



South-South Series: Empowering and Growing Women-led Business

Session 9: Engaging men as
partners and champions of
women's empowerment

10 June 2026

How can men be effectively engaged as partners of women's economic empowerment?

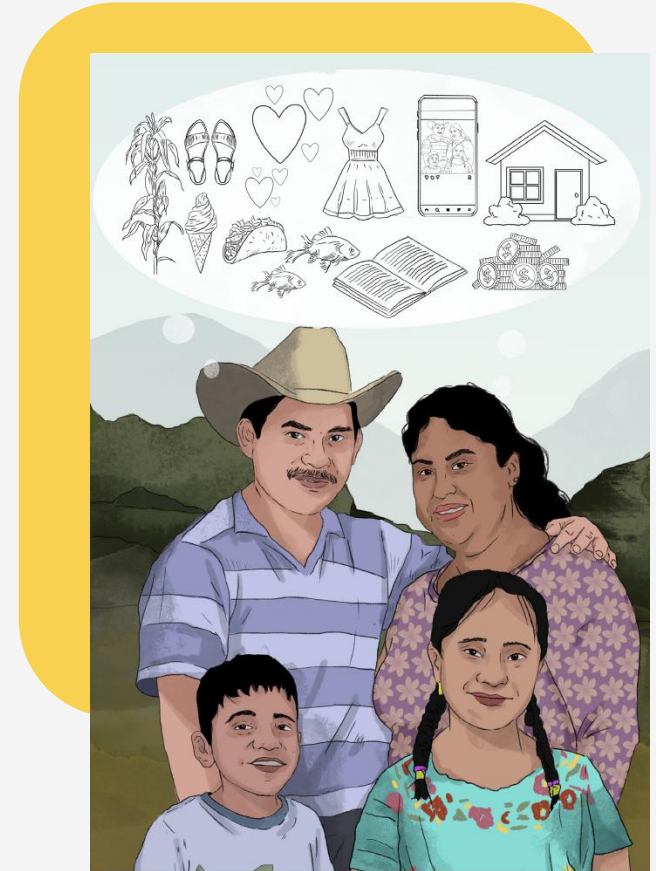


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Men & Women's Economic Empowerment

- Men typically have **more power** in government and **systemic** opportunities
- Men typically have **more power** and access to **income** generating opportunities
- Men typically have **more power** over decisions in the **household**
- **WEE** can be seen as a threat to **men's power**

Need to engage **men as allies** of WEE and in support of women's agency



Program Example: Journeys of Transformation

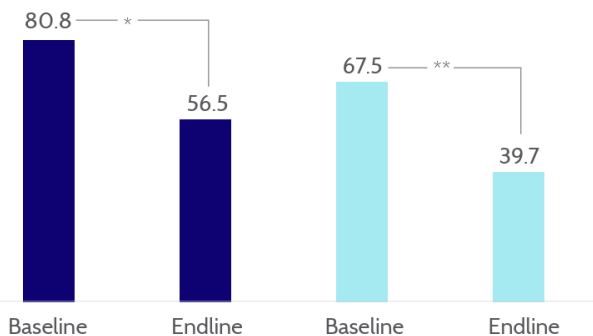
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting more equitable and non-violent relationships• Supporting Women's Economic Empowerment and family wellbeing
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group education for partners (1/2 sessions separated by gender, 1/2 together)• Shift restrictive gender attitudes, norms & behaviors
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Household decision-making• Couple communication• Women's engagement in income generation• Division of domestic and childcare labor• Sexual and reproductive health• Violence against Women (VAW) – intimate partner violence (IPV)



Findings: Reduction of gendered barriers and acceptance of IPV



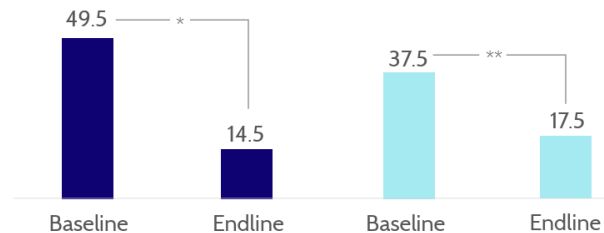
"If there are children in the household, the woman should not work outside of the home"



*Significant Difference ($\chi^2=11.08$, $p = 0.001$)

** Significant Difference ($\chi^2=7.67$, $p = 0.006$)

"Women who work outside of the home cannot also be good wives and mothers"



* Significant Difference ($\chi^2=20.24$, $p < 0.001$)

** Significant Difference ($\chi^2=7.14$, $p = 0.008$)

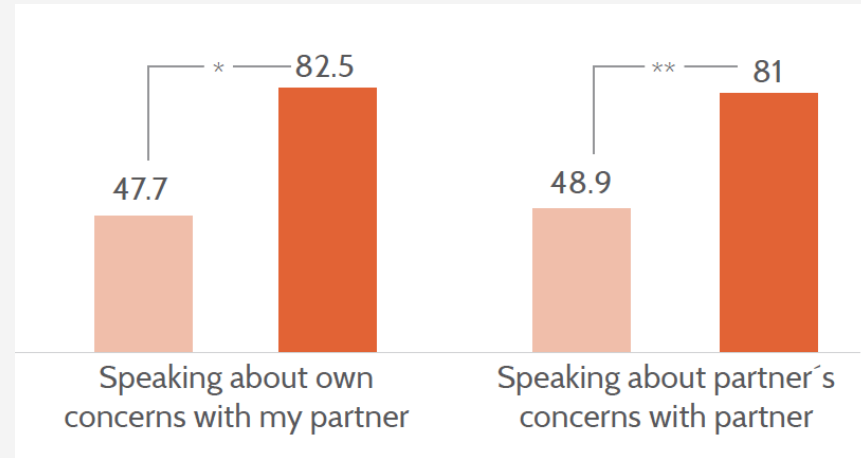
■ Men ■ Women

I didn't like it when he spoke to me loudly because it was like I wasn't worth it, but not now, it's different" (Woman, GFD).

Findings: Improved Couple's Communication



“It is good that men also took the workshops, because before they didn’t know what we (women) were doing (in the WE group), and my partner used to say that it couldn’t have been anything good, that we were wasting our time, but now he supports me in my skills building.” (Woman, IDI)



* Significant Difference (chi2=19.37, p < 0.001)

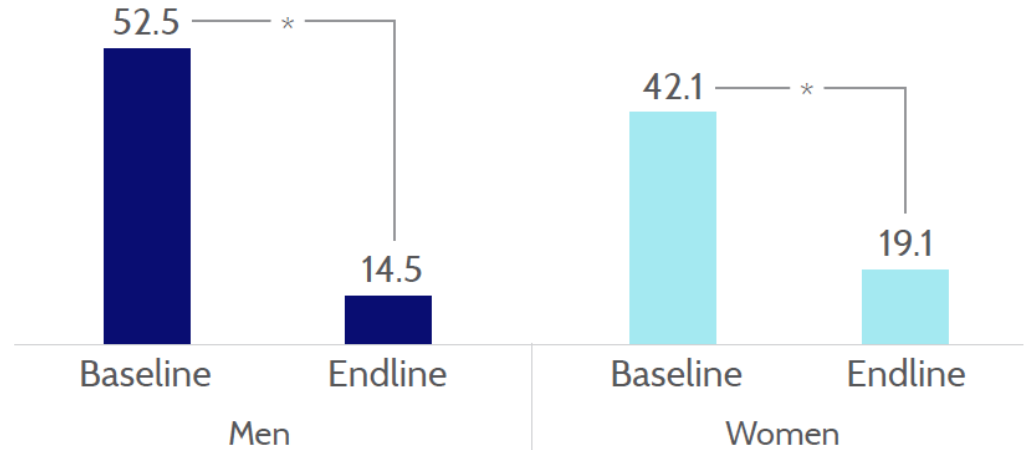
** Significant Difference (chi2=17.64, p = 0.001)

■ Baseline
■ Endline

Findings: Increased shared decision-making

- Increase of women's participation in joint decision-making regarding paid work outside the home and how to spend family income
- Reduction in male dominance regarding women's mobility
- However, women still don't report increases in autonomous decision-making

"The man should make the final decision about how family funds are spent"



* Significant Difference (chi2=23.41, p < 0.001)

** Significant Difference (chi2=8.86, p = 0.003)

Challenges & lessons learned

- Avoid favoring 'joint' decision-making **at the expense of women's autonomy**
- Promising findings to **reduce risk factors for IPV** but behavioral and normative change may require additional components
- **Sustaining** and scaling change

Recruitment & Retention

- Presenting the program doesn't work (215 vs 140)

What works?

- Establishing alliance with male community leaders
- Appeal to men's aspirations
- Allow snowball effect
- Consider men's schedules
- Fostering fun and non-judgmental spaces
- Framing to appeal economic aspirations

THANK YOU

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**Check out our JoT
Learning Briefs and
Manual**





Thank you

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