



Equal  
Community  
Foundation

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# ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

Action for Equality Programme

Author: Ayesha Gonsalves and Zoe De Melo

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**Authors:**

Ayesha Gonsalves, Zoe de Melo,  
Research, Development and Evaluation Associates

**Editors:**

Madhumita Das, Director of Programme and Innovation at CREA  
Christina Furtado, Operations Director, ECF  
Rujuta Teredesai, Co-founder and Director, ECF

For further information about data in this report and the overall programme please contact:  
Ayesha Gonsalves at [ayesha.gonsalves@ecf.org.in](mailto:ayesha.gonsalves@ecf.org.in)

\*Cover page image is of active participants from Action for Equality Programme  
Photo courtesy: Sharan Shetty

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# Executive summary

Action for Equality Programme is a programme that engages adolescent boys to raise them to be gender equitable. In this report, we take a look at the monitoring and evaluation findings from the year 2016-17. We produce this report every year to enable our team to make informed decisions regarding programme improvement, and to share our learnings with other practitioners in the sector.

In order to measure progress towards our objectives, we created two broad types of indicators: those related to the Process Evaluation and those related to the Outcome Evaluation. The process evaluation looks at enrolment, graduation and transition from one stage of the programme to the other. The outcome evaluation explores how Action for Equality has resulted in changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours of participants.

This report focuses on tracking the progress of 134 participants who graduated from Action for Equality Foundation Programme, directly transitioned to and graduated from the second stage Action for Equality Action Programme Cycle 17.

Overall findings indicate that the Foundation and Action Programme are critical in bringing about positive changes in skills, gender attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of the graduate participants.

Results demonstrated that the programmes have been successful in:

- a) unleashing the skills of graduates to be creative and autonomous,
- b) providing opportunities for graduate participants identify gender norms and discuss human rights violation and
- c) encouraging participants to take action on gender equality.

At the same time, findings from the outcome evaluation have suggested that graduates find it more difficult to take actions that challenge or stop gender based violence and discrimination in their family or community as compared to raising awareness on gender equality. Further, results also concluded that on one hand, participants support girls' right to education and women's right to work, however, their attitudes towards violence are still deeply rooted in patriarchal concepts of power and male dominance.

Thus in conclusion, Action for Equality has brought a positive change in skill development, attitude and behaviour among the 134 participants through the Foundation and Action Programme. However, results have shown that the process towards gender transformation is gradual, and that once the boys begin to incorporate these changes in their lives, it will translate into changes among their family, their peers and the community.

Based on these findings, recommendations to improve programme development and implementation of gender transformative programmes are provided at the end of the report.

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# Glossary and acronyms

AfE	Action for Equality
FP	Foundation Programme
AP	Action Programme
LP	Leadership Programme
CC	Community Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAS	Gender Attitude Survey
MOT	Mentor Observation Tool
SAP	Skill Assessment by Participants
SAM	Skill Assessment by Mentors
VADAWG	Violence and Discrimination against Women and Girls
Mentor	An individual who implements Action for Equality Programme in the communities. Mentor's responsibilities include: facilitating sessions, community engagement and mobilisation, and contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of the programme.
Programme cycle	Every 15 weeks the programme enrolls a new batch of adolescent boys and starts from the beginning. In a year we implement three programme cycles.
Graduate	A participant who has attended 60% of the training events and attended the action/public events.

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# Background information

Equal Community Foundation (ECF) has been implementing Action for Equality (AfE) Programme in low-income communities of Pune, India, since 2009.

AfE is an action research programme that provides adolescent boys with knowledge, skills and peer support to reflect and bring change in their own behaviour. It develops their leadership capacity and communications skills to influence their families and communities to question gender norms related to masculinity and use of violence and discrimination against women and girls.

AfE is divided into three stages: Foundation Programme (FP), Action Programme (AP) and Leadership Programme (LP). Each of these sub programmes is organised in 15 weekly modules. A participant who goes through the whole AfE programme is engaged for a duration of one year.

Through the programme, we primarily focus on adolescent boys in the age group of 13-17 from 19 low-income communities across Pune city, Maharashtra.

## Revised delivery model

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ECF revised the delivery model of AfE Action Programme in February 2016. This revision was made on the basis of the findings from the [external evaluation report](#) commissioned in 2015 and the first [internal annual evaluation report](#) published in 2016. Specifically, the report noted that the outcomes related to knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour change were positively correlated to the

number of events the participants attended. While participant engagement in FP was not flagged as an issue, participant engagement in AP was found to be problematic. Structure of the curriculum and the community-cluster based delivery model were the two reasons behind inadequate participant engagement.

AP was being delivered in clusters of two to three communities. The venue of the sessions was alternated between the communities. Despite this, the fact that participants had to travel to another community, even a neighbouring one, was a barrier for participants to attend sessions. As a result, many participants did not fulfil the attendance criterion for graduation. Lack of a completely structured curriculum also contributed to low participation.

Internal discussions led to the conclusion that the delivery model needed to be revised to ensure a higher dosage in terms of events and more structure in terms of the curriculum in AP. Thus, the revised delivery model was implemented in February 2016 i.e. programme cycle 15 which was a community-based model, with a structured curriculum and alternate cycles of FP and AP to ensure higher transition rates between programmes and consequently better outcomes.

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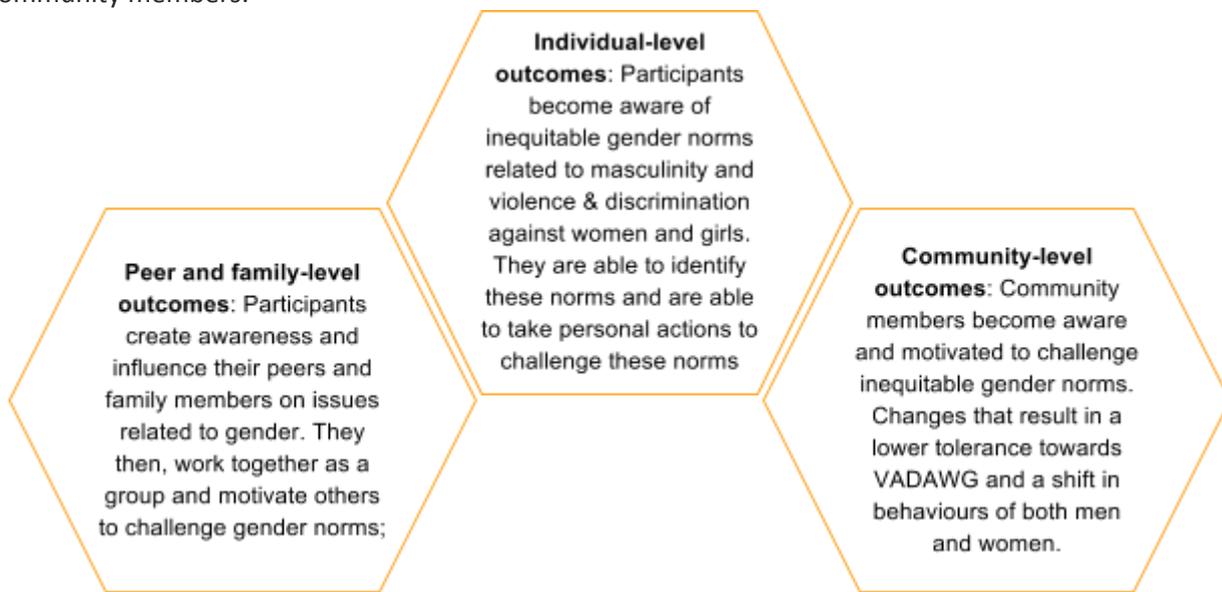
To know more about the programme and the revised delivery model, kindly [click here](#).

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# Methodology for evaluation

The methodology used for the evaluation is as prescribed in the AfE Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and is based on the programme’s [Theory of Change](#).

We evaluate progress of the programme against the following outcomes amongst participants and wider community members:



In order to measure progress towards our goals, we created two broad types of indicators: those related to the Process Evaluation and those related to the Outcome Evaluation.

**Process Evaluation Indicators:** Our two main indicators are: Enrolment and Attendance of participants.

**Outcome Evaluation Indicators:** The four main indicators to evaluate the three stages of AfE programme are: Knowledge, Skills, Attitude, and Behaviour change. The table below shows the outcome indicators assessed, the tool used to assess the indicator and the time when the indicator was assessed

Outcome indicator	Tool used	When was the indicator assessed?
Skill development	Skill assessment by mentors during group discussions	FP pre-test and AP post-test
	Skill assessment by mentors during action/public events	FP action events and AP public events
Attitude change	Gender attitude survey	FP pre-test, FP post-test and AP post test

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Behaviour change	Action log	Throughout FP and AP
	Focus group discussions with parents	At the end of FP and at the end of AP

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# Evaluation findings

## Demographic profile

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The table below shows the main demographic features of 134 boys out of 185 boys who **graduated** from FP Cycle 16, directly transitioned and graduated from AP Cycle 17.

	AGE				
	1% 13 years	66% 14 years	20% 15 years	11% 16 years	2% 17 years

	EDUCATION BACKGROUND				
	8% std 6 or 7	54% std 8	28% std 9	9% std 10	1% std 11

	RELIGION			
	84% Hindu	8% Muslim	6% Buddhist	2% Christian

	MOTHER TONGUE	
	90% Marathi	10% Hindi

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## Enrolment, participation and graduation

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In FP Cycle 16, 217 boys enrolled and 185 graduated. Of these 185 who graduated, 157 directly enrolled into AP Cycle 17. And, from these 157 boys who enrolled, 134 graduated.

**The graduation rate for FP Cycle 16 was 85%, the transition rate from FP Cycle 16 to AP Cycle 17 was 85% and the graduation rate for AP Cycle 17 was 85%.**

To graduate from FP and AP a participant needs to attend 60% of the training events and have 100% attendance for the action events.

Results show that more than half of the graduates attended 90% to 100% of the training events during the FP and AP, i.e. 84 and 71 respectively.

This robust attendance can be attributed to

- the positive and participatory training spaces that mentors were able to create for the boys to debate about gender norms and social issues in their communities,
- a structured curriculum which included topics such as sexuality, which, for many boys this was the first time that they had the opportunity to learn about and discuss such issues, and
- the community-based model of the programme which allows mentors to devote sufficient time to mobilise boys and build rapport with the families.

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## Knowledge and skills assessment

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AfE aims at developing understanding of concepts related to gender and gender norms as well as four key influencing skills: Communication, Critical Thinking, Initiation and Mobilization.

To measure progress in terms of knowledge and skills, programme facilitators observe and record the frequency of knowledge and skills the participants have demonstrated using [Skills Assessment by Mentors tool \(SAM\)](#).

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## Knowledge and skills in the context of Action for Equality

In order to clarify what the broad categories of Knowledge and Skills mean in the context of the programme, ECF has developed its own operational definitions for Knowledge, Communication, Critical Thinking, Initiation and Mobilization. The definitions are as follows:

- **Knowledge:** The ability to use concepts related to gender and to talk in terms of Human Rights during groups discussions.
- **Communication:** Within group discussions, the ability to actively listen to and to convince others. During Action or Public Events, the capacity to talk clearly and confidently in public.
- **Critical Thinking:** The ability to link gender issues to one's own experience and to challenge existing gender norms during group discussions.
- **Initiation:** Within group discussion and during the preparation of Action or Public Events, the capacity to participate actively and to propose original ideas.
- **Mobilization:** During Action or Public events, the ability to work as a team with other participants and to interact with community members on issues of gender.

## Facilitators' observations during group discussions

Out of our original sample of 134 participants, 81 participants were observed at the beginning of FP Cycle 16 and at the end of AP Cycle 17.

**Findings show that initiation was the indicator that increased the most.** While only 18% of participants participated in the group discussion without being probed at the beginning of FP, 83% could do it at the end of the AP. Similarly, only 19% of participants could suggest creative solutions during the FP pre-test, whereas at the end of AP 44% could do so.

**These results indicate that AfE is successful in unleashing the capacity of**

**participants to be creative and autonomous in their thinking.**

**Regarding the ability to communicate during group discussions, results showed an improvement both in the participants' active listening and persuasive skills.** While 43% of tracked participants were able to listen actively during the pre-test, 59% were able to do so at the end of AP. 37% could use persuasive skill during the pre-test, 37% did so at the end of AP. These results indicate that as participants progress through the different stages of the AfE programme, their ability to communicate improves.

**The results regarding critical thinking were mixed.** It is encouraging to note that 70% of participants

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were able to relate gender issues to their personal experience at the end of AP, considering that only 45% could do it at the beginning of AP. However, the proportion of participants who demonstrated the capacity to question existing gender norms remained the same (44%) in the pre-test and the post-test.

The results indicate that although the number of participants who are able to identify and relate gender norms to their own experience increases over the course of the programme the number of participants who challenge gender norms does not change in such short intervals/duration.

This could also indicate that a long duration programme is the need to demonstrate participants ability to challenge gender norms.

Lastly, the results for **knowledge** are concerning, as they show a decline in both indicators : knowledge

The frequency-based results allow to exemplify the skills for which there was more progress observed in participants.

- The skills for which there was the strongest improvements were the ability to link with experience and to participate actively. A proportion of participants that provided and discussed relevant examples of gender-based violence and discrimination at least twice increased from 15% to 33%. The proportion of participants who took part actively in discussions on gender issues increased from 7% to 44%.
- With regard to convincing skills, a small proportion of participants showed an improvement (15% to 21%) in formulating at least two convincing arguments in favour of gender equality.
- For skills like Active listening and Challenging, the frequency based results increased from FP to AP. However, a higher proportion of participants demonstrated the skills only once in the AP post-test as compared to the FP pre-test. Thus, we can hypothesise that there was a difference in the facilitation style between the pre-test in FP and the post-test in AP. In other terms, the same participants seem to have had less opportunities to demonstrate their skills in the post-test, probably because of the session observed for this test (see the table on limitations of the tool).
- The skill of bringing creative ideas to the session and discussion was first measured in the post-test. The results were positive. According to the observations, 44% of participants were able to bring original ideas, a result which will need to be verified by the next observations.

about concepts related to gender (95% in the pre-test and to 76% at the end of AP) and use of rights-based language (53% to 43%). The accuracy of the results related to the knowledge indicator might be questioned considering that the results of the pre-test seem unrealistically high for adolescent boys who have never gone through a programme about gender issues. A lack of standardization of expectations from the programme related to knowledge seems to have affected observations from facilitators. Thus, the definitions related to this indicator became more demanding in cycle 17.

The *Figure 1* shows detailed results based on the observations of facilitators according to the frequency with which participants have demonstrated each skill.

## Facilitators' observations during community events

For this part, out of our original sample of 134 graduates, 97 graduates were observed during the preparation and execution of the Action Event/Public Event at the end of FP and AP respectively. Figure 3 shows the percentage of graduates who demonstrated influencing skills during the preparation and execution of the action event.

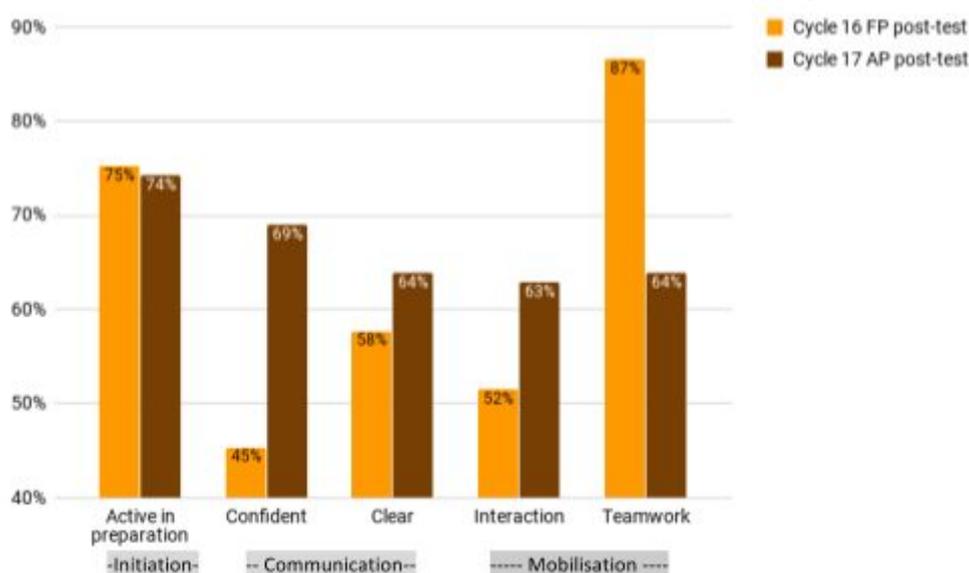


Figure 3: Percentage of graduates who demonstrated influencing skills in action events

Results indicate that **with regard to initiation, a high and similar proportion of participants were actively involved in the preparation of the events both in FP and AP (respectively 75% and 74%),** indicating that participants maintained their interest in organising community events in AP.

The results related to the indicator on **communication** showed improvement, especially regarding the confidence of participants when addressing community members (from 45% in FP to 69%) and to a lesser extent regarding the clarity of the participants' speech (from 58% to 64%).

**Findings confirm that community events lead by participants are important opportunities for participants to develop their ability to communicate about gender issues outside the group.**

They confirm the increase in communication skills observed in group discussions.

Regarding **mobilization** skills, results were paradoxical. On one hand, participants improved their capacity to interact with community members during events. On the other hand, the results show an unexpected decrease related to the capacity of participants to work as a team, from 86% to 64% of the group observed by the mentors.

We can hypothesise, based on the observations from field visits, that this drop in teamwork between participants is correlated with the tendency for participants to take more individual initiatives rather than take collective actions. This tendency has been confirmed by the data collected on actions taken by participants as the great majority of actions reported were individual. Considering the theory of change of the programme, it is concerning that 36% of programme graduates did not demonstrate the capacity to work as a team to prepare the Public Events, as participants are expected to challenge gender norms as a group and not only individually.

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On average, 14% of participants met the expectations of the programme in FP, 20% in AP.

It is encouraging that a bigger proportion of participants managed to go beyond the expectations in AP as compared to FP as it shows that the programme provides space for the most engaged participants to practice and develop their skills at a high level.

As in the first part of the tool, an indicator for creativity has been introduced in cycle 17. The first results for AP indicate that 68% of participants brought their own ideas to prepare the Public Event, a number which will have to be compared with future results of observations in FP.

## Limitations of the Skills Assessment by Mentors

Even though the methodology of the Skills Assessment by Mentors allows to collect observations of participant's skills with multiple and specific indicators and to encourage facilitators to reflect on how to create more opportunities for participants to practice their skills, it presents several limitations:

1. **Incomplete standardisation:** A systematic standardization process has been implemented since cycle 15 to clarify and harmonise the expectation of the programme among facilitators. Nevertheless, this standardization process is still in progress and will need to continue to train new facilitators and ensure results are reliable.
2. **Differences in discussions:** Participants are observed during group discussions which are integrated in the curriculum. Although all discussions are related to gender norms, the focus of each discussion is slightly different. While the discussions at the beginning of the programme are more about defining and identifying gender norms, discussions towards the end of AP are more about challenging these norms and taking action. These differences are likely to influence the number of opportunities provided to participants to demonstrate their skills and therefore the results for the first part of the tool. The same problem does not arise for the second part of the tool as both Action and Public Events follow a similar model.

## Attitude change assessment

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ECF's mission is to raise every boy in India to be gender equitable, and hence, one of the key indicators of the AfE programme is to measure attitudes towards gender norms among participants.

Through the AfE programme adolescent boys uncover how gender norms influence and shape role division and power relations, and they begin to

critically reflect on their own attitudes and behaviour.

AfE ensures the participants experience and understand equality in the context of gender relations, while encouraging them to challenge existing gender norms. One of the key aspects of the programme is that at the end of each cycle,

boys take collective actions to support women and girls in their community.

Hence, we define a boy who has gender equitable attitude as one who supports relationships based on equality; challenges gender and social norms in the family and in the community; uses human rights language; and takes independent or collective action to prevent gender based violence and discrimination.

Attitudes towards gender norms are measured qualitatively using the Scenario based Gender Attitude Survey. It consists of ten scenarios that assess attitudes towards violence against women and girls, masculinity and gender roles and responsibilities. We track changes in attitudes of participants by administering the survey at the beginning of FP (T0), at the end of FP (T1), at the end of AP (T2). Out of our original sample of 134 participants, 107 participants answered the survey at T0, T1 and T2.

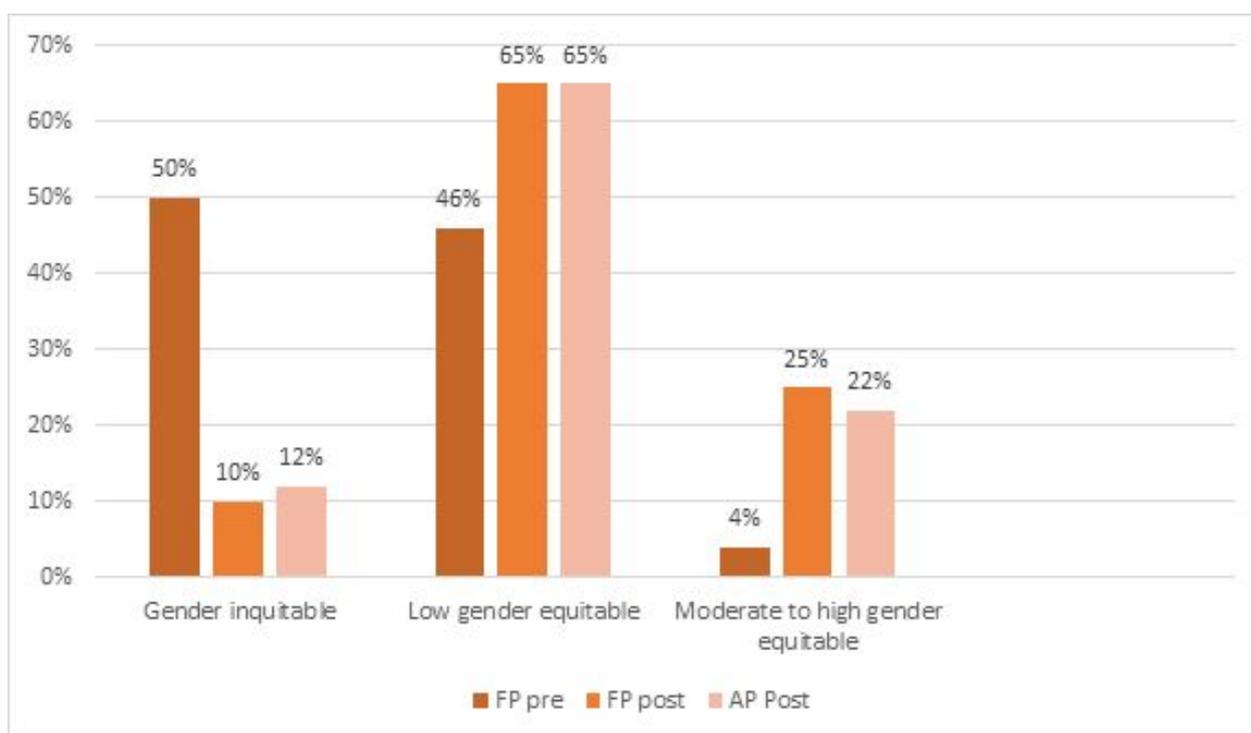


Figure 8. Gender equity scores of 107 graduates in the context of gender norms

Findings from the survey (Figure 8) show that at the beginning of FP (T0) substantial percentage of boys supported gender inequitable norms, but these attitudes positively changed at the end of FP(T1). In general, the support for gender equitable norms is low across participants at the end of the FP and AP.

Comparison of FP pre (T0) and FP post (T1) with FP post (T1) and AP pre (T2), shows that the most significant shift occurs post FP, and following that shifts in attitudes post AP are marginal, as seen in the table on the next page.

FP pre (T0) & FP post (T1)	FP post (T1) & AP post (T2)
A 79% decrease in the number of graduates who are <b>gender inequitable</b>	A 15% increase in the number of graduates who are <b>gender inequitable</b>
A 30 % increase in the number of graduates who are <b>low gender equitable</b>	No shift in attitudes
An 85% increase in the number of graduates who are <b>gender equitable</b>	An 11% decrease in the number of graduates who are <b>gender equitable</b>

The table below compares the number of graduates who are moderate to gender equitable across the three themes (violence, manhood and gender roles). Results indicate that at FP Post (T1) and AP Post (T2) more number of boys had moderate to gender equitable attitudes for gender roles and responsibilities as compared to masculinity and use of violence towards women and girls, see table below.

	Violence & tolerance			Manhood & Masculinity			Gender roles & responsibilities		
	FP Pre (T0)	FP Post (T1)	AP Post (T2)	FP Pre (T0)	FP Post (T1)	AP Post (T2)	FP Pre (T0)	FP Post (T1)	AP Post (T2)
<b>Gender equitable</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Moderate gender equitable</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>55</b>
Less gender equitable	70	85	78	61	63	66	60	38	37
Gender Inequitable	35	7	6	40	6	10	26	5	9
<b>TOTAL number of graduates</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>

Further analysis of the data shows differences in the level of support across the individual indicators (scenarios) in the gender attitude survey. For all indicators boys fell between the moderate gender equitable level to low gender equitable level, where every point is below 2. See further explanation below.

## Violence and tolerance

- **Appropriate behaviour of a wife/partner (scenario 1 + 2):** Averages of this sub-section was the lowest. Boys consistently support violence to govern appropriate behaviour of woman. For example, boys feels that a wife should tolerate violence to keep her family together. Further, it is justified for a man to beat his wife if she is found to be unfaithful.
- **Condemning and taking action against sexual street sexual harassment (scenario 3 + 4):** Averages of third scenario was the highest (demonstrating moderate gender equitable attitudes) in both FP and AP. It shows that boys understand that the type of clothes that women wear should not be the root cause for harassment. However, boys find it difficult to take action or do not have knowledge with regard to what action to take against street sexual harassment as seen in scenario 4, where averages drop to low gender equitability.

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## Manhood & Masculinity

- **Appropriate/Natural behaviour of a boy (scenario 5):** Averages of this scenario show low gender equitability. Boys uphold beliefs that adolescent boys/men should behave in a manner which is in accordance to their 'sex and gender role'. For instance, graduates feel that boys could play with dolls only upto a certain age, however if this behaviour continues as he grows older, he would not be considered a 'true man'.
- **Gender roles of men (scenario 6 +7):** Averages of the two scenarios measuring gender responsibilities of men are slightly different. On one hand boys believe that it is their duty to protect the girls/ women of their family from harm. On the other hand they support the idea that both men and women have equal right to work outside the home.

## Gender roles and responsibility

- **Support for equal opportunity to be educated (scenario 8):** Averages of this scenario demonstrates moderate gender equitable attitudes. Boys consistently have supported equal rights of education for both girls and boys.
- **Gender roles of women (scenario 9+ 10):** Averages of this scenario demonstrate moderate to low gender equitable attitudes towards gender roles of women. Even though boys support the idea that both men and women have equal right to work, they feel that women/ girls are responsible for the caring of the home and children.

## Analysis

Analysis reveals that the major change in gender attitudes occurs during the first four months of FP. It is during this time that the boys gain knowledge on gender based violence and discrimination and their existing gender attitudes and behaviours are questioned and challenged. Subsequently, results show that attitudes that have changed in FP, begin to stabilize in AP, hence we do not see a shift in attitudes during this stage of the programme. Correlation of age and dosage (number of training events) with attitudes found no significant relationship to conclude that age and/or dosage were related to attitudes.

Findings also indicate that, **it is easier to change attitudes around the theme of gender roles and responsibilities, but harder to change attitudes around masculinity and the use of violence towards**

**women and girls.** Moreover, results show that it is easier to change attitudes with regard to condemning sexual harassment in public places and supporting equal opportunities for women's and girl's'. However, more difficult to change attitudes that support traditional gender relations and roles as they seem to be more engrained in the minds of the boys. The reasons for this could be boys can relate more easily to street sexual harassment as opposed to fidelity in relationships. Further the issue of street sexual harassment and equal rights to education is in the forefront of a number of public campaigns.

Thus, from the results we can conclude that on one hand boys support girls' right to education and women's right to work, however, their attitudes towards violence are still deeply rooted in patriarchal concepts of power and male dominance.

# Behaviour change assessment

## Actions taken

On a weekly basis, participants of AfE are encouraged to take actions to develop their capacity to influence others and challenge gender norms. Facilitators propose actions to participants on the basis of a plan of actions which aims to gradually increase their level of engagement. Then participants report and reflect on the actions they have taken during sessions and facilitators report the actions taken in an Actions log tool.

Two main indicators are used to measure the success of the programme in supporting participants to take actions.

- The proportion of participants who report taking actions,
- The type of actions reported with reference to levels of engagement: from the first level “Sharing information” to the highest level “Planning and executing”.

In cycles 16 and 17, out of the original sample of 134 graduates, 126 graduates were tracked through the Actions log.

## Proportion of participants taking action

The following graphs (Figure 10 & Figure 11) give information about the proportion of participants who reported taking action throughout FP and AP. As the actions plans for the programme have been divided into themes in order to let more time to participants to understand, prepare for, take actions and reflect on them, data is presented by theme.

Percentage of participants who reported taking actions throughout FP cycle 16 (N=126)

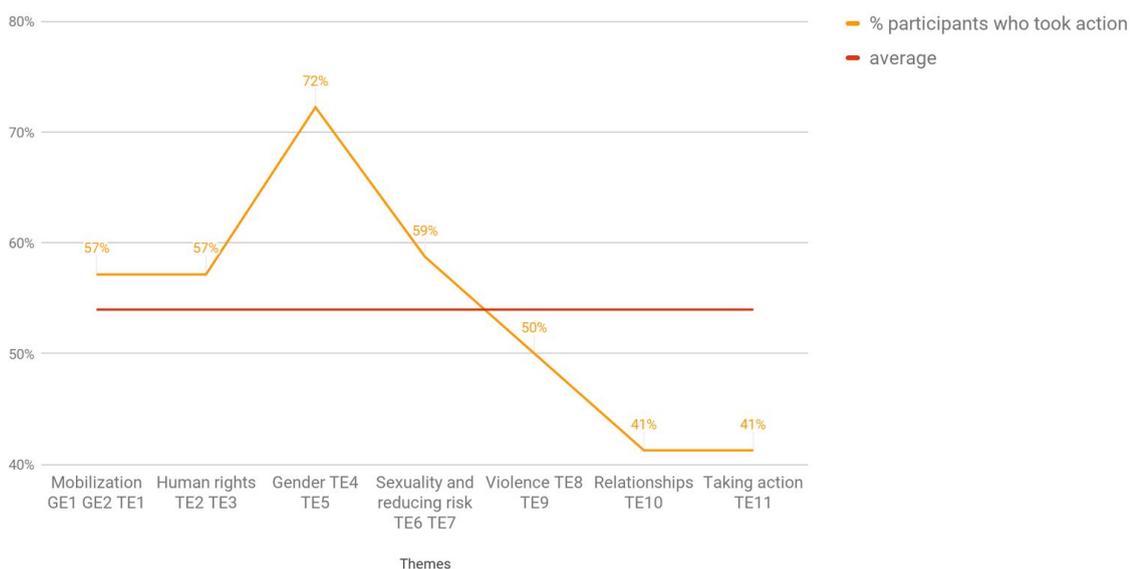


Figure 10

## Percentage of participants who reported taking actions throughout AP cycle 17 (N=126)

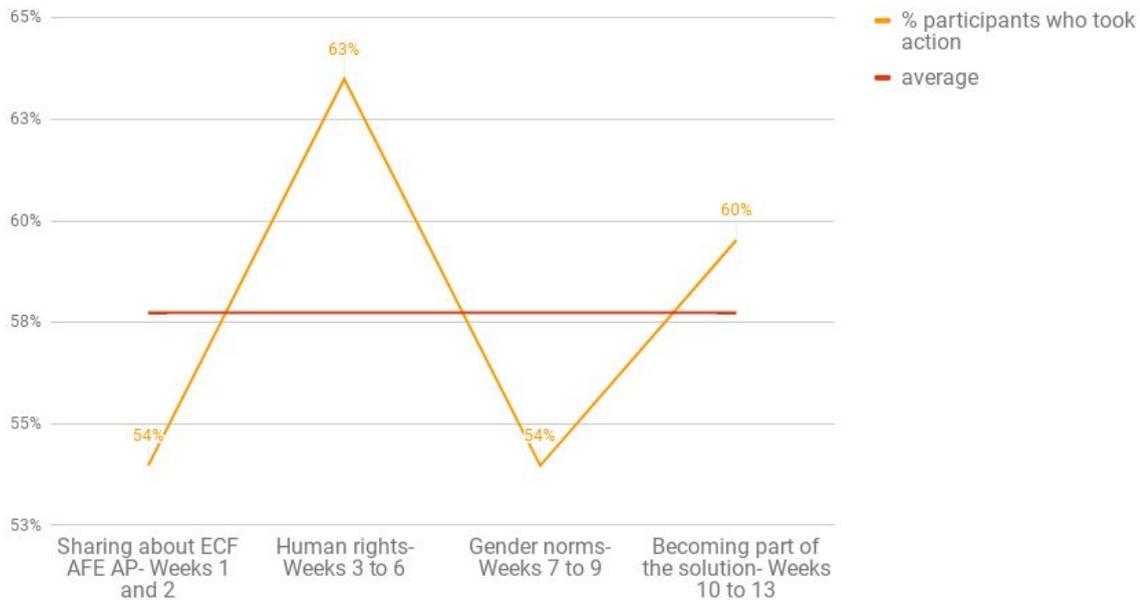


Figure 11

Overall 54% of the 129 tracked graduates reported taking actions in FP for each theme. The average slightly increased to 58% in AP.

It is interesting that the trends identified throughout the programme are different in the case of FP and AP. In FP, the proportion of participants reporting taking actions gradually decreased after the seventh week of the programme (Training Event 5). The indicator oscillated between 72% of participants reporting action to 41% in the last two weeks of the cycle. Several causes can explain this gradual drop.

First, it is likely that the interest of participants for taking action has decreased throughout the weeks, especially for participants who do not understand that actions are an important part of the programme and opportunities to practice their skills.

Secondly, as participants were expected to take more challenging actions in the later half of the cycle i.e. engaging discussions about the myths related to sexuality or intervene when they witness incidents of gender-based violence or discrimination, it is possible that a bigger number of boys did not feel confident to take these actions as compared to less

demanding actions at the beginning of the programme i.e. sharing information about ECF or doing new household chores at homes. As observed in previous cycles, the action of taking a bigger share in chores and childcare at home (see Theme “Gender” in Figure 10) has been the most popular action among participants in cycles 16 and 17.

In AP, the proportion of participants reporting actions did not vary as much as in FP and oscillated between 54% and 64% of the same participants. The highest number of actions taken by AP participants were related to the Human rights theme, for which participants were encouraged to take interviews of their community members, and actions related to preparing the Public Event in the community. The fact that almost 60% of participants reported actions towards the end of AP suggest that they were more involved in the design of the Public Event than they were at the end of the Foundation Programme, confirming that Initiation and Creativity skills are developed within AfE.

Even though the trend observed in AP shows a rather constant interest in taking actions, it is concerning that more than 40% of the batch did not

report actions. As the focus on the programme on actions was recent during the period considered in this report (actions plan were piloted in cycles 16 and 17) we can assume that actions were not

considered to be a priority in the cycles observed and that they were not sufficiently integrated in the sessions and curriculum.

In order to achieve programme outcomes in terms of skills development and influence on peers and family members, participants in AfE are expected to take actions regularly. To assess if this happens, the below chart (Figure 12) shows how many actions were taken for each participant.

### Number of actions taken by participants throughout the cycle (N=126)

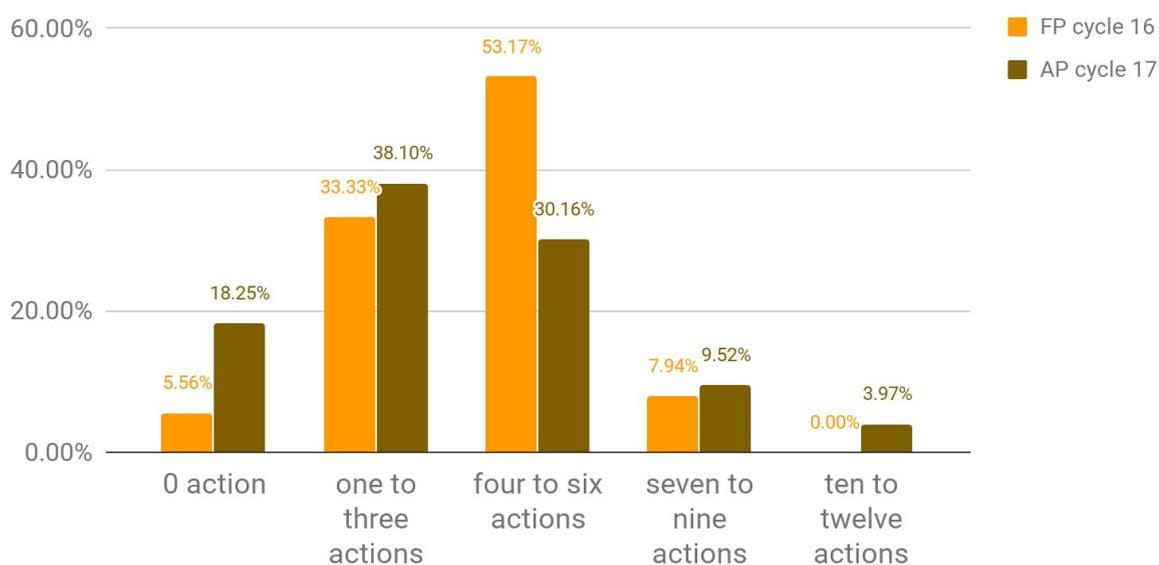


Figure 12

On average participants took 4 actions both in FP and in AP. Even if the number has stagnated, it is worth noting that:

**The actions proposed in AP are more difficult and required more preparation than actions proposed in FP i.e. taking interviews, preparing slogans, engaging in discussion about the root causes of community issues. Considering this, maintaining the same number of actions per participant is an achievement.**

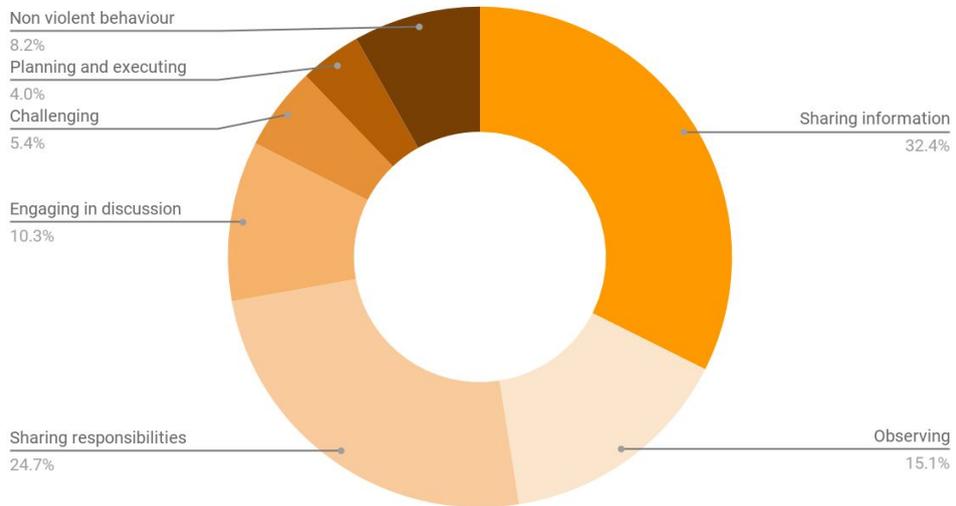
The data also shows that while fewer number of participants take actions in AP, those that do, take action more frequently than in FP. While 5% of tracked participants had not reported any action in FP, they were 18% in AP. On the opposite, while 8% of participants reported to have taken 7 or more actions in FP, they were around 14% in AP. This suggests that participants who did take actions in AP were more active than in FP, and that a minority of programme participants either lost interest or did not feel confident enough to take actions. This reinforces the idea that participants tend to be more polarised in AP between boys who actively participate and those who remain passive. It is concerning that despite the fact that most actions proposed could be done by pairs or small groups, only 9.6% of the actions reported were collective. This finding

questions the capacity of the programme to ensure all participants consider actions as relevant and feel they are part of a group committed to challenge existing gender norms.

## Nature of actions taken by participants

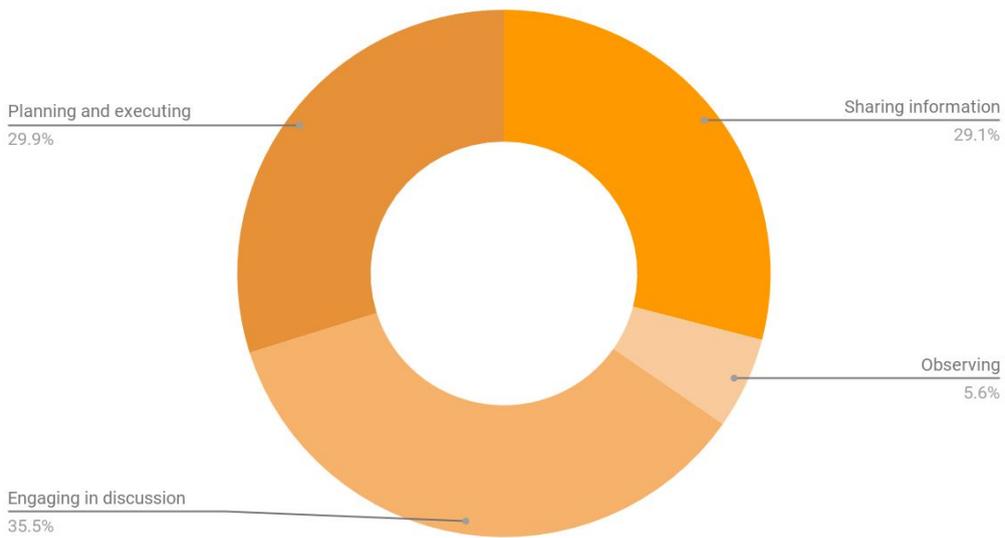
To measure the second indicator for actions, all the actions reported have been categorised by level of engagement. The results are presented in the charts below (Figure 13 & Figure 14)

**Types of actions reported by participants in FP cycle 16 (N=126)**



*Figure 13*

**Types of actions reported by participants in AP cycle 17 (N=126)**



*Figure 14*

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Four main types of actions reported by participants were common to FP and AP: Sharing information, Observing (examples of gender-based violence and discrimination), Engaging in discussion and Planning and executing. However as explained later in this section, the proportion of actions under each category varied significantly between FP and AP, with the exception of the category “Sharing Information” that remained stable at around 30% of the actions reported.

Two categories appear only in FP: “Sharing responsibilities”, which corresponds to chores taken by participants in their homes, and “Non violent behaviour” which refers to actions for which participants made efforts to improve their relationships with others and behave in a more respectful and assertive manner. These two categories of action are specific to FP and reflect an individual behaviour change, while actions expected in AP to be more oriented towards peer and family level change initiated by participants.

It is striking that the actions taken in AP revealed a much higher level of engagement than the actions taken in FP. While only 10% of the actions reported were discussions about gender issues initiated by participants, the proportion of this type of action was 35% in AP. Similarly, while only 4% of actions required planning from participants in FP, almost 30% of the actions were categorized under “Planning and executing” in AP.

**These numbers show how AP is successful in increasing the participants’ capacity to initiate critical discussions about gender issues and to take responsibilities to design their own actions.**

It is likely that the actions under these categories will contribute to raising awareness about gender-based violence and discrimination and influence peers and family members of participants, while developing active citizenship.

To qualify these findings, the results for the categories “Sharing information” and “Challenging”

indicate that there are lessons to take to make AP more engaging. As the actions related to sharing information are the least challenging to take for participants, one would expect for this category to represent less than 29% of actions reported in AP. Regarding challenging actions, it is surprising that the number of challenging actions reported dropped between FP (5%) and AP (less than 1%). We can hypothesise that as participants were more mobilised to build their own projects and prepare for the Public Event, they focused less on the need to intervene when incidents of violence occur. However, preparing for actions that aim at raising awareness to prevent gender equality should not replace actions that stop incidents of violence or discrimination. Attention should be given to both types of action since the programme Theory of Change expects participants to be able to identify and challenge gender-based violence at all levels.

## Parents experience of their son’s behavioural changes

In order to assess behavioural and to some extent attitudinal changes in graduates who participated in the AfE programme, it is important to understand how these changes are experienced by people around them, particularly by the graduates’ mothers and sisters. For this purpose Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted in 5 communities at the end of FP and 4 communities at the end of AP. Total number of respondents present were 34 and 24 respectively. 98% of these were mothers.

The discussions with parents gathered information on their understanding of the AfE programme and their awareness on gender based violence and discrimination. Questions also revolved around changes in the graduates’ behaviour, communication and their interactions with their mother and sister.

## Awareness about the programme

There is an understanding of the AfE Programme among FP and AP parents. The names Equal

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Community Foundation and Action for Equality, were unfamiliar to the respondents in both stages of the programme. However, majority of the parents identified the objective of AfE as gender equality and/or prevention of violence and discrimination against women and girls. Respondents also shared about the positive impact the programme had on improving their sons' behaviour and communication.

## Communication

Through the discussions majority of the respondents shared that there was a positive change in their son's communication with the family. When asked if participants shared their learnings with the family. About half of the respondents reported that graduates spoke to them about human rights, the importance of sharing household chores, zero discrimination between girls and boys with respect to education and the importance of raising voices to stop violence. Results from the gender attitude survey too indicates that participation in the FP and AP programme has resulted in graduates supporting equal rights with regards to education and work and using more human rights language.

When asked about if respondents learnt anything new from their sons, one mother reported that she learnt that using certain language is disrespectful and since then changed how she communicates. Another mother said that she learnt transgender people are human beings and have rights. This demonstrates that graduates have an ability to positively influence their family members. Other changes in communication reported by respondents are listening without arguing and not answering back.

## Gender behaviour: Sharing household chores

The AfE programme teaches adolescent boys to challenge gender norms in their families first, and then, in their communities. The discussions with parents revealed that graduates in FP and AP were beginning to challenge attitudes on gender roles and

responsibilities in their families, particularly with regards to participating in domestic chores.

According to respondents, the most common chores done by the graduates are sweeping the floor, buying groceries, paying bills, throwing out garbage and filling water. Results from the gender attitude survey too demonstrates that graduates are beginning to change their attitudes towards gender roles and responsibilities by indicating acceptance of boys helping out in child care or men taking equal responsibility in household chores. When asked about doing inside house chores like laundry (washing one's clothes), doing the dishes, and wiping the floor a few mothers said that they did not want their sons' to share in these chores. The reasons presented by mothers for not wanting their sons to undertake these chores are: not wanting their sons to be teased by community boys and not wanting to listen to negative comments of relatives or neighbours.

When questioned about the level of satisfaction on help received, all parents (especially mothers) were satisfied with the level of help they received at home. But, a few mothers also stated that taking care of the home is their responsibility, and they would prefer if their sons concentrated on their studies.

Thus, we see that graduates of the FP and AP programme mostly share the responsibility of outside chores: buying groceries and filling water than inside chores: laundry or washing dishes. Results also indicate that a few mothers did not support attitudinal changes of boys with regard to sharing of domestic chores. The reason could partly be because of their own gender views and patriarchal values, or the inability to stand up against the communities gender views or patriarchal values on gender roles and responsibilities.

## Relationship with sisters

Discussions also revealed that the since joining the AfE programme the relationship between the

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graduate and his sister/s had improved. For instance, less fighting over the use of remote, talking more to one another, sharing of household chores such as putting the plates for dinner, picking up and putting the sleeping mattresses back in place.

However, there was one concern that arose from the discussion. A few parents in both programmes reported that their sons had become protective with regard to their sisters. For example, accompanying them at night to the grocery store, or going to the grocery store instead of sending their sisters.

The reason for this behaviour could be the fact that before joining the programme violence against girls, especially, street sexual harassment was normalised. However, since joining the programme boys have become aware and are able to identify situations of violence against women and girls, however they find it difficult to take actions. This has resulted in wanting to protect their sisters.

## **Gender based violence and discrimination a priority**

The goal of AfE is that women and girls are free from gender based violence and feel safe. To achieve this goal it is important that gender based violence and discrimination is recognised as a priority issue in the community.

During the discussions respondents were asked to list two important problems in their community. At both stages (FP & AP) the two main issues were alcoholism and street sexual harassment. When questioned if domestic violence exists in the community, most respondents reported that it exists, and people should not get involved in this issue as it is private. When questioned about

solutions a few respondents (mothers) believed that alcoholism was the reason for the problems in the community: from street sexual harassment to fights between neighbours and even domestic violence.

Thus, even though domestic violence is visibly seen in the community, it is not regarded as a problem. In many ways, domestic violence has been normalised by the respondents and thus not regarded as a priority issue.

## **Other behaviour outcomes**

Other changes that parents observed in their sons which they attributed to the AfE programme were increase in confidence when communicating with family and community members (also supported by the skills assessment by mentors), more attention to studies, and spending less time on the streets of the community.

Thus, overall findings from FGDs show that parents are aware that AfE teaches their boys gender equitable behaviours and attitudes, and they value the programme as they have observed positive changes in the graduates' behaviour and communication styles. Mothers are satisfied with the level of household chores shared by the graduates. However, mothers prefer if their son do more outside chores like buying groceries or filling water than chores inside the home like laundry and washing vessels. Furthermore, mothers reported that graduates' relationship with their sisters have improved, however, a concern for the AfE programme is graduates have become protective about their sisters. Lastly, results show that violence and discrimination especially with regard to domestic violence is normalised and is not considered a priority issue.

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# Lessons learned

134 boys graduated from the Foundation Programme, directly transitioned and graduated from the Action Programme as seen in the analysis of Cycle 16: Foundation Programme and Cycle 17: Action Programme.

We have learnt that the Foundation Programme is critical in bringing about positive change in gender attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of the graduate participants. Subsequently, these positive change begin to stabilize in the Action Programme. The reason for this is that during the Foundation Programme, for the first time, boys are provided with knowledge on gender based violence and discrimination and human rights; and their existing gender attitudes and behaviours are questioned and challenged.

Results from the skill assessment show that the programme curriculum has been successful in unleashing the skills of graduates to be creative and autonomous. Moreover, the programme has also been successful in creating a space for graduate participants to effectively discuss and take action on gender equality with family and community members through programme sessions and community events. Analysis of the focus group discussion reveal that parents are aware and value the change the programme has brought in their son's attitudes, behaviour and communication skills.

However, through the outcome evaluation we also learnt that while the programme provides opportunities to identify gender norms and discuss human rights violation through group discussion, there are insufficient opportunities to challenge these norms and talk on alternatives in the community.

Results from the gender attitude survey demonstrate on one hand that participants support girls' right to education and women's right to work, but, on the other hand still support the idea of traditional gender relations and roles.

Results from the actions log have indicated that graduates are comfortable taking actions on raising awareness on gender equality - such as sharing information on human rights or sharing of household chores- as compared, to actions that challenge or stop gender based violence and discrimination in their family or community. For example, analysis of the gender attitude survey demonstrate that boys condemn street sexual harassment, but do not have knowledge with regard to what action to take against street sexual harassment.

Lastly, we need to understand that our participants live in communities where violence and discrimination against women and girls is not a priority issue and patriarchy is very strong, thereby increasing the risk of backlash when the participants take action. This could explain why 40% of participants did not take actions during the action programme

Overall, Action for Equality has brought a positive change in skill development, attitude and behaviour among the 134 participants through the Foundation and Action Programme. However, we must remember that the process of transformation is gradual, and that once the boys begin to incorporate these changes in their lives, it will translate into changes among their family, their peers and the community.

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# Recommendations for improvement

In this section, based on the findings of the report, we have documented recommendations for programme improvement.

## Skills development

- Increase the number of opportunities during sessions for participants to communicate between themselves about gender issues i.e. debates, to ensure more participants can improve their active listening and persuasive skills.
- Focus discussions within sessions on the need to reflect on and build alternatives to existing gender norms, so that participants can go beyond the identification of gender norms and improve their capacity to challenge inequality.
- Develop the participants' capacity to use concepts related to human rights and gender so that they understand that gender-based violence and discrimination is systemic, as participants tend to refer to specific examples without always linking them to the bigger picture of gender inequality.
- Define clearer expectations when participants are expected to work as a team, to avoid a division between active and passive participants. Insist on need to work as a group to achieve to objective to influence others.
- Give more responsibilities to participants when designing their own projects i.e. Public Events in order to stimulate their creativity and autonomy.

## Attitude change

- Facilitation of discussions and debates on gender related issues, especially on sensitive topics like family violence and homosexuality is important. For this to happen, it is crucial for mentors to continue to develop their facilitation skills so that they can encourage adolescent boys to speak on these taboo issues.
- Inclusion of women's voices in the programme is important. This provides participants opportunities to hear women's experience, connect curricular knowledge with reality and help build empathy around the issue on violence and discrimination against women and girls.

## Behaviour change

### Taking actions

- Present and integrate actions to take between sessions as an essential part of the programme to increase the proportion of participants who take actions.
- Monitor actions taken by each participant to increase regularity and understand better the factors that can prevent them from taking actions.

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- Define actions to be taken in the Action Programme as collective. Discourage participants from building individual projects, in order to build their teamwork, negotiation and planning skills and to create a sense of belonging to the group.
  - Encourage participants to continue challenging incidents of gender-based violence and discrimination in their daily lives. Create a space for participants to discuss about tips and solutions to intervene, either individually or collectively, when violence occurs.

## Support and encourage behaviour change within participants

- Increase communication with parents on:
  - programme content, requirements and expectations
  - gender based violence and discrimination so as to build knowledge on the issue.
- Increase engagement with community based organisations, local police stations, community stakeholders. This will result in these organisations/persons supporting ECF participants when they take action for gender equality.