power with” has to do with finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength. Based on mutual support, solidarity, and collaboration, “power with” multiplies individual talents and knowledge. “Power with” can help build bridges across different interests to transform or reduce social conflict and promote fairness and equity. Unions, for example, use “power with” to create greater strength for workers. Coalitions of unions and other groups, such as women’s organizations, are one way for poor people to use their “power with” for social change.

POWER TO: “Power to” refers to the ability of every person to take action and shape his or her life and world. Each individual has the potential to make a difference in their own family, worksite, community and world. When used in the service of shared goals, “power to” can become “power with”. Citizen and worker education and leadership development for social change are based on the belief that each individual has the “power” to make a difference.

POWER WITHIN: “Power within” describes a person’s own sense of self-worth and self-knowledge: it includes an ability to recognize individual differences while respecting others, like the differences between men and women workers. “Power within” is the capacity to imagine and have hope. Many people find their “power within” through practicing their spiritual beliefs or by sharing their stories of struggle and success. “Power within” is personal dignity and strength.

Adapted from “A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation”, 2002, World Neighbors.

Session 10 – Active Listening and One-on-One Communication

Goal:

To equip participants with active listening skills needed for building successful relations with women workers.

Timing: 90 minutes

1. Drawing game (15 minutes)
2. Discussion of the exercise (15 minutes)
3. Review of communication handout (10 minutes)
4. Role-play (30 minutes)
5. Reflection on Role Play (10 minutes)
6. Conclusions (10 minutes)

Trainer's Tips:

- Make sure you adequately explain the drawing game and role-play so that everyone understands what to do.
- Encourage participants to start practicing some of the listening skills during the current workshop, because listening is a natural ability that requires practice for it to become spontaneous.
- Show the importance of the relationship between effective listening and direct communication for establishing relationships between female workers and for familiarizing with the problems and from their affiliating them.

Handouts: Communication

How It's Done:

Drawing Game and Review of Communication:

Time: 40 minutes

- Explain to participants that during this exercise, a volunteer will be given a paper containing a certain geometrical shape, and then asked to describe the shape to the rest of the participants without showing the shape. Every participant will then attempt to draw the shape on a white piece of paper relying on the description of the volunteer. The volunteer will stand behind the board, or with her back turned

to the room, in order to be isolated from the rest of the participants. Explain that this activity will take only 5 minutes.

- Prior to handing the drawing to the volunteer, note that there are certain rules for this activity. They are listed below:
 - * Questions are not allowed.
 - * Participants are prohibited from looking at other participants' drawings
 - * Nobody is allowed to talk during the exercise, except the volunteer.
 - * Side conversations are prohibited.
- Give the volunteer 2 minutes to look at the shape, and 3 minutes to explain it. Have all the participants try and draw the shape according to her description.
- Now allow participants 3 minutes for clarifying questions to the volunteer, so they can complete their drawings. Otherwise, the same rules apply for this phase as the earlier one.
- After completing the exercise, show participants the original drawing so that they can compare it to their own drawings.
- Now ask the participants to express the feelings they experienced during the exercise. Discuss the following questions with the entire group:
 - a. What are the difficulties you faced during the exercise, and what obstacles did you encounter to understand what the volunteer was saying/describing?
 - b. What are the things that help you “decode” messages sent by the volunteer, hence enabled you to accurately draw what she was describing?
- Discuss with participants the interaction between participants and the volunteer during the exercise. Try to clarify with them the kinds of different aspects of the exercise – preparation, all the different means of communication that were employed, efforts to understand and decipher, clarifying questions, and feedback.
- Pass out the handout on communication, and ask the group to identify specific things that happened in the exercise that relate to each of the Phases in the handout.

Role Play Activity

Time: 40 minutes

- Tell participants that they will now have the opportunity to practice what they learned from the previous listening exercise. Remind participants that being able to listen is essential if we are to understand the problems women face, and use

that understanding to build relationships with them and develop action plans to bring about change.

- Ask participants if anyone has a question about anything relevant to women workers or women in unions. Choose one of these questions, and ask someone to volunteer to answer that question. Give the volunteer a few minutes to prepare before providing the answer, and give them up to 5 minutes to answer the question in front of the group.
- Next, give the group a couple of minutes to consult on what they heard, and then ask the participant who asked the question whether her colleagues succeeded in conveying the information clearly, and whether the answer was complete and relevant to the question.
- Then, ask the group to provide feedback to the volunteer on how she communicated, noting what was effective and (gently!) where they may have been room for improvement. Record the main points on a flipchart.
- Repeat the exercise with another volunteer, using another question.

Role Play 2

- Ask participants whether someone has a particular problem facing her at the job site or with the union, and that she would like to talk about. Ask her to stand in the middle of the room, then ask a volunteer from the group to converse with her and listen to her problem. Give them 5 minutes for this exercise and ask the participant who was briefing her colleague about her problem whether her colleague listened to her in an effective manner.
- Then ask the volunteer (who listened) to assess her own listening skills, including any thing she felt she could have improved. Write down her observations on the flipchart. Ask for input from the group as well, and record their input. Remind the group to be positive in their feedback, even when they are pointing out improvements that could be made.
- Repeat the exercise with another set of volunteers.
- Now ask participants about what they learned from role-play, and how they can benefit in the context of appealing to women workers. Summarize the points recorded on the flipcharts, and link them to what the participants learned.

Reflection/Connection

- Remind participants that the process of drawing women workers into membership or into the study groups foreseen in this program often takes place either through familiarizing with others problems and addressing them, and finding ways to solve them, or by answering questions posed by women workers, notably when these questions concern union or labor laws. In either case, communication and listening skills become essential, and it is through the exercise of these skills that trust and relationships are built.
- Ask the participants: how can we benefit from this session in the process of women's empowerment? Ask for a couple of volunteers to summarize the responses on the empowerment flipchart.

Handout: Communication

Phase 1: Think about crafting and organizing a message for the relevant audience. One should know their audience well and take into account the extent of its knowledge and its background.

Phase 2: Send the message using words and facial expressions and hints. This phase is identified as *coding*.

Phase 3: The target of the communication receives the sent codes through his/her ears and eyes.

Phase 4: The one receiving the message attempts to decipher the message sent, through the analysis of uttered words and gestures. This phase is known as *decoding*.

Phase 5: The listener interacts with the message and follows with clarification questions. The sender then senses the extent to which the message sent was understood by the one receiving. This phase is called *feed back*.

After that, the one sending messages thinks about clarifications, which in turn are sent through coded units. This will trigger the repetition of the process again, and then the operation is repeated again and again until the message is fully understood.

Session 11: Role of Education in Social Change

Goal:

Familiarize participants with most important characteristics of the concept of adult learning and its role in social change.

Time: 1 hour and 25 minutes

1. Discussion of traditional, top-down educational situation (10 minutes).
2. Collaborative pair work on positive learning experiences (25 minutes).
3. Group presentations (20 minutes).
4. Discussion of the experience of personal learning at the workshop to know methods of learning and characteristics of adult learning (15 minutes).
5. Present the theory of adult learning (15 minutes).

Handouts:

The Adult Learner
Memory and methods of Learning
Features of Participatory Learning
The Spiral Model of Learning

How It's Done

- Start the session by showing a photograph or other representation of a traditional method of education in your country. Ask the participants to comment on the picture. What does it represent or symbolize for them? Who has the power in this picture? Who is assumed to have the knowledge? How do you feel about this type of learning? How effective is this method at helping people learn how to deal with complex situations?
- Then have the participants count off by twos, and have them break into pairs (each pair with a number 1 and a number 2). Ask each person to describe to the other one of her best or favorite learning experiences. Who or what was “the teacher” in your experience? Why was the experience so positive for you? Did it spur you to take new actions, or act differently in some aspect of your life? Give everyone a few minutes to think. Each person can take 10 minutes to tell her story.
- Once everyone is done, ask the group to share some of the answers with everyone. Then ask (in Plenary): Do you see any patterns? Are there any interesting commonalities or differences in people's stories? What seem to be the elements

of positive educational experiences? How often did it lead to changed behavior? What do these individual experiences tell us about the links between learning and change?

Reflections/Connections:

- “Good education has the power to transform people. It can break through apathy and feelings of powerlessness that inhibit action, and encourage reflection and analysis that sharpen strategies and lead to effective action. This is why we chose to develop an educational program as a way to help empower women workers.
- Our role is to develop and conduct educational processes and events that:
 - a. enable participants to identify and analyze their problems, not what we think are their problems;
 - b. provide participants the chance to think about problems in new ways and practice new actions;
 - c. help participants create and implement actions that bring about positive change.
- In previous sessions, we practiced skills that will form the basis of our work as educator/activists – that of active listening and one-on-one communication. In this session talked about our own feelings about learning, and our assessments of the best ways for adults to learn. We are now going to review the theoretical underpinnings for some of these concepts, which you have intuitively understood. This will help us ground our own learning and action in the long history of peoples’ struggle for economic, social and political justice.”

Participatory and Adult Education Discussion Activity

Time: 30 minutes

- Ask participants to think about the learning that they have experienced during the workshop. Discuss the following questions with them:
 - a. How can we describe the teaching method/style adopted during the workshop?
 - b. How does it work?
 - c. What are the essential features of this method/style?
 - d. What are the essential steps/phases in this teaching method?
- Write down the responses on a flipchart.

- Pass out copies of the handout entitled “Features of Participatory Learning.” Give participants 15 minutes to read it.
- When they are done, ask the group to relate or classify all the items on the flipchart, and others they think of during the discussion, to the information in the handout.
- Now ask participants:
 - a. Why is participatory/collaborative learning considered to be effective and appropriate for adult learners?
 - b. What are the essential characteristics of adult learning?
- Again, pass out the handouts on the adult learner, memory and methods of learning and the spiral method of learning and discuss these in relation to the discussion in the group.
- Indicate to participants that they will rely heavily on participatory learning and on their knowledge about the characteristics of adult learning in the process of recruiting and engaging their small groups they will form after this workshop, to help facilitate working women’s empowerment in their workplaces and communities.

Features of Participatory Learning⁵

There are different empowering learning approaches that help people to ask questions, discover new truths, and practice solving real life problems. Freire spoke about popular education as a participatory process of action-reflection-action. While popular education has spawned a myriad of participatory learning methods, the basic process always involves problem identification, analysis, and the pursuit of solutions through dialogue, self-awareness, and organizing.

Some of the features and assumptions of participatory learning methodologies are described below.

The Political Nature of Education

No education is neutral. *How* one learns is linked to *what* is learned. Education can teach people how to conform or it can encourage independent thinking and creative change. A learning process that validates what learners know and challenges them to examine their ideas more deeply can empower them to think independently, seek information, and act on their knowledge.

Relevance

People absorb and act on information that is directly related to their daily lives. Relevance is vital to motivation.

Linked to Problem-Solving

Adults often learn faster when the information they gain addresses the problems they face directly.

Dialogue and Mutual Learning

Dialogue can ensure that the learner's concerns are the focus of the educational process. By promoting a more equal educator/learner relationship, dialogue involves joint discovery and helps learners to gain confidence in their own ability.

Recognizes Differences among People While Seeking Common Ground

The same power imbalances that generate conflict in society are present in groups brought together to learn, plan, and act. Naming these differences and adjusting for power dynamics is a vital starting point for empowerment. The approach contrasts with the tendency to see marginalized groups as homogenous, and to ignore the power differences between educators/organizers and "people from the community."

⁵ From "A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation" by Lisa Veneklasen with Valerie Miller, World Neighbors, 2002.

Problem-posing and Open-ended Learning

One of the facilitator's roles is to ask questions that assist learners to examine their own situation and deepen their understanding of the problems they face. The facilitator also introduces new ideas and information to supplement and broaden the analysis.

An Iterative Process without Predictable Steps and Outcomes

Although participatory learning methods use a certain set of techniques, the process is not linear. Because the facilitator cannot anticipate how learners will think and interact, he or she must listen and engage in the process. There are no mechanical formulas for developing an empowering learning process.

Moves from the Concrete to the Abstract and Back

Traditional education, especially at higher levels, usually begins with theory and then tests the theory against reality. This is why some highly educated NGO leaders may be uncomfortable beginning analysis with a concrete description of a problem (e.g., women's health is poor due to too many children and inadequate nutrition) rather than an abstract explanation (e.g., reproductive health needs). When trainers start with a theoretical explanation, they can derail the empowering effect of analyzing and discovering things for oneself.

The Dialogue Process

Some educators refer to problem-posing in participatory learning as the "but why?" method. The facilitator's questions encourage learners to ask why problems exist and so probe their social, economic, cultural, and political roots.

Stimulating discussion with adults who are not used to speaking up in public can be difficult. Even people who are more comfortable speaking publicly may not have much experience with critical questioning. The problems people face may be so threatening that they find it impossible to talk about them. For this reason, it may be helpful to begin discussion with relevant examples rather than asking directly about problems. Some distance allows people to get comfortable with a topic, and after discussion, they may be able to relate the analysis to their own lives more readily. For this purpose, participatory learning approaches often use "codes" to start the reflection process.

Tips for Outside Facilitators

- Know the group you are working with. Prior research and observation will give you a sense of the problems facing this particular group. Use examples familiar to them to stimulate discussion.
- Remember that political analysis involves making connections between the past and the present as well as examining how privilege, power, and disadvantage mold real-life problems.
- Give people ample time to discuss a thorny topic with each other. A participant, rather than the facilitator, can sometimes more easily challenge misinformation or stereotypes.

Codes: Opening Discussion on Difficult Problems

A code can be a drawing, role play, game, skit, song, or story that presents a familiar problem in a concrete way. Usually, it does not provide answers, solutions, or morals. It simply depicts a situation that then becomes the focus of dialogue. The development of a suitable code requires observation and consultation. A code is especially helpful for dealing with personally sensitive problems such as rape, domestic violence, and AIDS.

Discussing Codes

The steps listed on the next page can help facilitators to guide dialogue around codes. They do not always follow a predictable sequence. Rather, the facilitator is responsible for guiding the spiraling process that takes people from the personal to the concrete to the abstract and back again.

Steps in the Dialogue Process

Introductory Step: Self-Analysis and Affirmation

Dialogue requires confidence and trust-building. If participants have not developed a sense of group solidarity, encourage them to introduce themselves and get to know others. Questions like “What inspires me?” or “What are my hopes and fears for myself, my family, my community?” can help build trust and affirm the importance of everyone’s contribution. The idea of beginning the dialogue process with personal analysis and affirmation was added to Freire’s original process by activists working with women. This is an important step because values and self-esteem are central to the way we learn and interact with the world.

Step 1: Description of what you see happening in this picture (skit, code, etc.)

Using the code, encourage participants to carefully describe what is happening—something that may be a daily occurrence for them. Often more schooled people use shorthand terminology to describe situations, such as “gender violence” or “conflict.” This step tries to avoid such abstraction by talking about concrete details.

Step 2: First Analysis—Why is this happening?

Begin to ask why people are doing what they are doing in the picture or skit. Keep asking why so that participants question as well as describe. Take advantage of the comfort people may feel in probing a situation that is not directly related to their own lives. It is useful for the facilitator to know enough about the issue to be able to formulate questions that help people analyze and that challenge myths, stereotypes, or misinformation.

Step 3: Real Life Comparison—Does this happen in your community? In your life?

Encourage people to give examples of how the situation in the code happens in their lives.

Step 4: Related Problems—What problems does this lead to?

This step looks at the consequences of the problem. Again in this step, the facilitator can provide additional information to supplement what participants contribute.

Step 5: Deeper Analysis—What are the root causes of these problems?

This step encourages learners to probe deeper into problems. Why does this happen? Once learners have had sufficient time, the facilitator can expand with additional information. The facilitator should also challenge simplistic explanations.

Step 6: Alternatives and Action—What can we do about it?

Linking education to action is essential for empowerment and effective advocacy. How will people use their new knowledge to change their situation? In this step, information about policies, law reform, budgets, and basic rights can assist people in defining what they can do. Step 6 can start by asking “What can we do to address this problem here in our community?” and “How can we bring about policy change to obtain more resources or better protection?”. Local solutions, such as setting up community committees to monitor water use, are as important as solutions at the national or international levels. This step can serve as an initial brainstorming for a group that then can lead to further analysis and organizing.

Handout: The Spiral Model of Training

The Spiral Model of Training is a way to think about the design and implementation of training that acknowledges adult learning theory, respects the needs and prior knowledge and experience of the participants and allows them to discover how to best put their new knowledge and skills into action.

1. Getting Started

- Create an environment that is conducive to learning by conducting introductions of participants and facilitators to build the feeling of community within the group.
- Ask the participants for their expectations of the program and respond with how these expectations will be met.
- Present the learning objectives of the course and how the participants will be involved in the course.

2. Begin with the participants' experience.

- Ask for participants' experience with the concepts and issues being discussed and relate the experiences to the training.

3. Look for patterns

- Identify patterns in the responses and discussion of the participants. Make note of and integrate these patterns of experience and concerns into the training.
- Making the participants realize that they share experiences and concerns helps to build a sense of community in the group.

4. Add new information and theory

- Link new information to the experience and knowledge of the participants.
- Assist participants in the organization and understanding of new information.
- Apply a variety of teaching techniques.

5. Practice skills and take action

- Include activities that allow participants to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned.
- Discuss how participants can use their learning outside of the classroom.

6. Evaluate

- Evaluate the program by asking for participants' feedback and assessing if the learning objectives of the program were achieved.

7. Begin again!

Handout: The Adult Learner

Malcolm Knowles, Ph.D.

- **Adults are self-directed, and not dependent on others for learning.**
- **Adults bring experience and prior learning to their learning situation.**
- **Their readiness to learn is related to their social roles such as union activist.**
- **They have a problem-centered focus. Adults are motivated to learn information in order to solve a problem or better a situation.**
- **Adults learn best when they can immediately apply new knowledge, skills and abilities.**

Handout: Memory and Methods of Learning

Listening = 20%

Sight = 30%

Listening and Sight = 50%

Listening + Sight + Discussion = 70%

Listening + Sight + Discussion + Practice = 90%

Session 12: Empowerment

Goal:

To have participants develop a common definition of empowerment, and recognize their roles and the role of their organizations in women's empowerment.

Duration: 40 minutes

1. Define empowerment (30 minutes)
2. Discuss the role of women, trade unions and other organizations in women's empowerment (10 minutes)

Tips for the Trainer

- Write participants answers on flipchart so that everyone can see.
- Made sure participants develop a common understanding of empowerment.

Handout: Definition of Empowerment

How It's Done:

- Review the contents of the empowerment flipchart with the participants. Let them know that it is now time for the group to come up with their own definition of empowerment. Ask everyone to help formulate a definition, and write all remarks on the flipchart so everyone can see.
- Try to condense all the ideas into a single definition.
- Pass out the attached definition of empowerment, and ask a volunteer to read it out loud. Discuss with the group any differences with their definition. Have everyone write the group's definition on the bottom of the handout.
- Now direct a group discussion around the following questions:
 - d. How can a woman contribute to her own empowerment?
 - e. How can a woman assist in other women's empowerment?
 - f. What can trade unions and organizations do to empower women?

Reflection/Connection

- Emphasize that while empowerment starts with the self, and no one can “empower” anyone else, it is also true that large numbers of women cannot become empowered without concerted collective action.

Handout: Empowerment

Empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation and decision-making power. It enables people to take control of their lives, set their own agendas, build self-confidence, solve problems, and develop self-reliance. It involves the ability to make choices as well as to define what choices are offered. Women's historic and worldwide exclusion from the institutions and processes of power make their empowerment an essential precondition for gender equality. While only women can empower themselves, institutions can support processes that create space for women to develop their skills, self-confidence, and self-reliance.

Session 13: Summary Role Play

Goal:

To give participants a chance to showcase what they learned in the workshop, and to enable facilitators to assess the extent to which participants gained skills and knowledge from the workshop

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

1. Review the major themes of the workshop (10 minutes)
2. Develop, perform, and receive feedback on role play (80 minutes)

Tips for Trainers:

- Make sure the role play is clear for participants
- Pay careful attention to the role-plays, as this is a chance to assess how effective the workshop was in developing skills, knowledge and motivation among the participants. This is critical feedback for the program overall.

How It's Done:

- Take about 10 minutes to review with participants the main themes of the workshop (gender, problem identification, prioritization and analysis, power, communication), how they relate to one another, and how the information learned can be used to help them to recruit women into their small groups.
- Then divide the participants into 4 groups, and ask each group to prepare a 5-minute role-play about one of the four topics. Participants should make sure the role-play relates to working women. Give them 30 minutes to prepare the plays. Encourage participants to use everything they have learned in the workshop to develop the role-play.
- Have each group present their work. Ask participants about their feelings and thoughts about the role-play. Take time to give your own thoughts and feedback, using the opportunity to once again make connections between what we have learned in the workshop and the real-life work of women's empowerment.

Reflection/Connection:

- Summarize this session by reminding participants of all they have learned, and how they can put their new skills and knowledge to work for women's empowerment.
- Remind participants that this workshop is only the first in a series of 3 workshops. The second workshop will provide them with the chance to deepen some of the skills we learned in this workshop, and develop new ones.
- In the next session, we want to get concrete about actions we hope you will take, and that we will take, to support women's empowerment in your unions and communities.

Session 14: Next Steps

Goal:

To establish the mutual commitment of participants and the program staff to the WREN program, and to provide participants with guidance on the next steps they are expected to take in the program.

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Tips for Trainers:

- Highlight the importance of participant's efforts to the success of the program.
- Do not end the session without ensuring that participants completely understand what they are expected to do in the next Phase.
- Show your enthusiasm for the project during the session, as it communicates to participants.

How It's Done:

- First, discuss the important role they can play as educator/activists in the movement toward women workers' empowerment.
- Ask each individual to consider what she has learned in this workshop, and decide anew to commit to the program (or not), given what she knows now. This is an important step in a long-term effort such as the WREN program. People may have come into the program without really understanding the extent of the commitment it requires. To give participants a chance to "recommit" based on full knowledge. It is useful to start this discussion by first stating our commitment to the participants over the long haul. Be careful to not pressure the participants, and to be open to those who may not be able to continue in the program.
- Now divide the participants into groups by sectors of employment, and ask each group to answer the following questions: (Refer to Flipchart on Empowerment)
 - a. What is the first thing you will do following the workshop?

- b. Do you know which women you will seek to recruit/bring along in the next phase?
 - c. What is the plan you intend to follow to reach out to women in your workplace and community? Please tell us where and when?
 - Give the groups 30 minutes to discuss, and then ask them to present their results. Leave time for questions and clarifications, as needed.
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