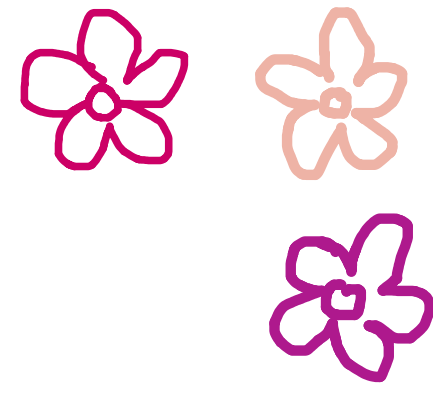
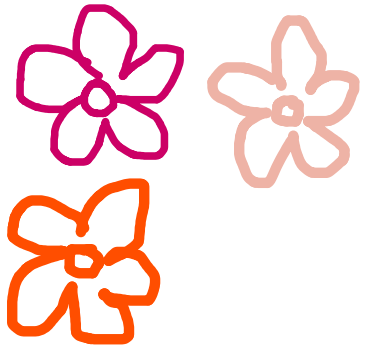


SISTER TO SISTER

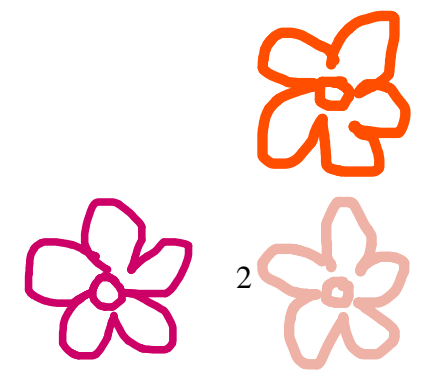
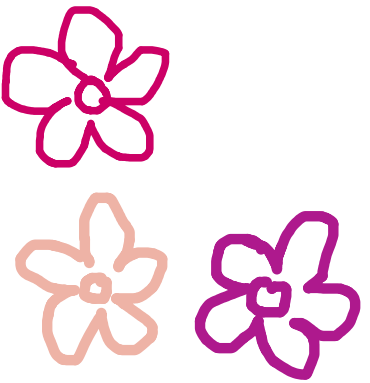
A MENTORING AND SISTERHOOD GUIDE
FOR WOMEN WORKERS IN FLOWER FARMS





“If you get, **give**. If you learn, **teach**”

Maya Angelou



A decorative border of colorful flowers surrounds the text. The flowers are arranged in a rectangular frame, with colors including pink, orange, purple, blue, and light pink. The flowers are stylized with five petals and a central circle.

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Acknowledgements

This mentoring and sisterhood guide was developed with support from Hivos under the auspices of the Women@Work Campaign, an initiative that seeks to propel decent working conditions for women who earn their living in global production chains most notably flowers, fruits and vegetables grown for export. The Campaign's main advocacy areas include; fair income (living wage); security in the work place (dealing with issues of sexual harassment); good labour conditions (contracts, social protections systems); compliance with international safety standards; freedom to organize; and women's leadership. Through the Women Leadership Project, Akina Mama wa Afrika contributes to the campaign through building the capacity of women workers to participate in critical decision making spaces to demand and influence changes in policy and practice to enable them enjoy their economic and social rights both at the workplace and in the wider economy. The project is implemented in partnership with Uganda Workers' Education Association (UWEA) in Uganda, The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) in Kenya, and Rwanda Women's Network and Rwanda Workers' Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR) in Rwanda.

Background to this mentoring framework

The mentoring and sisterhood guide is complementary to the feminist and transformational leadership training designed by AMWA and delivered to women workers working on flower farms. Leadership is a continuous journey of growth that requires a combination of knowledge, skills and opportunity to be exercised and built upon. Having undergone the leadership training, the mentorship programme allows beneficiaries to further deepen their knowledge in the concepts learnt at the leadership institute, while creating opportunities for them to exercise their leadership skills by serving as mentors to their peers. This is the first step in building solidarity premised on sisterhood among workers, with the aspiration that this will be a key building block in collective action around issues of concern on the farm. We hope that this guide will be a handy companion in workers having a better understanding of themselves, their rights and how they can challenge structural oppression.

Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMWA) is a feminist-Pan-African leadership development organization that was founded in 1985 by a group of visionary African women in the United Kingdom but later relocated to Africa with headquarters in Kampala, Uganda. Our work is rooted in feminist principles and beliefs guided by the Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists which define our leadership development program and movement building activities. We strive to strengthen the individual and collective leadership of African women, forming strategic partnerships, to tackle patriarchy and attain gender equality and women's empowerment for a just and secure Africa.



SECTION ONE: Planting the Seeds

“you can never leave footprints that last if you are always walking on tiptoe”

- Leymah Gbowee, Liberian Peace Activist and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize

EVERYONE IS A MENTOR

Maybe you have heard too many times that women cannot lead, that women should follow; and you decided to stay back instead of speaking out or acting. Maybe you did the opposite. You spoke out and acted, but received punishment for doing so. If you are holding this guide in your hand, it is likely that you have made a decision to believe in yourself and other women to lead and take action, and to support each other along the way. That realisation, that women can lead and support each other to create change is one of your primary strengths in your journey of mentoring.

We seldom recognise the leaders that surround us. They are everywhere. Your grandmother who passed on to you your mother tongue and family history; your mother who gave you the skills to survive in the difficult terrain of life; or the friend that you can consult and share your joys and sorrows with. To be a mentor means actively passing on your knowledge and skills to other people. But it is also about helping sisters to see their own skills and unlocking their potential. In a process of mentoring you will soon discover that you are learning just as much as your mentees.

Mentoring your sister

In this guide we encourage you to see mentoring as sisterhood. Sisterhood means supporting and learning from each other in a loving and respectful way. However, you as a mentor carry the largest responsibility to make sure that this is established by leading by example.

As a mentor you will use the skills you have been exposed to during AMWA's feminist leadership trainings. To mentor therefore becomes a means to put this theory into practice. It gives you an opportunity to be part of a new wave of leadership where there is collaboration and co-learning rather than hierarchal and domineering practices. To begin with, ask yourself and reflect on the following:

- What experiences and learning can I bring to the mentoring relationship?
- What are my own expectations for the relationship?
- Are there any obstacles that could impede the relationship's development?

Mentoring skills:

Active listening – by using active listening you will truly get to know your mentee and in this way you will be able to give the best support, facilitation, and advice in order to have a successful mentoring experience. Active listening means fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively hearing the message of the speaker. Active listening involves listening with all senses. As well as giving full attention to the speaker, it is important that the active listener is also being seen to be listening-otherwise the speaker may conclude that what they are talking about is uninteresting to the listener.

Building trust – be sure to create a non-judgmental and confidential environment so that mentees feel safe. This will help them truly blossom! You can do this by collectively deciding on group norms when you meet. An example of a group norm could be “listen to different points of view.”

Building capacity and skills – as you learn more about what your sisters are facing and what skills they need to address their needs and future goals you will be able to give advice on how she can do this.

Encouraging & inspiring – by believing in your mentees' capacities and by affirming their worth they will gain confidence that can take them far in making change. This might even be something that you will do jointly as a sisterhood.

Take your time—As women working on flower farms, it may not be easy to make time to talk to each other about everyday issues. If you are unable to finish a topic at one sitting, simply keep the conversation for the next meeting.

DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN! People will keep coming back to the meeting space if it's a place where they can relax and enjoy themselves and each other's company.

Phases of mentoring and sisterhood

In this guide we suggest three phases of mentoring. We call these, phase one: **planting the seeds**, phase two: **watering the plants**, and phase three: **keep her blossoming**.

planting the seeds... Right now, you are slowly planting the seeds. You as a mentor are starting to familiarise yourself with the practice of mentoring in order to identify the women that you will take as your mentees. In this guide we advise you to identify and recruit 3-5 women at your work place to be part of your collective mentoring. But before that, make sure that you go through this guide so that you know how you will be mentoring your sisters.

watering the plants... This is the longest process of the mentoring, where you take your fellow women through the different topics in this guide. During this phase you will sit together and discuss

keep her blossoming... The mentorship is almost coming to an end. Now your role as a mentor is to ensure that the women you have mentored are confident and equipped to take on the mantle of being a mentor and a leader themselves.

The conversation circles – your tools for mentoring

This is a method that facilitate peer learning by individual and group reflection while also practicing the skill of active listening. As a mentor you will be given proposed topics for discussion according to the different areas in the guide. However, we encourage you to take leadership and make alterations to make sure the topics are relevant for you and your mentees needs and realities. We suggest that you use 15-20 minutes of your lunch break or whichever time is most suitable for you at the farm.

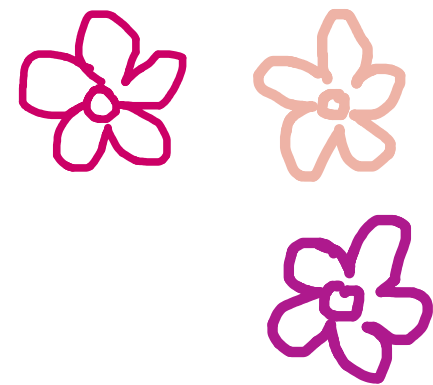
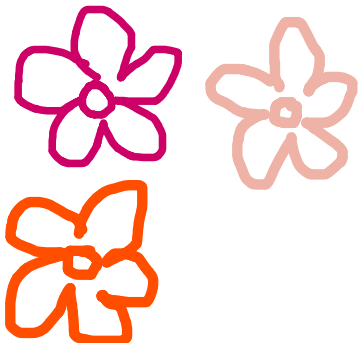
Instructions:

1. The mentor presents the topic to be discussed a week in advance to give mentees time to reflect and prepare.
2. You start the session by sitting down in a circle so you can all see each other well. The mentor gives a short introduction to the topic.
3. A token (a ball or stick or any other suitable object) is given to whoever wants to share her views. The token allows the speaker to take the floor and share her point of view on a selected topic. Encourage her to explain why she agrees, disagrees, how she relates this to her own life, and how she feels in relation to the topic.
4. It is important that you as a mentor ensure that the setting is respectful and it is your responsibility to ensure that no one speaks unless they have the speaking token so that there is no cross-talk or side conversations.
5. Considering the time limitation, be sure to divide the time amongst mentees.



6. When the first speaker has finished and/or the time is up, she sends the speaking token to the person on her left.
7. The new sister holding the speaking token must first state whether they agree or disagree with the previous speaker's stance. She will then provide her personal comment (thinking and feelings about the topic statement).
8. Steps 5 through 7 will repeat allowing the speaking token to continue around the circle giving everyone an opportunity to contribute.
9. Make sure that the whole circle is completed in the 15-20 minutes you have at your disposal. Also make sure that you have enough time to round up the session and give the mentees an introduction of next week's topic.

NOTE: At the very first meeting, all sisters should introduce themselves and say what they hope to benefit from the mentorship program



SECTION TWO: WATERING THE PLANTS

PART ONE

SITUATING YOURSELF

1.1 Session Summary:

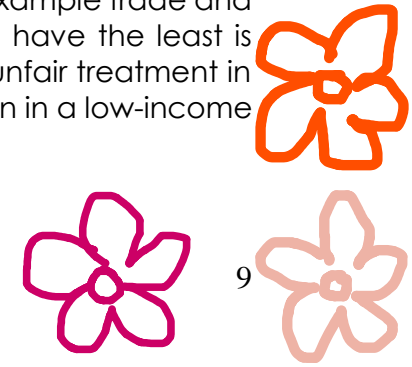
The overall goal of this session is to give the mentees a deeper understanding of themselves and their own situation. It includes reflection on the life she has and the conditions that affects her life. It is also about identifying her strengths and weaknesses as well as dreams and goals for the future. This is a process that will continue throughout the mentoring and therefore it is important that you assist your sisters to reflect deeply on their lives by providing an open and supportive space for sharing and feeling.

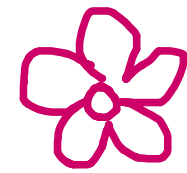
1.2 Mentors tip:

To be able to lead your sisters through this, as well as other sessions and topics, it is important that you first reflect on your own situation and future goals in the same way that you will encourage your sisters. If you are not able to describe your own life and your goals for the future you will not be able to facilitate the mentees to do so. It could be recommendable that you share some of your personal struggles and visions to give your sisters an idea of this process.

1.3 A woman in the local and the global world

While every sister's situation is unique, we know that the majority of us share common experiences. Feminists have long discussed the shared experiences of women, but also how these can vary greatly depending on local context, time, religion, culture, and other factors. Today the aspects that impact on the condition of women around the world are seen as increasingly complex due to the globalised world. The globalised world describes today's era of greater interconnectedness and interdependence with complex chains connecting us together through for example trade and communications. While the global divide between the people who have the most and those that have the least is increasing, it is still true that women across the world earn less than men, face more constraints and unfair treatment in the labour market, are more likely to experience domestic as well as sexual violence. However, women in a low-income country like Uganda are often more disadvantaged than women in high-income countries.





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 1.1

Self-Reflection

This first conversation circle setting off the journey of mentorship is geared to make the sisters reflect on their life situations. It is a way to spur the process of self-reflection which is useful in identifying both personal strengths and weaknesses, but also external processes and their positive and negative effects on your life. Explain in advance to the sisters that they should reflect on the following:

- What are my strengths and weaknesses? (mention at least three of each)
- Who and what influences my life? What does that influence look like? (Responses could include things like, "My life is influenced by my faith. Because of this, I always try to help others when they are experiencing difficulties.")

Getting started!

Are you all seated comfortably in a circle where everyone can see and hear each other?

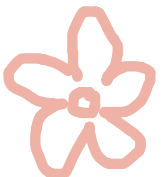
Take lead as the mentor and begin by reminding the sisters of the topics of reflection. To start off the session you can share some of your own reflections as this will make your sisters more comfortable sharing their own. Then you are ready to start. Give the token to one of the sisters and encourage her to start. Follow the guidelines for the conversation circle tool. (see p. 7)

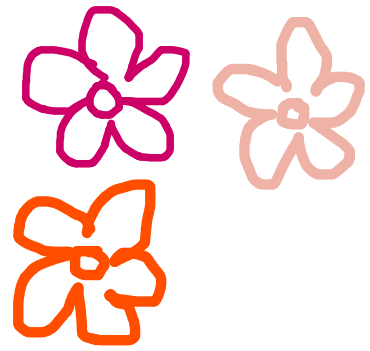
Has everyone shared their reflections?

Now your role as a mentor is crucial again. Try and summarise what the mentees have shared, point out the commonalities and differences that were expressed and maybe why these are present. Make sure that you do this without value judgement and also be sure that the mentees do not pass judgements on each other.

HOMEWORK

Prepare the sisters for the next conversation circle 1.2 "MY FUTURE". They should fill in the wheel of life tool before the next meeting. Look at p.12 for instructions.





ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF

Liberia and Africa's first democratically elected female president

She is a great woman who has accomplished change in Liberia and beyond. She was recognized for her efforts towards peace by being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. In her speech she said that "on behalf of all the women of Liberia, the women of Africa, and women everywhere in the world who have struggled for peace, justice and equality, I accept with great humility the 2011 Nobel Prize for Peace."¹ She also highlighted the many women and mentors that had helped her to reach where she is. This is how Ellen described her journey:

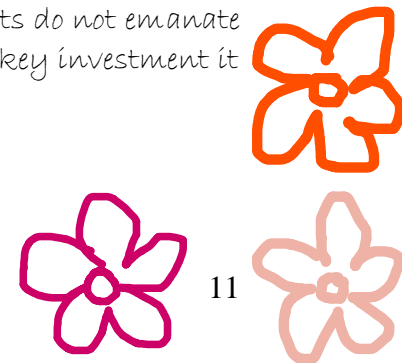
"It was shaped by the values of my parents and by my two grandmothers – indigenous Liberians, farmers and market traders – neither of whom could read or write. They taught me that only through service is one's life truly blessed. My journey was supported by my many teachers and mentors who guided me to a world opened up by the enlightenment of higher education, and which led to my conviction that access to quality education is the social justice issue of our time."²

Take note that she mentions various mentors in her life and that some of these were not formally educated or seen as powerful in the eyes of the general public. While there has been controversy around the politics of Sirleaf, she contributed to bringing peace amidst a bloody and drug related civil war in Liberia. Still, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said the following in her speech:

"However, the need to defend the rights of women is not limited to the battlefield, and the threats to those rights do not emanate only from armed violence. Girls' education, seen far too often as an unnecessary indulgence rather than the key investment it

¹ https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/johnson_sirleaf-lecture_en.pdf

² https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/johnson_sirleaf-lecture_en.pdf

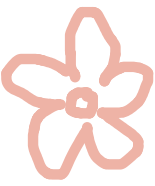
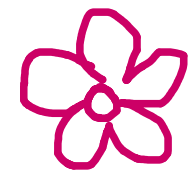


is, is still under-funded and under-staffed. Too often girls are discouraged from pursuing an academic training, no matter how promising they may be.”³

“If I might thus speak to girls and women everywhere, I would issue them this simple invitation: My sisters, my daughters, my friends, find your voices! Each of us has her own voice, and the differences among us are to be celebrated. But our goals are in harmony. They are the pursuit of peace, the pursuit of justice. They are the defense of rights to which all people are entitled.”⁴

³ https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/johnson_sirleaf-lecture_en.pdf

⁴ https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/johnson_sirleaf-lecture_en.pdf



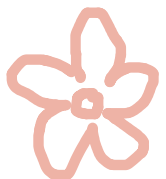
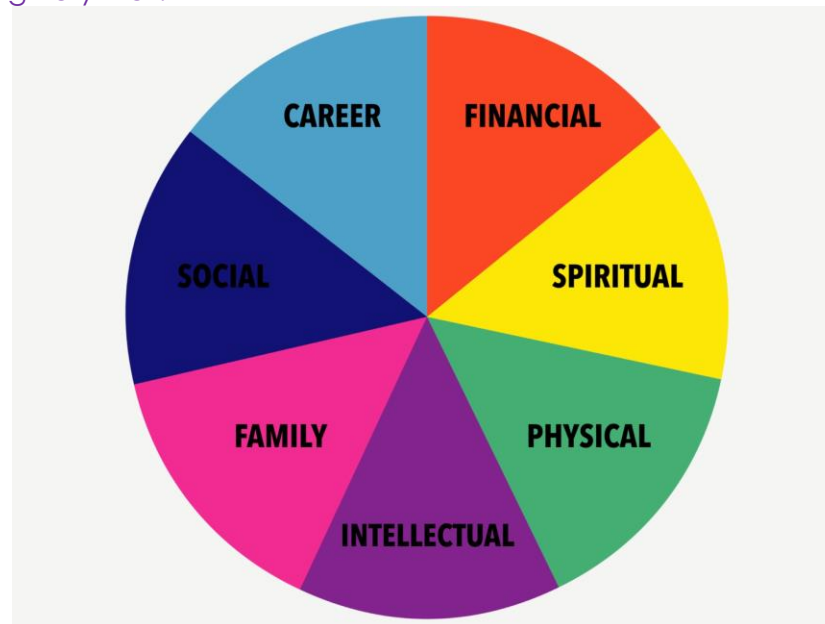
CONVERSATION CIRCLE 1.2

MY FUTURE

Last time you took your mentees through the first conversation circle on self-reflection. This second circle builds on this by looking ahead to map out the mentees' goals and dreams for the future. This is another important aspect in the journey, which you will come back to towards the end of mentoring.

Using the wheel of life

This exercise should be completed before the meeting to allow adequate time for reflection. Examine yourself on all the areas in the wheel and score yourself on a scale of 0 to 5. 0 means you are not doing anything at all while 5 means that you are doing very well.





After grading yourself...

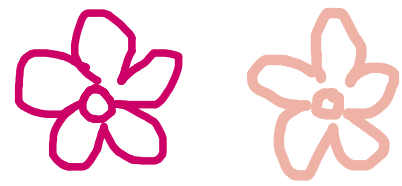
Guiding questions.

- Identify three areas of improvement in your life. Identify one short-term (within a one-year-period) and one long-term (within a 5-year-period or longer) goal and explain why you have these.
- Write down 2 to 3 things you are going to do differently in order to make the change. For example if you have chosen physical/health as your area of improvement, your actions could include
 - *Doing yoga/running every morning*
 - *Eating more boiled food, etc*
- When will you make this change?
- Who will be your accountability partner? (Who is the person that you trust will ensure that you keep your promise? This could be your co-worker, your husband/boyfriend, your supervisor, etc)

All the sisters have spoken...

Take lead as a mentor, with the speaking token to summarise this day's circle; identify dreams and goals that the women might be able to accomplish by joint efforts. Give encouragement and support and let the mentees know that these goals for the future will be revisited towards the end of the mentorship.





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 1.3

CARING FOR MYSELF

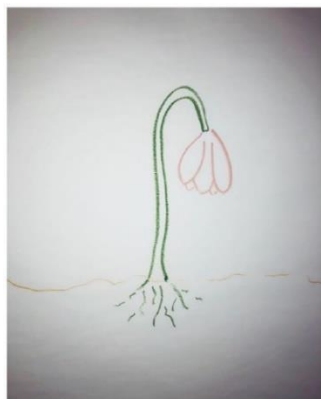
Last time you led guided your sisters through setting their goals. Now it is time to talk about an issue that keeps a lot of women from fulfilling their goals.

Women's burden of care

Lead your sisters through this reflection: As women, we are brought up to think about others' needs first. In addition to working and bringing in the cash, women also take care of men, of children, parents, the elderly, the sick, the bereaved and orphaned, unemployed extended family, the poor etc. They volunteer in the community and in the church. Sometimes they also support one another. Consequently we never think about ourselves. We are taught to merely survive and not to thrive.

Questions to ask the group

- What are some of the ways women have to look after others, both in and outside the home?
- What is the impact of this on women?
- If I am caring for so many others, who takes care of me?
- Whose responsibility is it to take care of me?



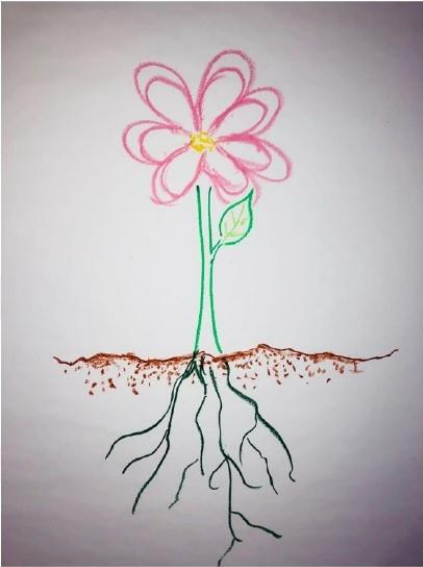
This is what we look like when we are just surviving. The flower is droopy and sad.

As a mentor, emphasise that we each need to take responsibility for our own self-care as there is no one else who will do this for us. As leaders and emerging leaders, this is very true and important.

Preparing for the next conversation

Tell your sisters to reflect on this as they go home in preparation for the next conversation.

Homework: Imagine the things that need to happen in order for you to thrive, in order for your flower to bloom like the one in the photo. *From your experience of growing flowers, what does it take to ensure that this flower thrives?*



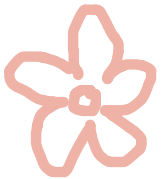
Drawing your own flower (To be done at home or in your free time). The discussion will be held at the next meeting.

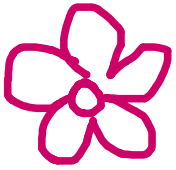
Ask your sisters to imagine that they are a flower. Let them make a drawing of what that flower looks like.

While they are drawing they should reflect on the following questions.

- What roots you firmly in the ground?
- *What are the nutrients from the soil that feed you?*
- What is a threat for you?
- What is the fence that protects you from predators?
- What is the sun that warms you?
- What is the gentle rain that refreshes and nourishes?

Think about some of your hopes, dreams and aspirations.





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 1.4 THRIVING

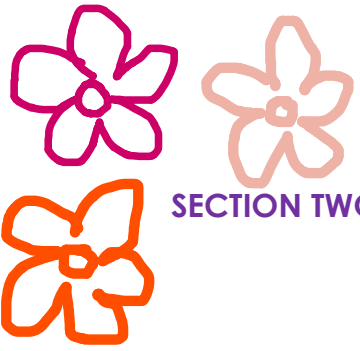
At the last conversation sisters were tasked to draw a flower that shows them thriving. During this conversation circle, sisters will all share what they drew and tell the group what their reflections were on the questions posed.

Possible responses to the reflection questions.

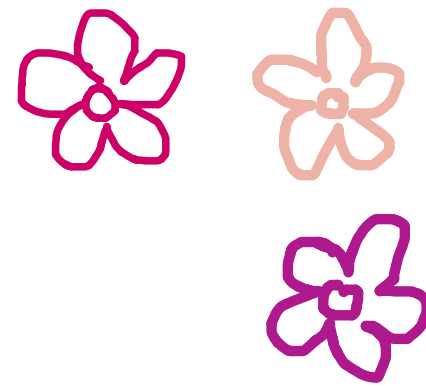
- What roots you firmly in the ground? *My children. Why? My children are the reason for my being. They are reason I come to work every morning.*
- What are the nutrients from the soil that feed you? *My faith/religion. Why? Every time I feel low, I pray to God and feel renewed and get the courage to keep going.*
- What is a threat for you?
- What is the fence that protects you from predators?
- What is the sun that warms you?
- What is the gentle rain that refreshes and nourishes?

Remind sisters that the things they have shared in with the group are what keeps them thriving. It is very important therefore to work on building and keeping those relationships.

Self-care is very important. We need to constantly reflect on whether we are taking care of ourselves properly. If we cannot take care of ourselves, we cannot take care of others and we most certainly cannot be effective leaders.



SECTION TWO: WATERING THE PLANTS



PART TWO

GENDER EQUALITY

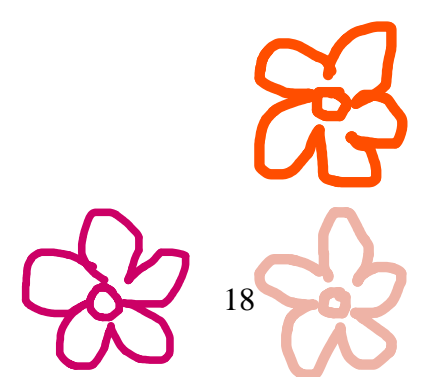
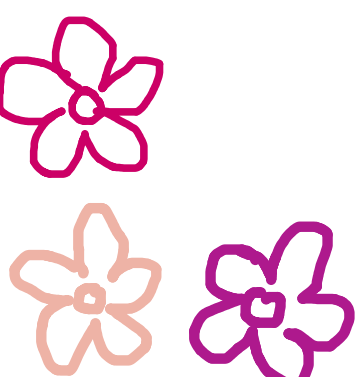
2.1 Session Summary:

The overall goal of this session is to give the mentee a very basic understanding of **Gender** as a concept and how gender norms affect individual values, aspirations and goals. It includes basic definitions of gender and how gender norms affect women working in the horticulture sector. This is applied in conversation circle 2.1 where you explore these in relation to your lived reality. Later on, there is a brief introduction to women's empowerment as a means to counter and reverse negative gender norms which is applied in conversation circle 2.2.

2.2 Mentorship Tip

Always seek to find existing community resources and references that the mentees can relate to when unpacking the concept of Gender. For example, substitute the examples/stories in the briefs for local examples that relay similar lessons and wisdoms. This teaches mentees to become more inward looking and think more critically of the things that happen to and around them.

“Gender refers to the socially constructed differences and inequalities between men and women”





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 2.1

Understanding Gender and Sex



So, what is this thing called Gender?

Gender refers to the socially constructed differences and inequalities between men and women (for example, because you are a woman, you are expected to dress a certain way or behave a certain way). These ideas and expectations are learned through families, friends, religious and cultural institutions, schools, workplaces and the media⁵. These ideas also change over time and depending on religion, culture, class (wealth), ability/disability, etc. For example, there was a time when women were not allowed to work outside the home, but now they do.

Instructions

- Go around the circle and ask mentees to share what they think women's roles are or what they have heard women are expected to do. Keep going around the circle until the answers are exhausted.
- Go around the circle and ask mentees to share what they think men's roles are or what they have heard women are expected to do. Keep going around the circle until the answers are exhausted.

Examples of responses to expect

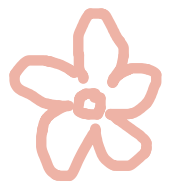
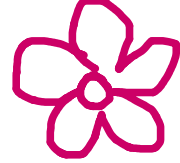
- Women should look after the children.
- Women should dress decently. (Wear long clothes that cover everything)
- Women should not deny their husbands/boyfriends sex.
- Men are the head of the family.
- Men should provide financially.
- Men should not cry.
- Men are the only ones who can be heirs.

NOTE

Explain to mentees that the responses they have shared are socially constructed roles. In other words, it is US (people) who decide that this is how these things should be because one is a woman or a man. Since these ideas/rules are created by

⁵ A Guide on Working with young Women on Gender: <http://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Program-M-Working-With-Young-Women.pdf>





people, they can change from place to place, over time, across cultures, religions, and class. This means that we also have the power to change the rules if they are not fair to us. However, this is not easy as the rules have become a big part of our culture such that trying to change them, even for the greater good, will be met with resistance.

So what is SEX?

Sex is biological difference between men and women. These are physical differences between men and women.

Instructions

- Go around the circle and ask mentees to share what sex/biological characteristics women have. Keep going around the circle until the answers are exhausted.
- Go around the circle and ask mentees to share what sex/biological characteristics men have. Keep going around the circle until the answers are exhausted.

Examples of responses to expect

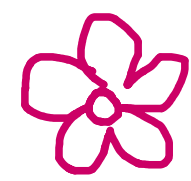
- A woman usually has a vagina while a man has a penis.
- A woman usually has a uterus that enables her to give birth while a man does not.
- A man usually has a lot of facial hair (beards) while a woman may have little or none at all.

NOTE

Please note that although these characteristics are common for both women and men, there are some people whose sex/physical characteristics may be different from what we know.

Preparation for next conversation

Tell mentees to prepare to have a conversation about the advantages of being a woman or a man. Do they like the roles they have to play as women? Are the roles they play fair?



CONVERSATION CIRCLE 2.2

Are the rules fair?

In the last conversation circle, we discovered that the ideas around what women and men should do in society are created by us. However, it is important to examine further how these rules are made and how they continue affecting us and also how they change. We also need to discuss if they are fair and if we want to change them, and why.

Conversation guide

Do a quick reminder of some of the gender roles discussed in the previous conversation.

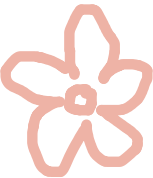
Who makes the rules?

As a mentor, you will provide mentees with a number of institutions and you will have a discussion about how gender roles are displayed in these places. Go around the circle until all answers are exhausted.

- Church/mosque/ religion
- Family/Home
- School
- Clan
- Work place

Some expected responses

- In the catholic church only men are allowed to become priests
- In the home, the father is seen as the provider for the family while the mother stays at home.
- In the clan, only boys are expected to inherit property especially land.



Questions

- Do the gender roles described represent your reality? (For example, is the father described as the main provider for the family true in your experience? Why or why not?)
- Do you like or are you satisfied with the way the gender roles are divided between men and women? Why or why not?
- Are there any roles/ideas about gender you would like to change? Which ones and why?

CONVERSATION CIRCLE 2.3



Gender in the work place



Now that you have a better understanding of gender, we need to discuss how it plays out at work. This session is designed to get your sisters to start making connections between misuse of power in the private and public spaces. It is also supposed to get them to start challenging the way things are run at the workplace with the goal of creating a fairer and more welcoming workplace for women.

Guiding Questions

- Do you see gender roles in your work place? Give examples of how they play out.
- Do you find the gender roles to be fair? Why or why not?
- What gender roles would you like to change in the work place?
- How do you think you can change them?
- What resources do you need to make these changes?

Guide sisters through a process of identifying similarities in the changes they have proposed. As a group, agree on one or two things you feel you can work on as a collective to create change for women on the farm.

This conversation will be revisited at a later time when discussing solidarity and collective action.





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 2.4

GENDER EQUALITY

In the previous conversation circle, you discussed gender norms and roles. This circle on gender equality builds on that by looking at dilemmas that relate to gender equality. Explain the dilemmas below to the mentees so that they prepare their reflections for this circle.

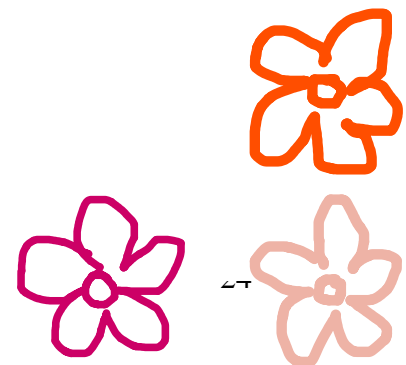
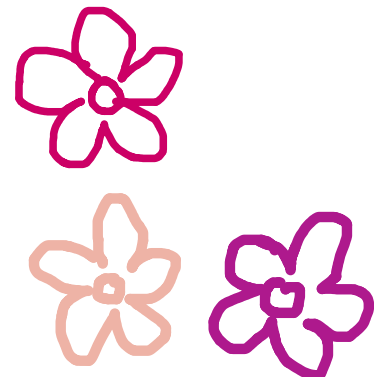
DILEMMAS

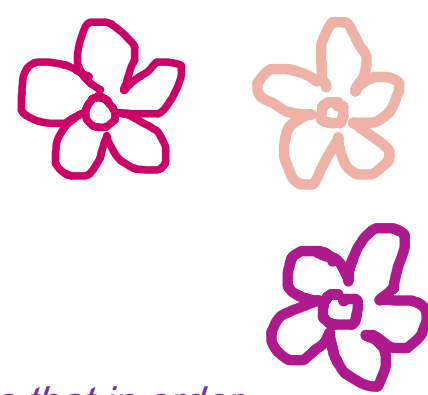
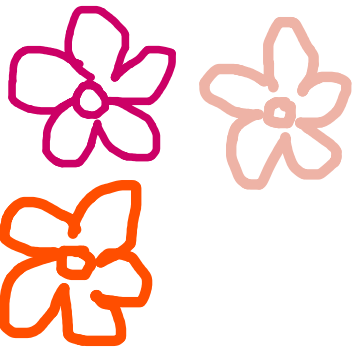
- You have four children, three girls and one boy of school-age. There is not enough money to send all of them to a high-quality secondary school. You can either send all of them to a lower-quality secondary school OR send one of them to a higher-quality school, two to a lower-quality school, and one would stay at home. What do you do and why?
- You have two equally qualified candidates applying for a job. Both the man and the woman have families and are planning to have more children. Who do you pick? Why?

Time for some inspirational conversations!

Get started by reading the dilemmas out loud to your sisters and then hand the speaking token to one of them. You are ready to have another interesting conversation circle!

Finish this session by reminding the sisters about how gender inequality at younger ages will impact the opportunities later in life, but also make sure to mention that many women have accomplished great things despite being disadvantaged. Prepare the mentees for the next circle, "women at work", on labour rights.





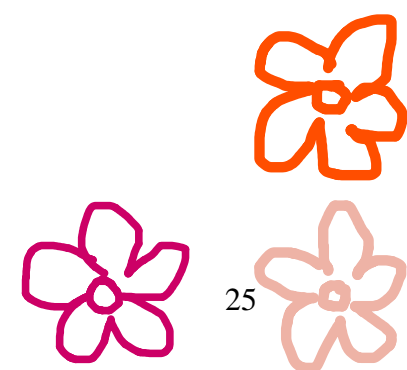
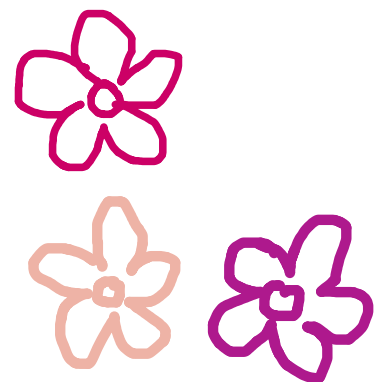
To the women who inspired us, to our roots

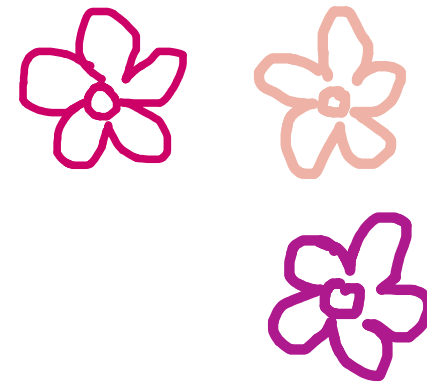
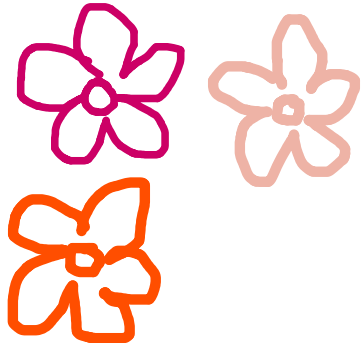


“A tree has roots in the soil yet reaches to the sky. It tells us that in order to aspire we need to be grounded and that no matter how high we go it is from our roots that we draw sustenance. It is a reminder to all of us who have had success that we cannot forget where we came from. It signifies that no matter how powerful we become in government or how many awards we receive, our power and strength and our ability to reach our goals depend on the people, those whose work remain unseen, who are the soil out of which we grow, the shoulders on which we stand”

--Wangari Maathai

Wangari Maathai was a Kenyan social, environmental and political Activist. She was the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004.





SECTION TWO: WATERING THE PLANTS

PART THREE

LABOUR RIGHTS & FINANCIAL LITERACY

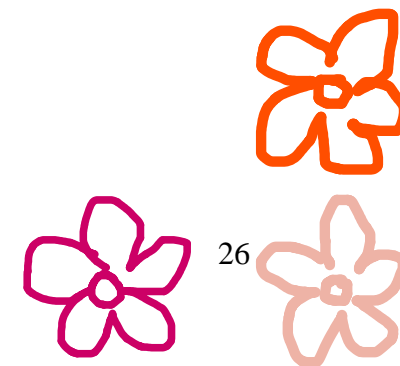
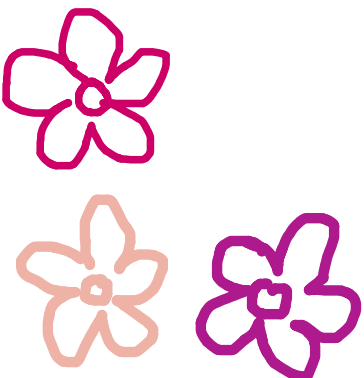
Who said women don't work and that they don't know how to handle money?

3.1 Session summary

In order to fully understand the situation of labour rights and how to manage finances, this session introduces a number of concepts that are key in these areas. This is therefore a resource for you as mentees might have different needs and questions in these two areas. However, not all of these aspects will be possible to develop fully in your conversation circle.

3.2 Mentors Tip

Once again, in your role as the mentor, try and make this part of the mentoring around labour rights and financial literacy applicable and valuable for the realities of the sisters that you mentor. Make sure to know which kind of work conditions and financial situations they are in so that you can build your conversation circles from that point. In that way you will give the mentees a better chance at acquiring as well as applying the knowledge.



CONVERSATION CIRCLE 3.1

Understanding Labour Rights

Labour rights simply refer to the protection and respect for human rights at the workplace. The United Nations has set minimum standards as core labour standards to be respected by all United Nations Member states.

Go around the circle and ask sisters to name some of the labour rights they know. For each right mentioned, try to explain what the right means.

Examples of rights to be shared

- **Freedom of association:** workers should be free to form and join trade unions free from government or employer influence.
- **The prohibition of all forms of forced labour:** includes security from prison labour and slavery, and prevents workers from being forced to work under duress;
- **Elimination of the worst forms of child labour:** implementing a minimum working age and certain working condition requirements for children; and identifying the worst forms of child labour.
- **Non-discrimination in employment,** there should be equal pay for equal work.

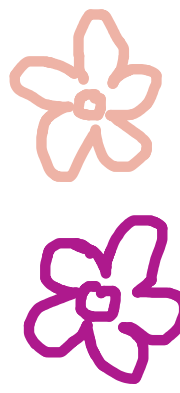
Once sisters have finished sharing, look through the list below and see if there is anything they missed.



WORKERS RIGHTS in UGANDA

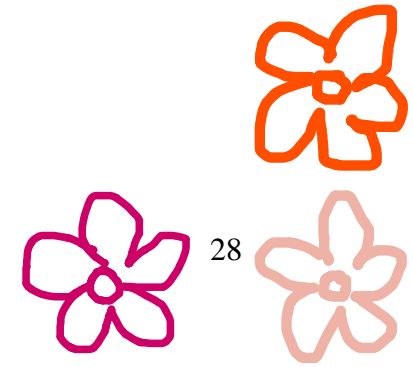
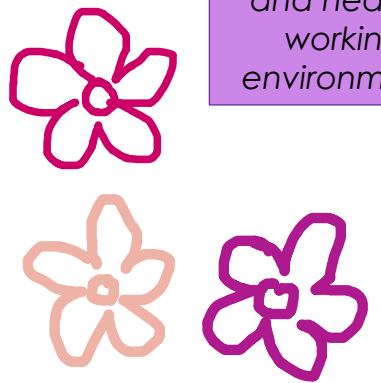
- The right to equality and freedom from discrimination including equal pay for equal work.
- Every worker has the right to form, join and participate in union activities without interference from the state or the employer. This is provided for in the Constitution of Uganda 1995 Article 40(3)(a),
- Workers have a right to participate in Industrial action such as strikes, picketing in accordance with the law and are protected from prosecution for participating in the same.
- The right to a fair hearing. Every worker has the right to be heard/ defend themselves before disciplinary action is taken against them or they are terminated.
- A worker is entitled to rest. The rest includes annual leave, weekly rest and during working hours. An employee cannot be required to work for six consecutive days without a rest. For example, workers who work 16 hours or more per week are entitled to 21 working days leave to be agreed upon between employer and employee.
- Female employees have a right to maternity leave. Every woman who has been pregnant has a right to maternity benefits, even if they have a miscarriage.
- The right to be paid is a fundamental right to a worker who has performed her duties as agreed. Men and women have a right to be paid equal wages for equal work done.

Women workers have a right to maternity leave, even after a miscarriage!



NOTE: Depending on whether you are in Uganda, Kenya or Rwanda, the labour rights may vary slightly. Make sure they are all captured in the conversation.

You have the right to a safe and healthy working environment!





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 3.2

Contracts: Are you protected?



This conversation will involve you sharing a lot of information with your sisters as they not be

Understanding the Employment Relationship

What is a contract?

A *contract* is a legal agreement. A contract is valid if someone makes an offer and it has been accepted. The parties involved have to have an intention of creating a binding agreement.

What is a contract of employment?

A contract of employment is an agreement between an employer and employee that lays out the terms and conditions of the employment relationship between an employee and an employer. Contracts outline the conditions of employment such as the wage rate, working hours, overtime and procedures for dispute resolution.

Contracts of employment can either be oral or written, express or implied.

Oral Contract: Is one which has not been reduced into writing. These can be proved through testimonies of fellow workers, pay rolls of the company, identity cards, gate passes and uniform among others.

Implied Contract: Is one that has not been put in writing or even stated directly, but is instead implied from the employer's oral and written statements and actions. These can be proved through actions, statements, and practices that led the employee to reasonably believe that she was employed or still employed.

Who is an employer?

An employer is any person, group of persons, company, or organization for whom a person works or has worked under contract of service.

Who is an employee?



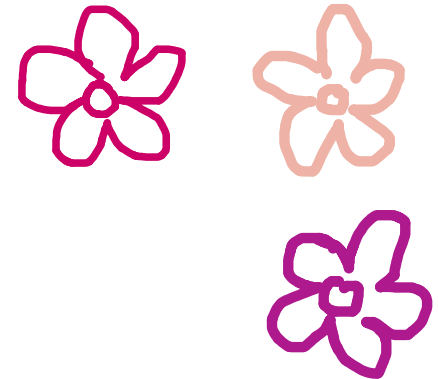
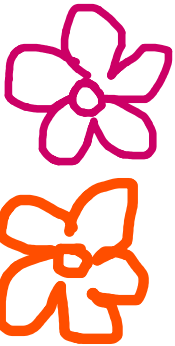
An employee is a person employed for wages or salary but not limited to any person who is employed for or by the government.

Types of contract of employment

1. Permanent contract, this does not specify an end date
2. Temporary contract, this is for a specified period
3. Traineeship/Internship contract
4. Casual contracts, these are usually short-term contracts not more than 4 months

Guiding Questions

- Does everyone in the group have a contract? What type of contract do you have?
- If not, what proof of employment do they have?
- How can employees protect themselves, with or without contracts?



CONVERSATION CIRCLE 3.3

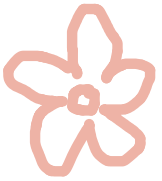
WOMEN at WORK

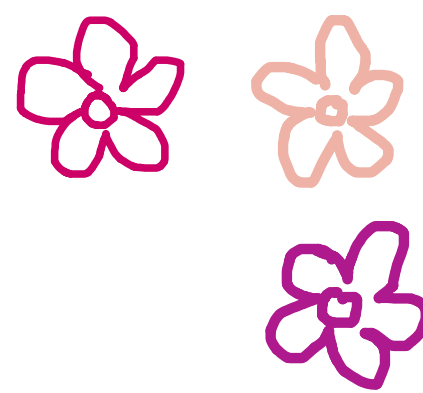
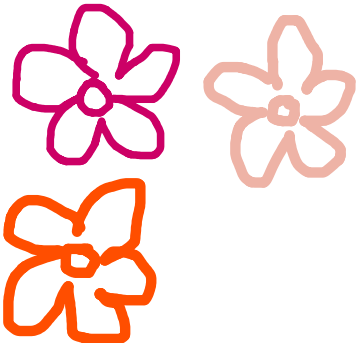
You have now taken your mentees through self-reflection and gender consciousness. It is time to situate this in their roles as women who work. This circle will look at how the women see their work situation and your role as a mentor will be one of adding knowledge around labour rights as described in this section of the guide. The mentees should be prepared to reflect on the following topics:

- Describe your work environment. What is positive and what is negative?
- What do you think is fair work and fair pay? How do you look at this in relation to your work situation?
- Describe a way to improve the conditions of work for you and your colleagues.

The last sister has spoken...

Take back the speaking token and summarise the circle by highlighting the different improvements that the mentees have suggested. Try and make a commitment to see that some of these are taken further and/or give suggestions on how these improvements could be done. Before you end, make sure to remind the sisters about the next conversation circle where you will engage in reflection on financial management and literacy.





CONVERSATION CIRCLE 3.4

Financial Literacy

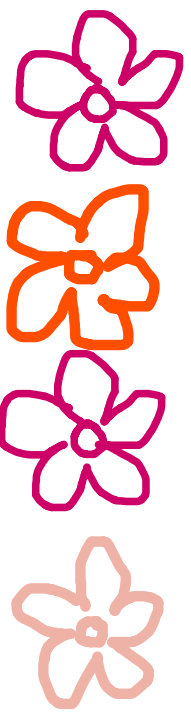
While financial literacy can encompass a lot, it is basically the ability to manage your finances. It is a crucial skill that will be useful to you in order to plan your life. Women were long denied the rights to hold their own bank accounts and they are still disadvantaged in accessing credit and loans which are often needed to do investments to improve your life. In this way women's economic situation has also been deprived as compared to men. Therefore, this session gives a glimpse of important aspects in financial literacy and how these are useful in order to better your life.

Let's get started!

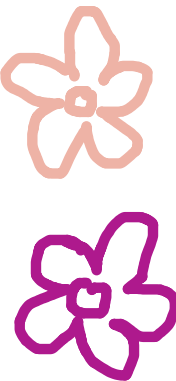
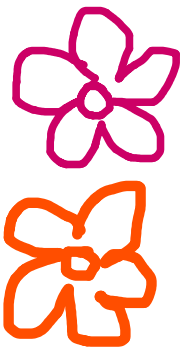
What are some of the things we need to keep in mind as we manage our personal finances? Ask sisters to share. Look at list below and share anything they may have missed.

THE ESSENTIALS OF PERSONAL FINANCE

1. *Self-Discipline*: This is needed to stick to a goal, overcome laziness; and procrastination. It is the ability to do what you know you should even when you do not feel like it.
2. *Budget*: Write down a budget each month beginning with priorities – the needs, then wants, then desires.
3. *Keep Records*: Write down what you spend on, invest in, give to others and savings made during the month, and check this back to the budget at the end of the month.
4. *Allocation and Reallocation*: Allocate money to different items. During the month if one runs out of money, you need to reallocate it from somewhere else.
5. *Saving*:
 - a) Once you have received your income, do not save what remains after spending, rather save first – putting the relevant funds away from you.
 - b) Start by saving what you can afford.
 - c) Save for a reason.



- d) Save when it makes financial sense.
 - e) Save where you cannot easily reach the money. For example – fixed deposit, Investment Club, etc. and not in a bank account that you have easy access to.
6. *Lending*: Never lend what you are not willing to lose.
7. *Giving*: Only give what you can afford to.
8. *Investing*:
- a) Treat your money as your employees who should work for you. After working for money, let the money work for you by investing it in appropriate ventures.
 - b) It is important to ascertain why you are investing. It can be for short- or long-term ventures.
 - c) Investment can be in low, medium and high-risk ventures.
 - d) Expand Investments: Strive to invest in completely different types of ventures so that if some do not work out, you do not lose your entire investment.
 - e) Read widely and learn about opportunities before investing your hard-earned funds.
 - f) As a general rule, try to avoid investment opportunities that promise a “get-rich-quick” return. These are quite seductive but usually lead to loss of funds invested.
9. *Borrowing*: Do not borrow for consumption but rather for investment. Even when borrowing for investment, this should be to top up your savings, rather than borrowing all that is needed for investment.
10. *Consumption*: Especially to the impulsive spenders:
- a) “Live within your means”. “Cut your coat according to the cloth’s size”. Avoid spending more than you earn.
 - b) “Be content”. It is possible to be content and ambitious.
 - c) “Do not spend to please others or fit in with others. Either they do not care or they will only get jealous of what you have spent on”. “We buy things we do not need with money we do not have to impress people we do not like” – Dave Ramsey.
11. *Balance*: Have a healthy balance between saving, giving, investing and consuming.
12. *Close the Leaking Tap*: Identify areas where it is likely that your money is “leaking” and work on ending those.
13. *Increase Your Income*:



- a) Sell or exchange assets that you no longer use or do not really need and invest the funds. Look at shoes, clothing, equipment, land, etc which you do not use.
- b) Use your undeveloped assets to make more money, for instance through hire.
- c) Improve your skills and learn new crafts through which you can offer services or products to enable you earn more.
- d) Set up businesses from your hobbies and talents.
- e) Do not necessarily increase your spending when your income increases. You may increase your standard of living marginally and make deliberate effort to save or invest the excess.

14. *Accountability*: The journey to financial freedom is not easy. It can get discouraging along the way and it is easy for old bad financial habits to return. It is important to get people whom you keep accounting back to, to help you stay on track and to ask you the tough questions.

Wrap up the conversation

Get sisters to reflect on how they are going to manage their finances. To facilitate this process, prepare them for the next conversation circle where they are going to have to give advice to a young person on how to manage personal finances.



CONVERSATION CIRCLE 3.2

Money, Money, Money

The last circle and this one is connected as we work to get money. However, earning money and learning how to manage it is not the same thing. This circle will spur conversations on how to have a sound financial management. The mentees should be prepared to make a short presentation as instructed below:

“You have been asked to prepare and make a 5-minute presentation to students that have just finished school and are about to start employment, what they should be aware of to ensure that they have a life of Financial Freedom. What tips can you give them?”

Financial freedom...

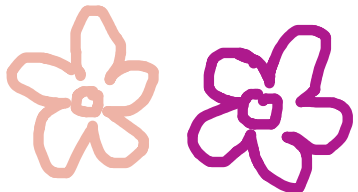
This session will be started off immediately by you as a mentor explaining the instructions of the presentations. Hand over the speaking token to one of the mentees and you are ready to go.

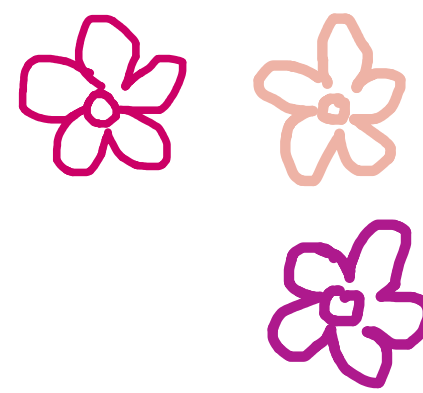
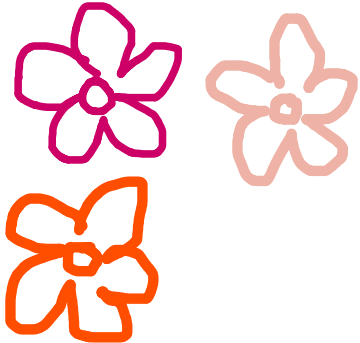
All the sisters have spoken...

When the last sister has spoken, we would recommend you to take the sisters through the “essentials of personal finance” as given on page 31. Do so by emphasising how the mentees themselves showed that they were aware of some of these aspects, but also point out areas that they might be falling short in. To end this session, encourage the women to think about their spending and if they could gain better oversight by making monthly budgets.

Questions for reflection

- Are there savings groups on the farms that you can join? If not, can you start your own?
- What are you going to save towards?
- How much will you save every week in order to achieve that goal?





SECTION TWO: WATERING THE PLANTS

PART FOUR

TAKING ACTION

"It's the little things that citizens do. That's what will make the difference."

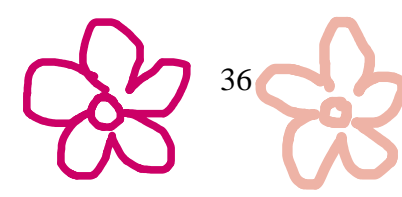
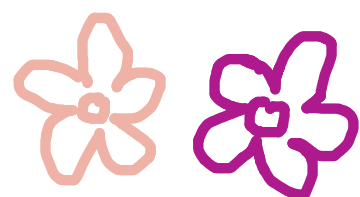
- Wangari Mathaai, the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004

5.1 Session Summary

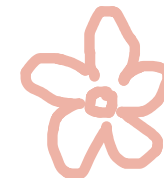
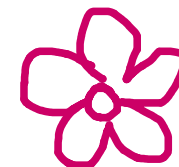
Feminism is about social change and transforming the lives of women. Taking Action is a critical aspect of movement-building which is in turn one of the ways that you can achieve the greatest impact. As commonly said, together we can move mountains. So, this session taps into the aspects of becoming agents of social change and joining together as a sisterhood to create social movements of change.

5.2 BEING A PROACTIVE CITIZEN

It is easy to believe that life happens to us, instead of seeing it as we make life happen. Being proactive means seeing ourselves as creators of reality; of taking action instead of resolving to reaction. This way you will be the one creating change! Similarly, active citizenship deals with actively engaging in the community where you are, but also taking an interest in what happens at other levels of society. Active Citizenship can range from being part of a campaign to clean up in your community to something as impressive as mentoring your sisters at your workplace. That's right! By being a mentor, you have practiced a great deal of active citizenship and proactiveness. As we are concerned about the situation of women, we argue that mentoring itself is a key aspect in unlocking women's potential and to achieve gender



equality. However, it is important to also reflect on how you are actively working towards gender equality in your proactiveness. This entails always evaluating your actions in relation to how this affects women and men.



CONVERSATION CIRCLE 4.1

Solidarity for social change

“United we stand, divided we fall”

It is time to transition from reflections of our conditions, situations, and dreams to the area of change and action. This is the first out of two circles on social change and action. In this first session you will lead the mentors through a conversation around the following topics that will also be used in the follow-up circle 5.2 where you look at how you go from idea to action.

Topics:

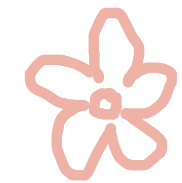
SOLIDARITY – a principle for building sisterhood

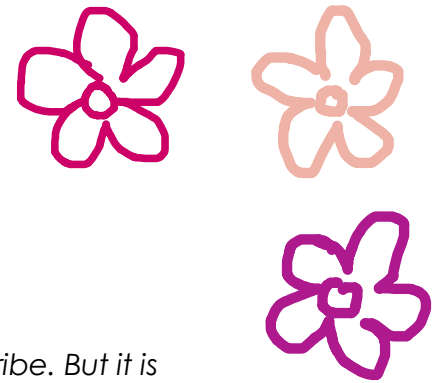
Solidarity is a feeling; it expresses who we feel aligned to politically and personally. At times we may be surprised by who we do or do not feel in solidarity with. Sometimes, a lack of solidarity stems from our own bias, stereotypes or fears. In many cases we feel solidarity with people who share our experiences, values, passions and beliefs – and we could be surprised to find that we need to remain connected to our own identities, politics and values – and open up with others, moving beyond surface conversations to know a person more meaningfully. First and foremost, solidarity helps us to strengthen and support each other as activists. Thus, with solidarity we can truly achieve the grand social changes we wish to see.

Let's get started!

Ask sisters,

- What does solidarity mean to you?
- Who are you solidarity with?
- Can you feel solidarity with people who are not like you? Why or why not?
- Why is solidarity important?





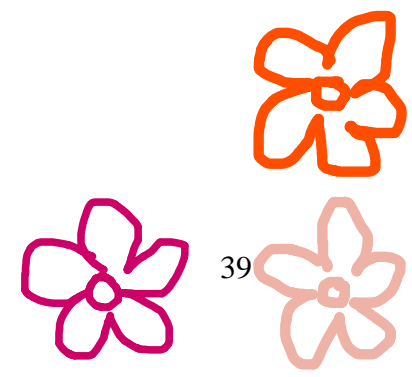
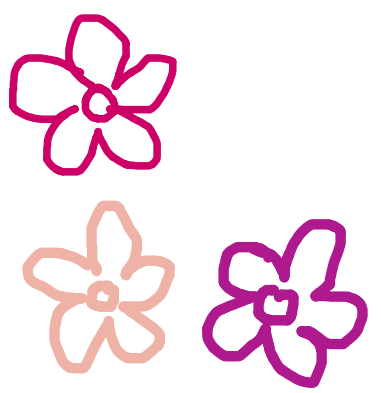
Reflection

Share with sisters that many times we feel solidarity with people who are like us – sex, class, religion and tribe. But it is possible to feel solidarity with people who are different from us but with whom we share similar values of struggles. For example, we could come from different religions but all us are being mistread at work. We can build solidarity that crosses religious lines.

SISTERHOOD – an unstoppable movement

- *Should women be in solidarity with each other? Why? (Get responses from around the circle)*

It is sometimes tempting to focus on what makes us different and to use that as a reason not to support one another. However, it is often so that we have more in common than we think when we start digging deeper. Women have often been fooled to believe that we are our own worst enemies and that we should see our fellow women as enemies. In this way men and other powerful people have been able to maintain their stronghold over us. They have done so because they know the power that lies in a movement of united women who are demanding change. The examples are many! Think about how a large women's peace movement were successful in stopping the violent civil wars in Liberia by their peaceful strikes and demands that their men put down their arms. Try and think of women who have created similar change in your village or community. How did they do it? Surely, they formally or informally knew how to use the stages of building and sustaining a social movement.



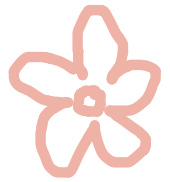
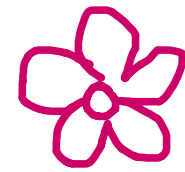


"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept."

- Angela Davis, an African-American activist who fought against racism and sexism in USA

CONVERSATION CIRCLE 4.2

from IDEA to ACTION



Now that the group has discussed solidarity based on sisterhood, it is important to revisit some of the plans you made to improve yourselves at the personal level and create change in the work place. It is important to rethink through these plans with the lens of solidarity built on the common identity of women working on flower farms.

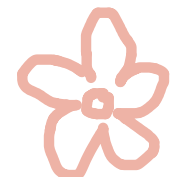
Remind yourselves

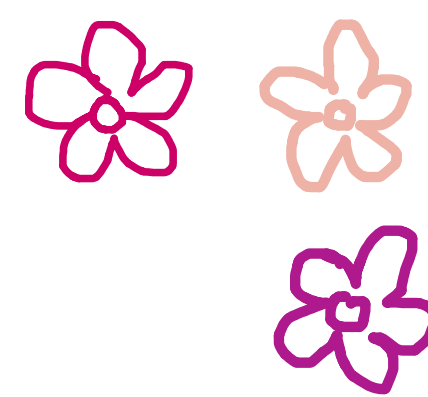
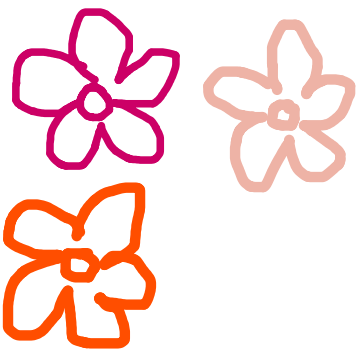
1. Remember the conversation around gender in the work place? Do you remember what you identified as unfair treatment between men and women? What did you agree to work on?
2. Remember the conversation on labour rights? What are the areas you agreed to work on?
3. Remember the personal goals you set for yourself? Do you think you are more likely to fulfil them now? Why?

Once these reflections are finished, think through how much easier it will be to realise these plans as a collective. Emphasize that our impact is far greater and stronger when we stand together. This is one of the core principles we hope that the mentees learn to appreciate and make use of as they go from idea to action. Before you go into the session, give space for some short reflection in relation to last time's session.

All the sisters have spoken...

Take lead as a mentor, with the speaking token summarise this day's circle; identify dreams and goals that the women might be able to accomplish by joint efforts. Give encouragement and support and reaffirm the need for solidarity in sisterhood.





SECTION THREE: KEEP HER BLOSSOMING

PART SIX

HELPING YOUR SISTER TO BLOSSOM

Congratulations!!!

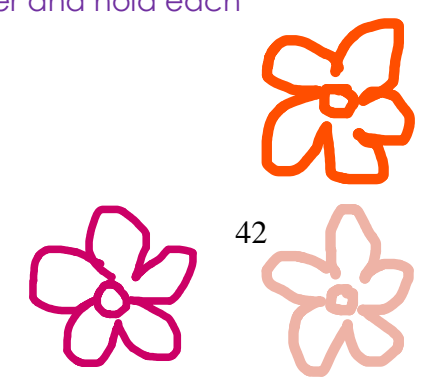
YOU DID IT! You have come to the end of your mentorship. Remember however that you need to be accountable to each other in order to support each other make the changes you proposed. We need to keep revisiting the plans we made for ourselves so that we can keep blossoming.

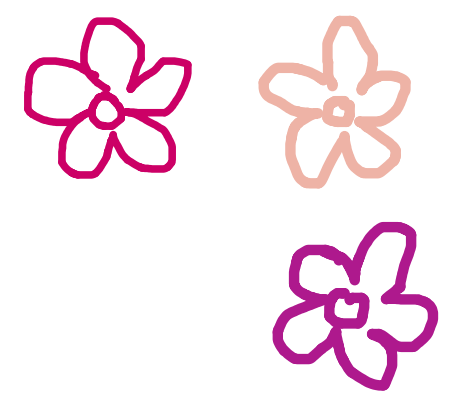
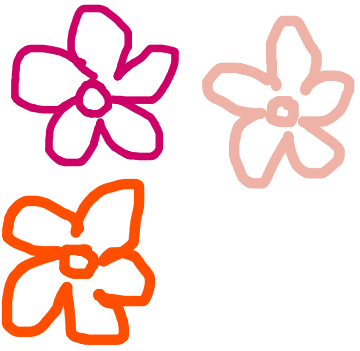
In this last session, sisters will share what progress they have made in achieving the goals they set out at the beginning of the mentorship

Guiding questions

- What personal development plans did you create using the wheel of life?
- What progress have you made in achieving them? Did you have any challenges?
- Are there any good practices you can share with the group to help others with achieving their goals?
- Are you practising self-care? How is that journey going?

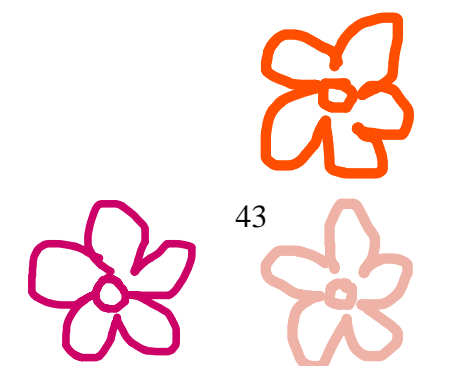
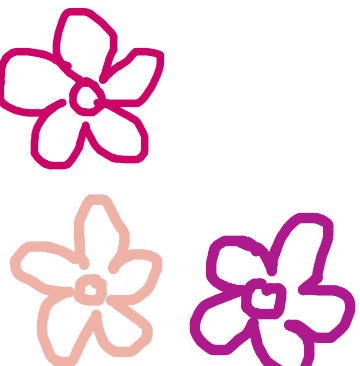
In this last session, make sure you celebrate the achievements/milestones of those who have made progress with their goals. Encourage others who lagging behind a bit. Encourage sisters to keep checking on each other and hold each other accountable.

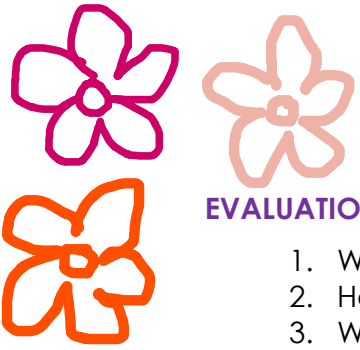




"If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough."

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Liberia's and Africa's first female president





EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

1. What did you find most interesting to mentor on and why?
2. How did your mentee respond to the overall process of formal mentoring?
3. What did you learn about mentoring that you never knew before?
4. Did you grow as a leader through the process of developing another leader?
5. How can we make mentoring a better experience for both mentors and mentees?

