care® TIPPING POINT

Phase 2 | Technical Brief

BE THE CHANGE:
STAFF TRANSFORMATION

Background

Since 2004 CARE has been investing in staff to challenge their own beliefs and attitudes related to gender and sexuality, so that they can authentically model change and gain skills to facilitate transformative change with communities. Staff members systematically addressing their own belief systems was first facilitated through Inner Spaces Outer Faces Initiatives (ISOFI)[1]. Based on the ISOFI learnings, CARE developed the Social Analysis and Action (SAA)[2] model, a critical reflective dialogue methodology that has staff transformation as the first vital step of any program's implementation of the model.

Staff members who work in communities often maintain the same beliefs, practices and social norms as program participants. Through investments in reflective spaces on gender and power, CARE learned that staff members increase facilitation skills around difficult or taboo topics, such as norms related to sexuality, and can also be a part of changing the norm in their own community through modeling their own

transformation. SAA and other reflective dialogue techniques are now integrated across sectors, with the goal of staff at all levels of the organization becoming active champions for gender equality.

The Tipping Point Initiative focuses on the root causes of Child Early and Forced Marriage, challenging the norms that are associated with the practice, specifically by trying to increase the voices, choices and agency of adolescent girls. To address social norms that devalue girls, the initiative invested in a continuous and systematic staff transformation process as the first step towards the journey of norm change to increase program quality. This was accompanied by a monitoring system to track changes in staff attitudes and practices along the program cycle. This technical brief provides an overview of the way Tipping Point fostered Staff Transformation as a core part of programming throughout the program cycle.

Tipping Point's Approaches to Staff Transformation

Tipping Point built upon existing CARE approaches and resources to build staff's capacity to reflect on the unequal gender and power norms in their own lives and in their community. The approaches and processes used to engage and reflect with staff include:

Foundational Training

To begin the structured staff transformation process, the Tipping Point team participated in a nine-day foundational training. This training included session demonstrations, facilitation skill building, mock sessions for staff and staff transformation monitoring using indicators brainstormed by the project team themselves, which will be to be assessed every four months. Additionally, critical reflective dialogue sessions on taboo topics related to sexuality and gender-based violence were also documented for monitoring changes, with consent of staff. See Annex A for a sample list of indicators from Bangladesh.

Gender Equity and Diversity (GED) and SAA

Tipping Point staff were also trained on a combined curriculum of CARE's GED and SAA approaches. The staff reflected on the diverse backgrounds they came from and the deep-rooted gender and sexuality related norms common within their community and workplace. When new staff join, they participate in this training as well. The training opened opportunities for staff to look at the activities in the program design that support changes in girls' agency, relations and structures and how these changes can contribute to adolescent girls' empowerment. This caused staff to challenge their own assumptions about girls, the normative barriers to their empowerment, and their own role in community-level change.

Field testing and modification of implementation manuals

The staff was trained to field test the manuals for girls, boys, mothers and fathers. It was an intensive process for staff capacity as well: after getting the training, they practiced the sessions with peers and then facilitated in the community, noting the flow of content and ease in facilitation as well as the time taken for each step. The field test included feedback from the participants which was helpful for the staff to modify the package, as well as enhancing their facilitation skills.

Periodic Reflection and Capacity Building

Every four months, Tipping Point held staff meetings for reflection and planning. The staff would consider which topics seemed easy and which were more difficult to discuss in their own lives and while facilitating the program, such as those related to social norms and sexuality. The staff discussed how they used each topic in their interactions with their spouse and their children. They also discussed how they mustered courage to talk about the taboo topics such as menstruation or contraception with their adolescent children before facilitating them in the community.

In addition to reflection, there is also staff capacity building based on staff needs and activities in upcoming sessions. CARE and partner[3] staff participate in training for the upcoming sessions at least twice. First, they do so as participants which provides space for even more reflection on their own biases and attitudes related to the issues discussed during the session. Then, they practice the session as facilitators, and are provided feedback by their peers who act as participants. The issues discussed in these sessions are related to gender, power, reproductive and sexual health, sexuality, masculinity, honor, virginity and gender-based violence Additionally, if the staff felt that they needed more in-depth understanding of a topic, an external facilitator was invited to facilitate a discussion with the staff.

> "I communicate to my husband and son every time I conduct the session [on good touch, bad touch] and my son is telling his friends about good touch and bad touch."
>
> —Woman Staff Member, Nepal

Couples' Workshop

To take the staff transformation further and extend it to the families of staff members, the Tipping Point team in Bangladesh organized a couples' workshop. During this family day, the issues related to power and gender norms were discussed through fun games and reflective tools with the staff and their spouses. In the feedback collected from the participants after the workshop, a spouse of a woman reflected that he "never thought [he] was using power over

[his spouse] so often". The staff shared that they felt such processes help them to talk about the issues from their work openly with family members. This built support for the job outside home for many staff members, particularly women. The staff said that talking to the community members about these topics is often easier than talking with their own family members, but once they break the ice talking to their families, doing it in the community becomes more comfortable.

Mentor training
As a component of Tipping Point, girl activists are trained to lead advocacy activities in their communities. The girls' group facilitators underwent a training for how to be a mentor by stepping back and letting girls take the lead. Reflection with the facilitators to trust girls' capacity to lead and step back while they take the charge was transformational.

Global Team[4] Review and Reflection
CARE's experience has shown that the connection between personal and programmatic transformation must run across the layers of the agency and have significant support from management. Therefore, the project leadership and technical advisors also participate in a staff transformation process. Being cognizant of the power that comes with holding technical assistance portfolio and overall budget, the global team reflection focuses on issues of race, power, privileges, perfectionism and participation. Many reflections centered on whether or not a certain process was participatory and how the ownership and reviews of the implementing country and local partners are included in budgetary and program quality discussions. The global team felt these reflections were a necessary contribution to not just program quality, but also the health of partnerships and consistency with Tipping Point values evidenced by the gender equality approaches applied in Nepal and Bangladesh.

Cross-Learning Calls
Throughout the program cycle, the Tipping Point teams in Nepal and Bangladesh met on a quarterly basis to share their learnings, program experiences and advice with each other. The topics included Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) for adolescent girls, facilitation of girl-led activism, social norms programming, and reflections about the staff transformation processes already described. The discussions and questions across contexts allowed the teams to learn from and challenge each other.

Monitoring and Evaluation for Staff Transformation

Tipping Point is unique in its dual mandate to implement high-quality programming while also producing evidence and advocacy materials so that other practitioners, donors and governments would embrace approaches such as staff transformation. Therefore, the initiative employed a rigorous monitoring system to assess changes over time in the staff attitudes and behaviors. The tools used for this include:

Anonymous survey
This survey collected quantitative data on the attitudes and reported behaviors of partner staff in regard to gender, in an anonymous format. The respondent self-identified as a man or woman. This survey was done completed every 4 months by each field staff member.

Observation of reflective dialogues
An SAA tool or a triad exercise[5] was used to discuss events and reflections by staff in a safe space, and notes documented anonymously on themes of the reflection which there then shared with the larger group at the end of the exercise.

Observation of training on sessions
Additionally, while the partner staff engaged in the demonstration of sessions they would facilitate, the reflections of staff related to their attitudes on gender, power and sexuality were useful to reflect and document.

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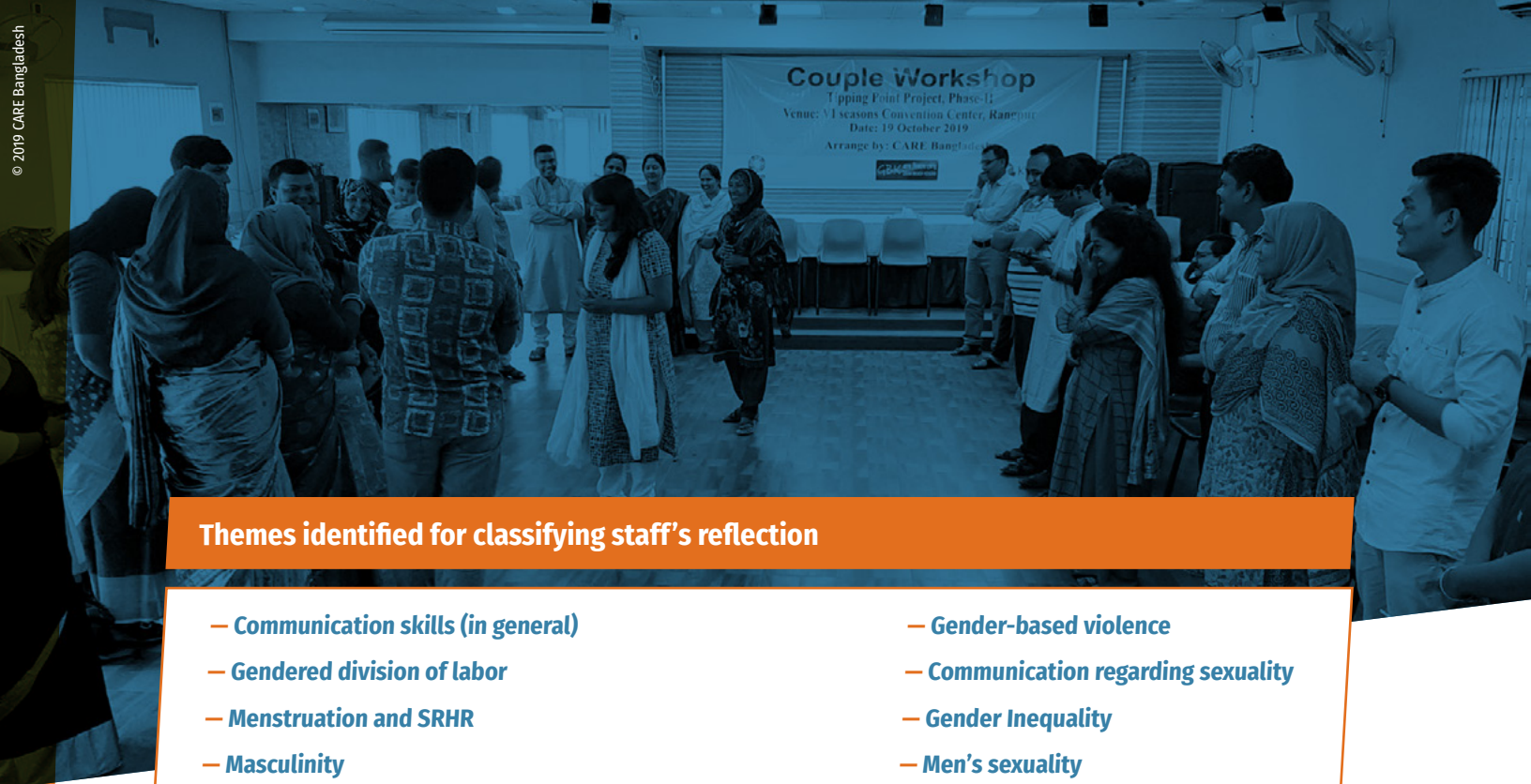
Themes identified for classifying staff's reflection

— **Communication skills (in general)**

— **Gendered division of labor**

— **Menstruation and SRHR**

— **Masculinity**

— **Belief in the ability of girls to exercise their own rights**

— **Honor and Virginity**

— **Gender-based violence**

— **Communication regarding sexuality**

— **Gender Inequality**

— **Men's sexuality**

— **Women's sexuality**

Results

Tipping Point collected data about staff attitudes, behaviors, knowledge and perceptions of select norms. Under each of these domains, staff reflections were documented under various themes like 'gendered division of labor', 'male sexuality', and 'menstruation'. The initial list of themes was developed based on expected topics of discussion among the staff during the training on TP package for that quarter. However, as more data was generated, more themes were identified and added to this initial list. Every four months, the reflections from staff on these domains of change and themes were tracked to identify the changes experienced by staff. Some of the initial findings from analysis of qualitative staff transformation data collected from Bangladesh include:

■ The staff developed more confidence communicating in general, not only with their colleagues and TP participants, but also in their personal relationships

■ Both men and women on staff self-reflected that their knowledge, with respect to menstruation, has improved since they joined the Tipping Point Initiative. There is an increased recognition of the misconceptions and restrictive norms around menstruation in the community and there has been a positive change in attitude among men on staff, who now feel that there is a need to inform and engage men and boys so that they are aware of menstruation and are sensitive to women's and girls' needs.

■ Women staff members have reported that their conversation with their husbands and fathers has become more open with respect to menstruation, but discussions related to decision-making, power-shifting and issues of sexuality and choice were not as easily discussed with their spouses and parents.

■ Women and men on staff reported increased consciousness of gendered roles and restrictions that are imposed on women. Even with this awareness, however, it was much more common that women on staff began negotiating with their husbands for shared power rather than men on staff also attempting to shift roles and responsibilities to be more equitable.

■ Women and men on staff recognized the need for sharing the burden of household chores with their spouse.

"When I joined at Tipping Point, I felt very lonely. Gradually I organized myself, become aware of my body and life. Now I convey my learnings with adolescent girls and my family.

—Woman staff member, Bangladesh

"After joining TPP and listening to different discussions from the meeting of TPP, I have changed a lot. Now I buy napkins for my sister during her menstruation. I do not feel shy to buy sanitary napkins or to discuss menstruation"

—Man staff member, Bangladesh

"I personally feel change. Earlier I did not use to do any household chores. But now I support my wife a bit in the household chores…. My neighbor however is telling me that I (have) become completely inclined to wife, they tease me, but that does not bother me"

—Man staff member, Nepal

"Before joining Tipping Point, I used to do my works myself but now I realize that there's no work specific to male or female. I discussed this issue with my husband, at first, he opposed, however, later on, he realized. Now he's doing household chores with me."

—*Woman staff member, Bangladesh*

Lessons Learned

Tipping Point's experience facilitating systematic staff transformation processes taught us how complex and dynamic social norms change can be. The initiative faced challenges with facilitation, measurement, and sensitivities around some topics that taught important lessons:

- Some staff members learned how to share in a way that aligns with gender equality, but their reported beliefs and behaviors in the monitoring data did not always match. Therefore, facilitators of staff transformation processes should be careful to probe for examples to explore perception compared to actual behavior, and why these might be different.

- Many staff learned to play a dual role of facilitator and mentor. While they actively facilitated sessions for reflection on power and norms, they took a back seat as a mentor and let girls lead to support girl led initiatives in other spaces. Consistent reflection on how to balance their role as a mentor for girl led events and as a facilitator for group sessions helped staff achieve success in both roles simultaneously.

- The review and reflection exercises have focused more on the program-related reflections that were easier or safer, such as sharing household roles. More focused conversation is needed on topics like sex and sexuality.

- When the first survey for staff transformation was completed, it became clear that staff responded with a social desirability bias, choosing the answers that imply more equitable attitudes than what came out in qualitative data. Therefore, each team then decided to observe sessions where the participants discuss their perceptions, feelings and understanding in a safe space.

- The monthly review and reflection meetings are held at the partner office, generally facilitated by the partner staff and co facilitated by the CARE staff. While CARE staff conduct observations, they did not do a separate reflection meeting amongst themselves, so personal transformation is largely focused at the partner level and not for CARE staff. To help remedy this, the global team, who do participate in separate reflections, facilitated a cross learning call among CARE staff.

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Conclusions

- **Investment in staff is the key to program quality**[6]. For Tipping Point, the staff acknowledge deep personal change, feel proud of their engagement with the project and the reflective processes. They began to model the change they want to see in the project. The staff agreed that unless they believed and lived out the behaviors themselves, sensitizing the community on those behaviors will never guarantee success. Through their own work, staff felt that they have a better and more credible connection with community members

- **The regular reflections amongst the team members were helpful in making strong relationships that were founded on trust**. Their bonding on a personal level helped the staff be enthusiastic in their professional duties.

- **Staff transformation is critical to embrace the power of girls and their role as leaders**. Their examination of power and the training on mentorship were eye opening for staff, who stepped back and let the girls lead advocacy activities.

- **Staff transformation requires the support of an organizational mandate**. In short term programs, if there is a passion from the program management, investment in staff reflections continues, but an organizational commitment to staff transformation and capacity building through reflective dialogue and training can be institutionalized for better program quality across sectors and increased accountability to organizational values. For example: the commitment from the management in Bangladesh inspired reflections amongst staff on gender and power on a regular basis.

For more information on this or other Tipping Point program approaches, please contact tippingpoint@care.org

ENDNOTES

1   ISOFI was designed to facilitate a safe and non-judgmental space where staff examined their own personal beliefs and attitudes about gender and sexuality, with the understanding that many times program staff's personal beliefs (Inner Spaces) are not in line with their professional duties (Outer Faces)

2   SAA is a facilitated process through which individuals and communities explore and challenge the social norms and practices that shape their lives and catalyzes a community-owned change process.

3   Tipping Point works with one partner in Bangladesh Gram Bikash Kendra (GBK) and two in Nepal : Dalit Social Development Center (DSDC) and Sidhartha Samudayik Samaj (SSS). These are implementation partners of the Tipping point Project during Phase 2 implementation.

4   The global team consists of CARE USA staff members who provide strategic direction and technical assistance to the Tipping Point Initiative

5   In a triad exercise, three people come together in a small group and share a story while others ask questions as they reflect on the given issue together.

6   For more information on the connection between staff transformation and program quality, see CARE's Inner Spaces Outer Faces Initiative Evaluation (2006)

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Annex A: Staff Transformation Survey Items

For quantitatively assessing the staff's transformation, changes in the staff was assessed in four domains. Each domain had certain survey items collecting data on staff's communication on sensitive subjects, knowledge and awareness regarding sexual and reproductive health, gender attitudes and work ethics. These items were selected from a longer list of items by the staff themselves, after a pilot-testing of this survey in each context.

SN	Domain 1 : In My Head
1	I am regularly aware of my power in various everyday situations in which I have power over others (younger, less educated, less wealthy, more junior, etc)
2	I think girls are bad or good because of what they choose to do with their bodies
3	I think my body should be in my control, not my spouse's control
4	I am able to speak about menstruation without feeling shame or shyness
5	I don't feel shy talking about sex
6	I don't feel shy talking about menstruation
7	I don't feel shy talking about night fall

SN	Domain 2: In the Work Environment/ With Colleagues
8	I proactively report when I see someone is being harassed.
9	As a male, I take note of how much "talk time" I am using in workshops and meetings and whether female or junior staff are equally talking
10	As a male, I listen closely to my female colleagues / As a female I can raise issues and contribute equally in meetings/ workshops.
11	I take initiative to make an environment in my team where all my colleagues/peers can contribute equally

SN	Domain 3: At my Home
12	As a male, I do half of the household tasks and child care work
13	I give important to the thinking and opinion of my spouse
14	When I hear any of my family/relative is going to get married soon I proactively encourage not give/offer dowry.
14	As a male, I can respond confidently to any relatives' teasing about me doing household tasks and reassure my wife that this is my duty
15	I ensure equal opportunities and facilities for my children and division of household responsibilities and responsibilities.

SN	Domain 4: In the Community / with Participant Groups
16	As a female, I don't feel shy to speak out in front of male community leaders/As a male, I consider consciously whether a girl will feel comfortable speaking to me or having me around
17	I listen to their reaction without being judicial
18	I maintain confidentiality
19	I let girls lead and implement their own decisions, even in situations when I'm not sure it's the right decision
20	I believe there are many things to learn from project participants.