



Chapter III:
The Community Action Cycle



Section A: Overview

Overview of GREAT Component 1: Community Action Cycle

WHAT

The Community Action Cycle is how GREAT mobilizes communities to reflect on gender equality, prevent violence, and promote adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH). The Cycle is your entry point into work with the community. A tested model of community mobilization that has been used and adapted around the world (Save the Children, 2002), the Cycle outlines a participatory process for a core group of community members to engage the government, community members and other stakeholders in action to address gender inequity, gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health for adolescents.

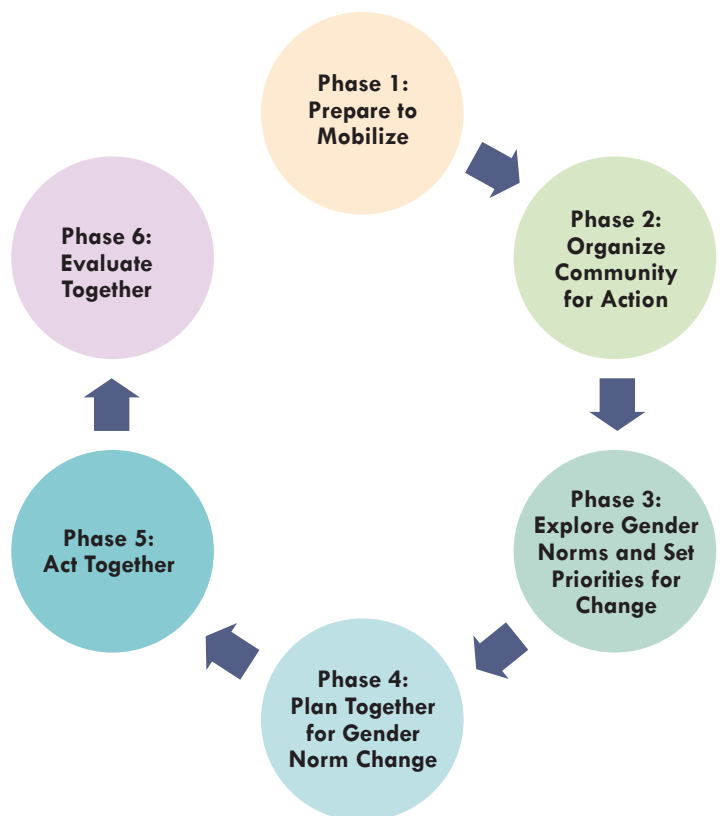
The Community Action Cycle does not prescribe activities or outcomes. Rather, it simply outlines a participatory process through which communities will identify, prioritize and act upon problems.

It is, in sum, a process of collective dialogue and action based on planning by communities who first define their current issues, the changes they seek, and how to make these changes happen through community mobilization and action.

WHY

The Community Action Cycle is a proven methodology for engaging community leaders and members in a process of community level advocacy and collective action on gender equity, gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health. Engaging communities and leaders in reflection and action, when done well, can lead to changes in gender norms and relationships and build an enabling environment to sustain behavior change. Community leaders—particularly clan leaders, religious leaders, and elected village leaders—play a critical role in setting and maintaining behavioral norms in communities and households. They can also be crucial catalyzers of normative change.

Phases of the Community Action Cycle



WHEN

Generally, you may begin implementing the Community Action Cycle prior to the 12 months of active phase when you've identified the issue(s) to be addressed, the area of intervention, trained field staff.

WHO

The trained field staff will guide Community Action Groups to roll out the Community Action Cycle using the Community Action Cycle Implementation Manual [<http://bit.ly/1Z2XVjz>] into all implementation areas. The Community Action Groups may be supported by the Village Health Teams (VHTs), Community Mobilization Teams, and the community groups, as needed.

HOW

The Community Action Cycle encompasses six phases, as shown in the diagram above. While the phases are summarized below, refer to the Community Action Cycle Implementation Guide [<http://bit.ly/1Z2XVjz>] for detailed instructions per phase.

Phase 1: Prepare to Mobilize: Form Community Mobilization Team

Phase 1 is when you prepare to enter and work in communities. Here you will orient government officials at different levels to get their buy-in to your work, form and build capacity of the Community Mobilization Teams, and plan on how you will mobilize different communities. This section of the Community Action Cycle manual gives you advice on how to approach government officials and what qualities to look for when recruiting members of the Community Mobilization Team. A series of tools or technical notes can be found at the end of this section in the Community Action Cycle implementation guide that can be used to: (a) conduct an inventory of resources, (b) guide interviews with community leaders to develop community profiles, (c) identify who is affected by different issues in a community, (d) conduct a checklist of preparations needed for orientation meetings, (e) guide on use of mini-dramas to introduce sensitive issues in these meetings and (f) provide a clear and accessible of how changing gender norms can lead to happier and healthier communities.

Phase 2: Organize the Community for Action

In this phase the Community Mobilization Team members, who were selected and trained in Phase 1, approach community members for the first time and begin their involvement in community mobilization and the GREAT Project. This section provides an overview of the four steps of Phase 2: Parish level orientation meetings, village orientation, community groups, and school-based clubs identification and assessment, and Community Action Group formation. A series of tools or technical notes is found in the Community Action Cycle Implementation Guide [<http://bit.ly/1Z2XVjz>]: (a) Mini-Drama on Gender Norms for the Orientation Meeting, (b) Preparation checklist for community orientation meetings (c) Gender Transformative Programming, (d) community groups and school-based clubs Assessment Tool and (e) criteria for selecting or putting together a Community Action Group.

Phase 3: Explore Together with Community

In this phase, Community Mobilization Team members begin to explore issues related to gender equality, ASRH and gender-based violence, within the team and in their own community. This phase creates a safe space for the community to begin to discuss and analyze gender issues affecting individuals, families and the community. This section of the Community Action Cycle implementation guide describes the steps and introduces tools from the GREAT Toolkit to use for participatory exploration. Additional guidance and tools are provided at the end on (a) how to open meetings and workshops, (b) preparing for field work, (c) decision making, and (d) use of the problem tree approach, (e) participant handouts, (f) interview guides, and (g) a community resource mapping guide.

Phase 4: Plan Together

In this phase, communities come together to plan activities to address the gender norms that prevent access to sexual and reproductive health information and services and act as barriers to healthier and fairer relationships free from violence. Community Mobilization Teams work with newly formed Community Action Groups (which coordinate activities in the community) to develop a participatory plan of action. Community Action Groups buy in to GREAT by committing to implement activities as part of the Community Action Plan. The plan is then shared with the wider community for feedback and commitment. A work plan tool is included in the Community Action Cycle Implementation Guide [<http://bit.ly/1Z2XVjz>].

Phase 5: Act Together

Community Action Groups and community members implement the Community Action Plan with the support of the Community Mobilization Team. The latter's role is now to strengthen community capacity to effectively carry out the Action Plan. In Phase 5, volunteers and community groups and school-based clubs often work together to carry out activities. Helping communities track their own progress is essential to motivate ongoing community action. Tools are included at the end of this section of the implementation guide Community Action Cycle to help you (a) identify capacity and training needs, (b) facilitate community groups/school-based clubs to assess their own progress, (c) provide capacity building in leadership skills, and (d) design a tracking plan.

Phase 6: Evaluate Together

Now the Community Mobilization Team works with Community Action Groups and community members to evaluate whether implementation of the Community Action Plan is proceeding as expected and whether the activities are producing the expected results. In this phase you will form an evaluation team, hold meetings to select indicators and design evaluation tools and plan, implement the evaluation plan, and analyze results and provide feedback to the community. Lessons learned and good practice will also be documented. Tools are provided in the Community Action Cycle implementation guide to help the evaluation team make the evaluation plan and document lessons learned.



Section B:
Chapter 3 Activities
**Community Action Cycle
Training Guide**

Purpose of Community Action Cycle Training

The general purpose of this basic training is to enable participants to roll out the Community Action Cycle in the GREAT context. In a very specific way, the participants will be able at the end of the training to:

- Define what community mobilization is
- List the Community Action Cycle phases and its steps
- Draft and use a detailed facilitation guide for the Organize, and the Explore, phases of the Community Action Cycle
- Plan action steps for rolling out the Community Action Cycle

In order to lead a successful Community Action Cycle training, refer to the Community Action Cycle Implementation Manual [<http://bit.ly/1Z2XVjz>] for detailed information on preparing to launch Community Action Cycle.

However, it is important to remember that in order to properly set up Community Action Groups and then guide them through the Community Action Cycle process, your NGO staff should first be trained themselves on the Community Action Cycle, especially the main facilitators. Your staff will be trained in Community Action Cycle as a community mobilization approach to engaging communities in transforming inequitable gender norms, attitudes and behaviors, for reduced gender-based violence, and improved sexual and reproductive health.

The Community Action Cycle training will occur in two rounds: the first round covering Community Action Cycle Phases I-III for approximately three days and then Community Action Cycle Phases IV-VI over the course of another three days. Between the two rounds of training, Community Action Groups should begin mobilizing in their communities, applying what they learned during the first round of training. Their experiences and lessons learned from implementing Phases I-III will be the bedrock for their Phases IV-VI training.

In situations where no master trainer is available to provide the Community Action Cycle training, project staff can read through the manual together and discuss how each of the 6 phases of the Community Action Cycle would be implemented. This could take 3 to 4 days to read through the manual and discuss it as a team, as well as plan out logistics for beginning the process in the communities.

Below is a suggested schedule for running a Community Action Cycle training, assuming a master trainer is available.

Suggested Community Action Cycle Training Schedule

DAY 1: Community Action Cycle Phase I - Prepare to Mobilize Phase

Materials Needed:	Note books, Pens, Flipcharts, Markers, Masking tape, clear bags/folders, index/idea cards, photocopying papers, projector; optional: sticky wall, printer	
Time	Topics	Facilitator
8:30-9:30 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome/Introduction Participants Expectations; Overview of Workshop Learning Objectives, Review of Workshop Program, Pre-Test, Creating Workshop Norms and Learning Environment 	
9:30-11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of GREAT 	
11:00 -12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Community Mobilization?; The Community Action Cycle; Sharing our Experiences 	
12:30-1:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degrees of Participation and CM Elements 	
1:00-1:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Prepare to Mobilize – (DISCOVERY) 	
1:30-2:30	LUNCH	
2:30-4:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put Together a CM Team: Our personal attitudes and values/Roles & Responsibilities 	
4:00-4:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review non-formal training methods and facilitation skills; Experiential Learning Cycle 	
4:30-4:45	BREAK	
4:45-5:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal & non-verbal skills; Safety & Respect 	
5:15-5:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gathering Information about the Community: Resources & Constraints; 	
5:45-6:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of day/closure 	

DAY 2: Community Action Cycle Phase II – Organize Community for Action

Materials Needed:	Note books, Pens, Flipcharts, Markers, Masking tape, clear bags/folders, index/idea cards, photocopying papers, projector; optional: sticky wall, printer	
Time	Topics	Facilitator
8:00- 8:15 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome 60 Word Summary Review of Day's Learning Objectives 	
8:15-10:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a CM Plan/Summary of Preparing to Mobilize 	
10:15-10:30	BREAK	
10:30-11:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Powers that Be/Overview of Getting Organized 	
11:15-12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a 'Motivating' Core Program Goal(s) 	

12:00-1:00	LUNCH	
1:00-2:00	• Sharing our 'Motivating' Goals	
2:00-3:30	• How to orient the community to the Core Program goal(s) – sharing our techniques!	
3:30-3:45	BREAK	
3:45-4:15	• Inviting participation in the Core Program initiative	
4:15-5:00	• Gathering Information about the Community: Resources & Constraints;	
5:00-5:30	• Review of day/closure	

DAY 3: Community Action Cycle Phase III – Explore Together with the Community

Materials Needed:	Note books, Pens, Flipcharts, Markers, Masking tape, clear bags/folders, index/idea cards, photocopying papers, projector; optional: sticky wall, printer	
Time	Topics	Facilitator
8:00-8:15 am	• Welcome • 60 Word Summary • Review of Day's Learning Objectives	
8:15-9:15	• How to form 'Community Action groups'	
9:15-10:00	• Summary of Getting Organized	
10:00-10:15	BREAK	
10:00-11:00	• Explore Overview	
11:00-12:00	• Exploring the Program Issues with Communities, Setting Priorities & Identifying Underlying Influences	
12:00-1:00 pm	LUNCH	
1:00-3:45	• Exploring the Core Program Issues, con't	
3:45-4:00	BREAK	
4:00-4:30	• Summary Exercise of Explore Phase	
4:30-5:30	• Review of day/closure • Next steps – Set a date for reconvening to complete Phase IV-VI of the Community Action Cycle following the implementation of Phases I-III • Post test	

DAY 4: Community Action Cycle Phase IV – Plan Together

Materials Needed:	Note books, Pens, Flipcharts, Markers, Masking tape, clear bags/folders, index/idea cards, photocopying papers, projector; optional: sticky wall, printer	
Time	Topics	Facilitator
8:30-9:00am	<p>Introduction and opening exercises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce the participants to each other. • To identify the needs and concerns of participants. • To ensure that the objectives of the workshop are clear. • To establish trust and respect. • To bring out differences in organizational backgrounds. 	
9:00-9:30	<p>Quiz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess knowledge and understanding of Community Action Cycle elements in community mobilization 	
9:30-9:45	<p>GREAT project overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To remind participants of the GREAT project goal, objectives, and approaches. 	
9:45-10:30	<p>Presentation of updates from user organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide updates on the current projects for integration. • To share experiences of rolling out Community Action Cycle phases 1-3. 	
10:30-11:00	<p>Scale up updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide updates to user organizations about the scale up progress. • To discuss roles and responsibilities in the GREAT partnership. 	
11:00-11:45	BREAK	
11:45am-1:00pm	<p>Review previous elements of the Community Action Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define community mobilization and its elements • List the Community Action Cycle phases • List the issues prioritized as per organization, during the last training. 	
1:00-2:00	LUNCH	
2:00-4:30	<p>Introduction to phase 4 (Plan Together)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the Plan together phase at community level • Learn how to prepare for the planning sessions • Practice conducting a planning session with Community Action Groups and Community members to develop the Community Action plans as per project. 	
4:30-4:40	<p>Day's evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To obtain feedback from participants about the days sessions 	

DAY 5: Community Action Cycle Phase V – Act Together with the Community

Materials Needed:	Note books, Pens, Flipcharts, Markers, Masking tape, clear bags/folders, index/idea cards, photocopying papers, projector; optional: sticky wall, printer	
Time	Topics	Facilitator
8:30-8:90am	Recap of previous day • To remind participants of key points/take home messages from previous day	
9:00-9:30	Introduction to Act together phase • Introduce the phase, and its elements.	
10:30-11:15	BREAK	
11:15am-1:00pm	Act together phase –determination of roles • To define the role of community structures and project staff in implementing the Community Action plans.	
1:00-2:00	LUNCH	
2:00- 4:00	Act together – Ensuring support • Supporting the implementation of plans, and tracking of community progress	
4:00-4:15	End of day 5. Evaluation and closure. • To obtain feedback from participants about the day's training	

DAY 6: Community Action Cycle Phase VI – Evaluate Together with the Community

Materials Needed:	Note books, Pens, Flipcharts, Markers, Masking tape, clear bags/folders, index/idea cards, photocopying papers, projector; optional: sticky wall, printer	
Time	Topics	Facilitator
8:30-9:00am	Recap of previous day • To remind participants of key points /take home messages from day two	
9:00 -10:30	Developing an evaluation plan • How to develop an evaluation team • How to develop an evaluation plan	
10:30-11:15	BREAK	
11:15am-1pm	Developing an evaluation plan (con't) • Implement an evaluation plan • Analyze data from the evaluation results • Document and share lessons, and give recommendations.	
1:00-2:00	LUNCH	
2:00pm -4:00	Reviewing evaluation tools • Discuss various tools for conducting evaluation Community Action Cycle.	
4:00-4:15	End of day 6. Evaluation and closure • To obtain feedback from participants about the day's training	



Section C: **Tracking Forms**

Community Action Group Activity Form

INSTRUCTIONS: Please complete this form for every activity organized and conducted by the Community Action Group in the community (not for trainings organized by the GREAT resource team or user organizations).

If two Community Action Group members work together on an activity, only one form has to be completed. Submit this form to the UO staff at the end of every month during his/her supportive supervision/tracking visit. The last day of submission is the 5th calendar day of the following month.

SECTION 1: REPORT BY

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP ACTIVITY

Phase of the Community Action Cycle

(Tick only the phase of the Community Action Cycle that has been reached at the time of reporting):

(1) Prepare to mobilize

(4) Plan together

(2) Organize the community

(5) Act together

(3) Explore gender equality, adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) and gender-based violence

(6) Evaluate together

SECTION 3: ACTIVITY DETAILS

Date of activity:				
Estimated number of community members reached:	Age Group	Male	Female	Total
	10-14 years:			
	15-19 years:			
	Newly Married/ New Parent:			
	Others:			
	TOTAL:			
Activity undertaken: (Describe briefly)				
Topic addressed by the activity: (e.g. violence, early marriage, contraception, gender, etc.)				
Location of activity:	District:		Sub county:	
	Parish:		Village:	

Pre/Post Test Assessment



25 Minutes

1. What age range does adolescence refer to? (*Circle one*)

- a. 7-15
- b. 15-19
- c. 10-30
- d. 10-19
- e. 15-24

2. Write down any 3 challenges adolescents face during the stage of growth and development

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

3. Name three reasons why adolescents in your community do not seek sexual reproductive health services.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

4. Having specially trained providers serve adolescents seeking sexual reproductive health services is important because: (*Circle all that apply*)

- a. Communicating with adolescents can require special care with regards to language, tone, and establishing trust
- b. Adolescents are very demanding and require a trained provider to navigate rude attacks
- c. Healthy life-long habits are established in adolescence
- d. Adolescents may ask to see a training certificate
- e. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to poor sexual and reproductive health outcomes

5. Name three essential characteristics of youth-friendly services:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

6. What are the three most important concerns that adolescents have when it comes to sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence service delivery? (*Circle three*)

- a. Privacy
- b. Nonjudgmental care
- c. Confidentiality
- d. Respect
- e. Television or games at the health center
- f. Brochures that they can take home with them

7. Which of the following are good counseling techniques for adolescent's clients?

(Circle all that apply)

- a. Ask close-ended questions (yes/no questions) so that the client feels more comfortable
- b. Speak in understandable terms, avoid overly technical language
- c. Look directly at the patient, nod your head, and listen actively
- d. Sit behind a desk or above the patient so there is distance and she knows that she should respect you
- e. Avoid using questions that start with "why" and/or other judgmental language

8. Write three reasons why adolescents should use contraceptives

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

9. Which is the best way for adolescents to prevent both unintended pregnancy and STIs?

- a. Emergency contraceptives
- b. Implants
- c. Correct and consistent use of condoms, or use of condoms plus another contraceptive method (Called dual method use)
- d. Oral contraceptives

10. Which of the following aspects must be taken into account when counseling adolescent clients on contraception?

(Circle all that apply)

- a. Risk of sexually transmitted infections
- b. Effectiveness of method
- c. Patient preference for a particular method
- d. Availability and access to methods
- e. Concerns that might be more relevant to adolescents such as weight gain, skin complexion, and discreteness of the method

11. Write three consequences of not providing the right information and sexual and reproductive health services to adolescents

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

12. How have you handled cases of gender-based violence at the health facility where you work?
