

Community dialogues are an interactive participatory communication process that brings together different generations – typically the older generations and millennials – to dialogue to gain a better understanding of each other with the goal to ultimately address some barriers that youth are facing related to their access to reproductive health information and services.

Key Outcomes of Community Dialogue

- Change in practices, knowledge, attitude and beliefs towards FP/AYSRH services
- Supportive/enabling environment for provision of quality FP/AYSRH services



Steps

1

Engage stakeholders

Meet with key stakeholders within the health facility for buy-in and effective community-led dialogue preparation.

2

Select dates

Plan with the Community Health Assistants (CHAs)/Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs) on dates for the community dialogue, involve the local administrative units and community gatekeepers. During the planning meeting identify problems affecting the community e.g. increased rates of teenage pregnancy, youth issues, and myths on FP using the [facilitator's guide](#).

3

Mobilize target audience

Mobilize the target audience using community health workers and public announcements, (this could be parents, community gatekeepers, first time mothers, husbands, boda boda riders among others) based on the need and problem identified.

4

Engage participants

The facilitator engages the participants in a discussion to enable participants to share their opinions, experiences, views, stereotypes, narratives, norms and values in an interactive and participatory manner. The sessions should facilitate ease of expression without fear of judgment and intimidation.

5

Identify solutions

Where there is a commitment or resolution by the participants to embrace AYSRH / family planning, identify solutions. It may also bring about additional information, issues, and ideas that the community may wish to act on.

6

Seek joint resolutions

Develop an action plan together in accordance with cultural practices and traditional values. The process is most effective when the participants are actively involved in the resolution that may eventually lead to increased support and acceptance of AYSRH/FP.

7

Communicate appreciation

After successfully conducting a dialogue session and the evaluation, express appreciation to all participants for their time, contribution and resolve. This should be done regardless of the dialogue outcome.

8

Demonstrate commitment

Community units commit to work on AYSRH despite sensitivity surrounding youth sexuality.

9

Follow up

Agree on a date for a follow up meeting.

Useful Tips

- Use youth networks and collaborate with existing groups to engage youth comfortable in speaking on behalf of youth.
- An ideal community dialogue should have 15-30 members. In case there are more than 30 members, break the meeting into two and appoint different facilitator and note takers.
- Conduct the dialogue in a language that is easily understood by all. It is advisable to use the local dialect of the participants.
- If you have an individual who is outspoken, you might suggest continuing the conversation after the meeting or pulling them aside.
- Continuous engagement with groups is necessary for them to undergo change in mindset, attitude and belief, so plan to meet regularly.

For more information, refer to <https://tciurbanhealth.org/courses/east-africa-demand-generation/lessons/community-dialogue/>