



Engaging Culture and Community to address and change persistent harmful gender norms and attitudes. ID 293-2004 – EN

Location: Mwenezi district, Zimbabwe

Saint Mary's Road United Church with SCORE against Poverty



St. Mary's Road United Church

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3. Executive Summary

In 2021, following the acceptance of a proposal to the Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT), SCORE Against Poverty (Zimbabwe) and St Mary’s Road United Church (SMRUC) launched a testing program focused on documenting the change in harmful gender norms through an intervention in the context of household labor and family care.

The hypothesis, which is now validated, is that if men can be actively engaged in a community-designed program that (a) respects their culture and (b) recognizes and reinforces their importance to the family/community in new ways, then they are more likely to redefine masculinity and associated norms in a positive and supportive way that benefits the family and the community. The approach emphasises cultural ways of knowing and discovering, and utilizes two key variables: skills (cooking and communication/dialogue) and structured discussion forums (a safe place for men and women to discuss gender issues connected with marriage in constructive ways).

Testing involved 3 groups, geographically separated, each with 20 couples: Group 1 & 2 were included in the baseline but received no other treatment factor, Group 3 had a skills/cooking component only, Group 4 had only a Forum/dialogue component and Group 5 which had both components.

While all groups showed an improved definition of Masculinity & Femininity by both genders, *Group 5, which experienced the both treatment variables showed the strongest changes in behaviour related to participating in household chores, as well as behaviours that rippled out into the community* such as men advocating for gender equity, women having more time to engage in other none household activities and women gaining access to family assets (phone, finance land etc.) not previously enjoyed.

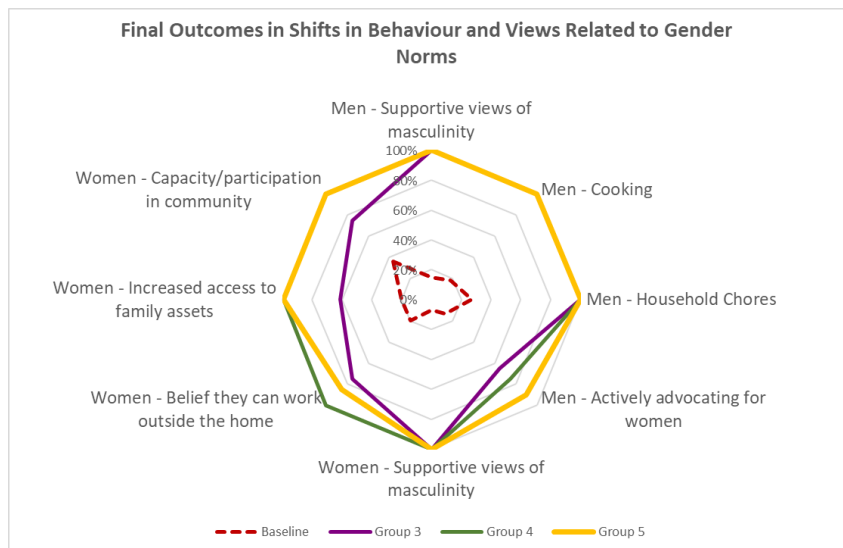
The program not only validated the original hypotheses, but also resulted in some unanticipated changes. One such change, which was highlighted by stakeholders in all groups, was the decrease in Gender Based Violence (GBV) in the home and increase in harmony/well being of the families in the program. This impact, like all other impacts of the program, were strongest with Group 5.

*The results confirm that, **transformational gender equity can be dramatically increased in a short period of time**, when basic “locality” and gender equity components are carefully implemented. The approach will lead to*

- a positive multi-generational impact on gender equity.
- increase family social/emotional wellbeing,
- increased family income generation and
- decreased in gender-based violence in the family and the community.

Pivots: 1. Engaging wives as primary trainers, alongside Home Ec teachers in the cooking sessions was a major beneficial pivot in terms of men continuing to practice at home. 2. The inclusion of “Homestead” visits by team members gave huge currency to the project from the participants side and added to verification of change from the partner side.

Lessons Learned: 1. The value of locality by the team and the close relationship with local leadership, along with



ongoing consultation with participants, dramatically improved validity of testing results. This emphasis on locality and giving power to the participants when decisions were needed, was paid back with trust and high levels of participation. 2. *In order for transformation change to happen in the family, any engagement of men **must** involve simultaneous involvement and input from the women in their lives.* 3. *The value of time spent by couples together either in activities of testing and traveling to and fro cannot be under rated as a contributing factor to building transformative relationships between couples.*

Participants noted lessons learned about the value of quality childcare and the large amount of time spent together by couples, during program travel/training. According to family members, stakeholders and the participants themselves, the result of all of this combined, resulted in 100% of couples claiming increased family wellbeing in general and a higher ability to withstand the twin 2022 economic shocks of Covid & the drought, as compared to their neighbors.

Other, longer-term indicators, such as men advocating on behalf of women, women having access to and control of key family resources, and women having more leisure time, can be seen to greatly increase the agency of women.

Lastly, the uptake in discussions between husbands and wives with regard to planning and decision making, indicate that women (and men) have gained knowledge and skills in these areas. Thus, the shift towards gender equity is strengthened because both men and women have gained awareness and confidence, learned new skills, and augmented their social assets (redefined family relationships, increased community recognition and support for women). As discussed below, this shift was strengthened by a combination of factors all of which were equally important. Those being, the “locality approach”, an embracing/inclusive gender strategy on the part of the partner, a safe place for discussions and training, time spent together by couples, modeling and support by gender champions, and meeting the [different] skill needs of the two genders.

4. Update on Context

Within the last two weeks, the good rains have returned after a year long drought, which will have a positive effect on crops and therefore on family income. However, these benefits will not be seen for another 2 -3 months, when the harvests start to come in. In the meantime, the general population is still struggling with high inflation caused by various factors including drought, which we have noted throughout the past year.

The silver lining is that, as farmers, our participants have more flexibility in what they eat as they determine what they plant and what livestock they raise. Facing policy restrictions on what they can do with maize (corn) along with the drought, they have turned to other drought-resistant and non-controlled grains. The program’s final cooking competition saw a large uptake in participants using older traditional grains to make their basic starch food (sadza) along with more traditional greens.

At this time, Covid is not a factor in this part of Zimbabwe—hospitals and clinics are monitoring and reporting but it is dormant for the time being.

Using the gender lens, historically, the impact of food scarcity on family relations, heightens behaviour related to gender divisions, either positively or negatively. In this rural society, where traditionally men eat first and eat the best, followed by children followed by mother, this can be punishing if not deadly on women. Here, the communities have had a year long period of scarcity, caused by drought, flooding and Covid. This has served to sharpen the *observable benefits* that derive from a *re-definition of positive/supportive gender norms* as is being built by this program: this participatory training program has allowed all the participants to survive better than their neighbors, both *economically and in family harmony* (based on self report of couples at the end of term). *Some of the comments noted made in the closing activity of Gr 5 where the discussion*

resolved around respect, and the statement “What does it mean for spouses to be- Walking together on the road called Respect” highlight this idea.

- According to several men, “When spouses now share family finances, give each other access to the phone and free discussions all these are signs of respect”. Women noted that they were happy that these are happening now because of the test.
- Sharing of responsibilities and duties. This was mentioned several times by many women and heavily supported by men. Most interestingly men said that the reason why they have already bought and use identical aprons *for both* the man and his wife is that they want to work together.
- Respect is when I wait for my wife when I want to make crucial decisions. Some men said, “Gone are the days when I dispose of my livestock without my wife’s full participation, not consultation”.
- Loice Makumure, spouse to Jacobe Gwezuva from Gr5 said that now she cannot imagine the difference in their home situation a year ago. She narrated how happy she is now, how fit and healthy she is now. She concluded, “I am doing well now because I am stress free, my husband used to block my success but now he is the facilitator and initiator. I am proud”
- Respect is genuine if it can be passed/ inherited to children and the community.” If our children see us respecting each other as spouses in the ways we address each other, deciding together, cooking for each other and walking together in the road, they call it respect. They will copy paste it into their actions, demonstrate it in schools and share with others in the community through plays. So happens the transformation that is sought for.”

5. Testing Results

5.1 Progress on Targets Through a Gender Lens

As stated in the Executive summary, there is no question that the activities tested have had the impact which was hypothesized in our proposal.

Discussion of PMF

This testing project is about changing norms, specifically harmful gender norms in the marriage relationship, in order to improve gender and household (HH) labour equity. Gender norms are based on culture and expressed through behaviour. *In Shona culture, to be a Shona man [or woman] is defined by behaviours they can and cannot do, which are cultural norms that have been taken for granted forever, passed down by both husbands and wives to their children.* The testing project’s Baseline and Ultimate objective speak to broad changes to these cultural norms. The midpoint and final testing results provided in the PMF show more concretely, the immediate and intermediate changes in specific behaviours that indicate movement towards positive holistic outcomes.

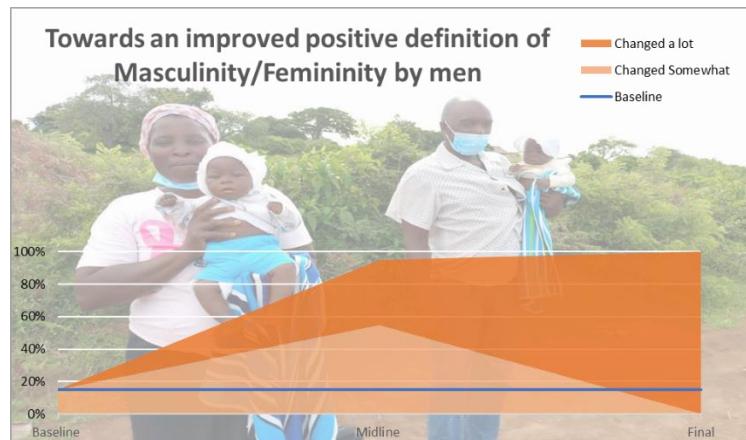
The PMF has separate columns to compare the **different conditions**

- Baseline,
- **Gr 5**, Cooking Skills & Discussion Forums
- **Gr 4** Discussion Forums only
- **Gr 3** Cooking Skills only

The narrative boxes below begin by showing the difference in **Group 5 vs Baseline** for each Outcome. This is followed by the **discussion part** of each box which discusses relevant differences between Group 5 and the other groups as well as other general overarching questions relevant to the outcomes that were not part of the PMF.

The Ultimate Outcome: Enhanced norms and understanding of masculinity and femininity of participating men and women benefit family and the community.

Indicator 1: The # and % of male participants whose definition of masculinity and associated norms has changed in a positive/supportive way that benefits the family



End of Testing/project result:

Out of the 20 men in Group 5, 20 (100%) said their definition of masculinity and femininity has changed “a lot” in a positive/supportive way. (This was confirmed independently by their wives.)

Baseline – Only 15% of men in the district survey claimed to have a any kind of positive/supportive view towards wives in the opening baseline survey.

Indicator 2: The # and % of men who shift their behaviours in carrying out their roles as husbands and fathers, and as members and leaders of community and institutions.

End of Testing result: Out of 20 men in Group 5, 20 (100%) demonstrated positive changes in behaviour (Sharing in one or more behaviours like cooking, prepping, fetching firewood or water). Seven (35%) of participants are doing so as community leaders, not just husbands, by actively promoting new gender roles.

Therefore, **100% of men have shifted their behaviour positively** in carrying out their roles as husbands and over 1/3 have extended this shift in behaviour out into their communities.

Baseline: 27% of men stated that they share household duties to some degree, in the privacy of their home and none (0%) as community leaders as this is not culturally acceptable.

Indicator 3: The # and % of **female** participants that state that their definition of femininity, masculinity and associated norms has changed in a positive/supportive way.

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 women in Group 5, 20 (100%) of wives said their definition of femininity and masculinity had changed positively **a lot or significantly**. This result is up from a **baseline of 7%** of women who felt they had a positive view of gender norms. Note: Culturally it was felt that a choice of a) No change from traditional Shauna definitions, b) you have somewhat changed or your definition of femininity or c) your definition has changed a lot because of FIT activities, would best capture change. Examples would be, allowing men in the kitchen, working outside the home.

Indicator 4: The # and % of female participants that are taking on new tasks and roles.

End of Testing result: Out of 20 women, 20 (100%) have taken on new tasks or roles and activities as opposed to just more work. This is compared to a **baseline of 25%** of women who said they had time and were engaged in outside activities as opposed to just more work.

Discussion on Ultimate Objective:

Our Ultimate Outcome statement, “Enhanced understanding of masculinity and femininity that would benefit family and the community,” is quite broad, which is why the Intermediate & Immediate Outcomes will be used below to describe specifically what those “enhanced” norms look like. As shown in the outcomes for Indicator 1, throughout the program, participants stopped saying that their views had shifted somewhat to instead declare that their views had “changed a lot.” By end of testing, a solid understanding has developed, by both genders, that their views of both masculinity and femininity had changed in a positive manner.

Given that masculinity and femininity in Shona culture are determined largely by observable behaviours by both genders, it is important to note that observable behaviours **did** change. This was **verified** not only by participants’ spouses but also by other family members and visits conducted with families, chosen at random, by the gender specialist who visited the homes of 25/60 (40%) of the participants through out the later half of the testing period. This is documented below in the intermediate and immediate objectives sections.

Comparison to other Groups: While all 3 groups, and *both genders* experienced change in their view of masculinity and femininity, Groups 3 & 4 (who only experienced either the skill building or the discussion forums) had around 30% that said, they were “**only somewhat**” changed.

Initially, in the PMF, we had indicated that we would disaggregate by age as well as gender. So, there is a row on the PMF, in the Ultimate Outcome, where we show the age breakdown of the different groups. However, because of the small size of the test groups and the majority of participants being in the mid age group, any disaggregation by age would be meaningless. So, although this was an option given the data collected, *it was not pursued on any of the indicators.*

When compared with **baseline data**, one can clearly see on a meta level that some major transformations took place with the participants. There have been significant changes which are spelled out below with regard to roles, both in the home and in the community, including behavioural expectations and asset use.

Significant variance between baseline data, targets and actual data.

The best way, we believe, to explain the huge change between the baseline and the results in general is to share part of a story that was gathered by Alice, one of our team gender specialists. This came to us from a young man, Lionel, age 13, who was trying to understand why his dad & uncle acted a certain way. He said “*my dad and his brothers were told by their father, ‘you should not seat or warm yourself with fire in the kitchen. All things done in the kitchen are associated with female. Men are different from women. Men should be brave, should do masculine tasks like digging anthills and cattle manure, whilst women carry it and spread into the fields. Men should never associate with women because they will be said to be weak and if married never allow your wife into decision making because she is not your relative, you are unrelated. One day she may be a spy. Your family issues are confidential and are for you only’.*

However, men in this district and perhaps beyond, when approached in the right spirit, are ready to question this oppressive norm. Our thoughts on *why* this might be are that, for sometime now and for legitimate reasons, almost every development project has been aimed at benefitting women and girls. The men have been sidelined or ignored. This project, Men Can Cook, emphasises the role of men so while it intentionally benefitted women by engaging them intentionally in designing project’s curriculum, in facilitating and in evaluating responses, it has not sidelined men but actually shown them the benefits of equity, both socially and

economically. Wives have enlisted their husbands by saying, *‘look this involves you and benefits you and our family’*. This is something which could be researched more fully and perhaps explains the request from many surrounding villages, chiefs and officials to expand the reach of the program much further.

The unmeasured impact played by tangential activities such as time spouses spent traveling together to the testing site, professional child care during testing activity, home visits and even positive economic impacts on the family are discussed at the end of this section.

Intermediate Outcomes

Intermediate Outcome 1: More equitable participation by men in household and family tasks, *beyond cooking.*

Indicator 1: The # and % of men who share in household duties.

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 men in **Group 5** who engage in household duties beyond cooking, **all 20 (100%)** are sharing in household duties on a regular basis. (The majority described this as 1 - 3 times a week)

Baseline: 27% of men stated that they felt [sharing in household tasks] is acceptable but not that they necessarily did it.

Indicator 2: The degree to which men advocate on behalf of women and girls in the community and in institutions

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 men in **Group 5**, **18 (90%)** are now advocating to some extent for women and girls, with the remaining 2 men stating that they are *willing to advocate but the situation has not arisen for them yet.*

Baseline: No men were advocating, although 13% of men said it was acceptable to advocate on behalf of women.

Intermediate Outcome 2: *Dropped as it was a duplicate*

Intermediate Outcome 3: Expanded behaviours related to gender roles by women

Indicator 1: The # and % of women that participated more actively in community development (CD) activities (e.g., food distribution or water point committee) because of the project.

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 women in **Group 5**, **11 (55%)** say Yes, they are participating more actively. All 20 (100%) of the women feel they have gained the capacity to participate more actively in community activities and committees.

Baseline: 20% of women sometimes participate in CD activities

Indicator 2: Degree of agency/access to four key resources (cell phone, family finances, land, cattle)

End of Testing result: Detailed numbers are in the PMF. However, all are around 90 -100% of women having more access to these resources, exceeding our target of 60%. Only very

recently, in May, did policy at the national level change on cattle, allowing two names to be on stock certificates.

Baseline: Only 10% of women indicated they have even slight control over 1 or more of these assets.

Comparison to other groups

As seen in the PMF, Groups 3 & 4 had *quite similar results*. While this was somewhat expected for Group 4 which had very intense debates on these issues, we *did not* expect similar results for Group 3 which only had cooking lessons. This will be discussed further at the end of this section.

Discussion on Intermediate Outcomes:

Intermediate Outcome 3 is about control and power. This is why all the elements of a strong Gender strategy, on the part of the implementer, must be employed in order for changes to be sustainable. When change happens at the deeper level that affects views of control and power, and is verified from multiple sources as were the results of this project, it is truly transformative.

Indicator #2, is about resource sharing and access. Cellphones, as noted by Deo, the FIT Evaluation officer, in one of our phone updates with FIT, are an example of this. No phones were given out in this project. Historically, men have had exclusive use and control of the family phone. To have women say their husbands have given them open access, or in some cases bought a phone for her, is truly a huge change.

Results related to gender equality and/or the empowerment of women. Obviously, these changes in power and control in the home, along with men being willing to speak up (advocate) on behalf of women (both on opportunity and protection issues) is going to have a strong effect on women and girls feeling more empowered and on being allowed to be involved in community activities with tools/access to mechanisms to allow them more choice and resources to pursue various paths of their choosing.

Indicator #1 is about women taking on new, community-based activities. Across all groups, where we saw women taking on new activities, it was in the later half of the project, co-occurring or in parallel with men taking on more household chores and cooking.

Variance between baseline data, targets and actual data for each indicator. Please refer to the section above (p.4&5- Lionel) with reference to the traditionally large gap between men and women and the apparent large desire by both genders, but especially men, to have a partner that they can discuss things with. Further discussion at the end of this section on PMF.

Immediate Outcomes

Immediate Outcome 1: Increased capacity of men to participate in household and family tasks.

Indicator 1: The # and % of men who can cook complete meals.

End of testing result: Out of the 20 Group 5 men, 18 (90%) are cooking 1 to 3 meals per week and the remaining 2 men (10%) have acquired cooking skills but are only doing it occasionally. In total, **100% of men are cooking complete meals.**

Baseline: 18% said they had the knowledge/skills to cook.

Indicator 2: The # and % of men who can care for children or elderly family members

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 Group 5 men, 20 (100%) care for elderly or children routinely.

Baseline: 27% of me said they shared in the care of household vulnerable [elderly & children] members.

Immediate Outcome 2: Increased capacity by men to discuss and promote positive social norms/behaviours in the community and institutions.

Indicator 1: The # and % of men who participate actively and regularly in Men's Forum discussions **and** are then willing to promote new social norms/behaviours in the community/institutions.

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 **Group 5** men, **20 (100%)** participate actively and regularly in Men's Forum and all are promoting new norms in the community, the majority of whom are doing it a lot:

- 5 of the 20 men (25%) are promoting new [gender] norms out in the community **somewhat**
- 15 of the 20 men (75%) are promoting new [gender] norms out in the community **a lot.**

Baseline: 13% of men believed it is acceptable to advocate on behalf of women/girls.

Indicator 2: The # and type of situations identified in which men can advocate on behalf of women and girls.

End of Testing result: The types of situations identified by 20 men in **Group 5's** Forum on Gender, for advocacy by men are:

- Sharing in household roles
- Engage in social & economic opportunities
- Family disputes
- Issues in a marriage
- Lobola issues (Bride price & related issues)
- GBV

This is a 600% increase over the **baseline** cultural norm that men do not advocate on behalf of women.

Discussion on Intermediate Outcomes:

While the # of areas in which men were willing to advocate remained the same among the three groups, in the later half of the testing cycle, the men in Group 5, said that within those categories there were now sub-categories that they were expanding about which they were feeling more secure on speaking out.

Comparison to other groups

As seen in the PMF, Groups 3 & 4 had quite similar results. While this was somewhat expected for Group 4 which was exposed to issues of advocacy, we did not expect it for Group 3 which only had cooking lessons. Likewise, behaviours like cooking and child/elder care were not expected to be so strong in Group 4 which had no skills training. This will be discussed further at the end of this section.

Analyze the results related to gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls against the baseline data.

The large increase in behaviors by men with regard to household chores and their willingness to advocate new norms under a variety of conditions speaks to a new culture where equity is being practiced at home and is spreading out into the community based on the stakeholders wide spread acceptance of women at all levels of community life.

Explain any significant variance between baseline data, targets and actual data for each indicator.

Please refer to the section above p.4 & 5 with reference to the large gap between men and women and the apparent large desire on both sides, but especially by men, to have a partner/wife that they can discuss things with. Further discussion at the end of this section on PMF.

Immediate Outcome 3: Increased capacity by women to participate in the community.

Indicator 2: The # and % of women who gain capacity that can lead to more active participation in the community.

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 women in Group 5, **20 (100%)** of women feel they have **gained** leadership capacity

Baseline: 36% of women felt they had *some* skills and capacity at the beginning.

Indicator 3: The # and % of women who believe it is a good idea for women to work outside the home.

End of Testing result: Out of the 20 women in Group 5, 17 women (85%) believe it is a good idea to have the choice to work outside the home. This is a complete flip from **the baseline/provincial norm** in which **80%** of women thought it **wrong** to work outside the home.

General Discussion:

First of all, the key behaviours that demonstrate a change in the gender norms, originally hypothesized are documented and confirmed by wives in these objectives. Secondly, there are some very important shifts demonstrated and verified in the immediate indicators.

With regard to advocacy, *the progression* by men, (Group 5 & 4) from being able to *discuss social behavior to identifying situations where they might be willing to advocate*, culminating in *actual advocacy in the community*, is very significant in this short amount of time.

The fact that men are openly, among other men, identifying situations where they might advocate is significant in that it was never done before. The issues identified in which they now feel they can advocate are also very significant and difficult.

Lastly, there are several issues involved in women's slower initial participation, during the testing period, within the community:

- 1) The time available after family responsibilities
- 2) Available opportunities in areas of interest in the community
- 3) The skills to do this.

While our Gender Strategy and Testing program can not address the availability of opportunities for women, it does address the other two issues. Data indicates that wives do have more time now and they definitely feel capable of getting more involved.

Re: Gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls against the baseline data.

The flip in the norms around women working outside the home and being involved in community can likely be explained by the fact that now (as opposed to ten months ago) women are freed up timewise, through the participation of their husbands in household chores/family care, along with the training they received and the confidence the FIT training built. *There is now support for this engagement on the part of wives from the husbands, which was not present before this project.*

Another cultural flip is the role of women in designing and assisting in verifying statements their husbands made through out the project. This not something they would ever have done previously. This, combined with favorable attitudes on the part of most village and government leaders, has provided ideal conditions to empower women and *explains the significant variance between baseline data and endline data for all indicators.*

Additional data acquired at endline Survey

In addition to the questions relating to the PMF, three additional questions were asked to all **couples** (all 3 questions asked while husband and wife were together).

Question #1 Do they believe they are **doing better economically as a family than before the project?**

	<u>Group 5</u> (Forum+ Cooking classes) 20 couples	<u>Group 4</u> (Forum classes only) 20 couples	<u>Group 3</u> (Cooking classes only) 20 couples
Definitely positive change	14 couples (70%)	4 couples (20%)	8 couples (40%)
Some positive change	6 couples (30%)	16 couples (80%)	12 couples (60%)
No change	0	0	0

Discussion: This is interesting because:

- As the type of intervention changes, the [perceived] “definite economic” impact drops.
- Group 5 had twice as much time together as the other groups, as they came for both Forum and Cooking classes which were held separately. Additionally, they received 2 types of skills, Dialogue & cooking.

Q #2 What did you [two] spend your time talking about while traveling to and from the classes?

	<u>Group 5</u> (Forum+ Cooking classes) 20 couples	<u>Group 4</u> (Forum classes only) 20 couples	<u>Group 3</u> (Cooking classes only) 20 couples
Issues/decisions regarding our family/chores	8 couples (40%)	4 couples (20%)	15 couples (75%)
Issues/decisions regarding family finance	11 couples (55%)	16 couples (80%)	4 couples (20%)
Other	0	0	0

Q #3 Compared to your neighbours/community how have you come through the last year as a family, with covid & the drought, because of things you learned in the FIT project?

	<u>Group 5</u> (Forum+ Cooking classes) 20 couples	<u>Group 4</u> (Forum classes only) 20 couples	<u>Group 3</u> (Cooking classes only) 20 couples
Better	20 couples (100%)	20 couples (100%)	20 couples (100%)
Same	0	0	0
Worse	0	0	0

Analysis: These results are interesting because they show the positive impact (although not hypothesized/planned) that this project had beyond gender equity.

General discussion on results of the Approach to Gender Transformation in this testing program

Validity

One of the large concerns with any testing project, which depends on self reporting, is the validity of those self reports.

The second additional verification was a set of interviews with families of participants. (Annex 5) 59 adults M30/F29) -Uncles, Aunts, Grand parents, neighbor and 42 (20/22) children (under 20 yrs. old, living at home) were interviewed away from parents with the following unanimous general results from Group 5 & 4.

- Husbands in the HH were observed helping with various HH chores.
- Wives were observed both, being involved in other outside (the family) activities and working along side their husbands in a variety of task that formerly were gender specific.

As expected, the weakest Group was **Group 3 (Cooking only)** where about half of the family respondents said they had **not** seen very many of

- the woman participants in their family be able to engage in any new income generating projects.
- family respondents said they had not seen the man of the house be able to speak out on behalf of women and girls. (This is consistent with the self evaluation of the participants themselves.)

In spite of all these efforts on external validation of data, it is acknowledged that self report, in various guises can be manipulated. However, budget constraints did not allow us to go into every HH and verify all of the changes so we did what we could, including the Men can cook contest to watch the men in 2 out of three groups cook.

Unanticipated Outcomes

In addition to verification exercises with spouses, and family members, data was collected and verified by one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders. These were local government officials, as well as traditional leaders', chiefs and village heads. Some 35 leaders (25/10), in the 3 testing communities, were interviewed (Annex 5) about gender related activities they could be expected to have first hand knowledge of and without exception they affirmed the following two broad areas of *change* as a result of the program.

Empowerment/Development dividend

- Women are now allowed, and encouraged to participate on village committees and as well are appreciated by leaders when they do so.

Peace dividend

- GBV has decreased significantly as a result of the program
 - Cases that do happen are most often resolved at the family level by Gender Champions and /or participants. Formerly most cases ended up in court or with divorce, depression even suicide. Leaders (23) were not asked for actual numbers as this is politically sensitive, again phrased as “the same, somewhat less or a lot/significantly less. Decline of GBV was not a main focus of the test but a side benefit that we believed officials could comment on more freely than participants. Several children commented on the family being more peaceful as an unprompted description of the change in the family as a result of their parents being in the program.

- Men are now advocating on behalf of women in various situations

Economic Dividend

- All the Families participating in the Men can Cook, Gender equity program, found that in working on equity, it positively affected both their family's economic status as well as their general happiness and wellbeing as a family.

Most surprising unanticipated outcomes

The most surprising outcomes were from Group 3. Why would the “only cooking” group show relatively strong responses on social indicators like, advocacy, child & family care and asset sharing. We do not have a researched answer to this, but in discussions with gender specialist internal and external, our opening hypothesis is that at least in this case, cooking came to be seen as a passive act of advocacy. The sequence of factors are,

- By freeing up their wife to do other things, men were saying that other men should consider it as well.
- By observing the gender specialist and trainers dialogue and teach husbands and wives to interact together, there was a model of an alternative way of viewing women.
- By having the wife teach the husband in a controlled supportive atmosphere, there was learning on the part of women that they could teach and could model behaviour to men.
- By cooking at home, the men are opening up themselves to questions by the community which wants to know why he is doing this.

Putting this all together, and the fact that there is the trip of several hours where husbands and wives could talk, one can imagine the woman saying, “I appreciate your help on cooking. Are there other things you would be willing to assist with?” Thus, there is an interesting, unintended spill over effect of husbands being slowly drawn into more supportive behaviour and even advocacy on some levels.

Which is the most important, skills or communication, the ability to cook or deep discussions in the Forum. The answer is not unequivocally clear from this testing project. It is obvious that without the skills element, men would not be able to engage in one of the key tasks in the household. It is also fairly clear, based on recent years within the development world, that “men’s discussion groups”, on gender, have not produced transformative gender change in the home. However, it is clear that the combination of both, when both genders are involved, is the best way to cement in stronger, broader change inside and outside the family.

Long term value and implications.

1. Perhaps, the biggest long-term value is the fact that there are 258 children, (149M/109F) under 17 years of age, that belong to the 60 couples that undertook the intervention. Given that all the parents in all the groups felt they had come to a more positive understanding of masculinity/femininity, all were practicing new skills at home, the impact on future generations can not be minimized. Quoting, Lionel, the 13-year-old son of one couple in Gr. 5 “...after this discussion I had with my father, I appreciated my father’s efforts, taking time to explain all his previous life experience which brought more harm than good, to my mother and other females. This allowed me to figure out real life and I am now eager to support the new situation in my home, improve my life and that of my friends as well. I will assist my mother and sisters to do all domestic chores. When I grow up and marry, I will help my wife in everything.”

2. After verified **knowledge that change has happened**, perhaps the next question is *why has it happened?* A recent massive review/analyze of thousands of studies,¹ to learn what really helps people make a change, high lighted *3 elements that assist the most, in changing attitudes and beliefs, all of which are taught in the Men’s Forum in Gender from a cultural perspective.*
 - **Awareness**—Noticing what happens in the present moment: What thoughts show up? Which feelings? (Men’s Forum)
 - **Openness**—Allowing difficult thoughts and painful feelings – exactly as they are, without them necessarily having to change in any way or form before you can move ahead toward the kind of life you want to live. (Men’s Forum)
 - **Valued-Engagement**—Knowing what matters to you, and taking steps in this direction. It involves the goals you want to reach, these need to be freely chosen, rather than being forced on you by others. (Forum & Cooking skills)

3. Another element of the “why” question is perhaps *the orientation of husbands towards wives, and the time spent together by couples.* Traditionally, in this rural area, culturally, wives are regarded as *one more asset* by men. They are not taken on as partners, so men are by themselves, not often congregating with other men except at the bars. *This project has opened their eyes to the value of discussing ideas not only with their wives but with other men in a constructive way like the Forum.* Secondly, traditionally men spend very little time, actually with their wives, they eat at different times, work separately, and never discussed things etc. Now they have spent ten months together with their wife and children, going to training sessions, engaging in activities together, and traveling some distance together. This has set a pattern, and changed their thinking about the way they can view women, especially their wife and family. It has given them a partner they can enjoy and collaborate with, to improve *the wellbeing of their family, which is still one of the primary roles of men in this culture.*

4. At a meta level, one of the larger research organizations in the US² focusing on ways to *reverse global warming* has the following data on the impact of the two areas on which this project touches. This is worth further consideration by doners & implementers.

This infographic details the potential direct and indirect impact of fostering gender equity will have on global warming & other sectors.



Next, as all our participants are members of SCORE conservation agriculture program which has started a push on agroforestry, this shows potential impact that combining equity training with the primary livelihood of Zimbabwe going forward.

¹ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/get-out-your-mind/202208/the-most-important-skill-set-in-mental-health>

² Operation Drawdown
https://www.drawdown.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Drawdown%20Lift_Climate%20Poverty%20Connections%20FactSheet_March%202022.1.pdf



Replicability vs scalability – Many development activities, desire and can benefit from, processes which are *highly scalable* (automation/formulistic in one form or another). However, this formulistic approach, is *seldom* true for gender equity, family well being, or even sustainable communities, in a climate changing world. The reason is that cultural norms, knowledge bases as well as the *man made* and *natural environments* create *quite unique & different* challenges and opportunities. These combine to create the need for a different mind set and a different approach needed to produce change in any given cultural/geographic location. This has been supported by a very recent (2022) research study on Adaptive Collaboration³ which in part states “Adaptive Collaboration Management (ACM) or Participatory Action Research (PAR), are needed, approaches that recognize the systemic and dynamic nature of societies and environments. These qualities and their inevitable variation from place to place and time to time suggest that logically **we cannot use conventional experimental** scientific methods alone (seeking generalizability and replicability) as the overarching umbrella approach. These fly in the face of the variability on the ground. In fact, any approach that is embedded in reality is challenging to implement in large, complex socio-political landscapes.

There are also parallel situations within Canada among the First Nations people that could be worth following up. In *Refracted Economies: Diamond Mining and Social Reproduction in the North*, Rebecca Hall of Queen’s University, *spoke with Dene, Métis, Inuit and non-Indigenous women in the Northwest Territories about their experiences with the mines*. She says, “The women I spoke with shared concerns that inequalities in both caring labours and finances were shaping conditions for interpersonal violence, and making it more difficult for women to leave violent situations.”

The approach used here is highly replicable, but perhaps only globally scalable if it pays careful consideration to all the elements that make it replicable. So, *Men can Cook* could be scaled up easily, as is, in any Shona culture, however, one would need to work closely with transferring it to people of a different culture.

5.2 General feedback from Beneficiaries about progress

Because of the nature of the testing program, feed back from beneficiaries is already included in Testing results above. All claims by husbands were backed up in the same survey – separately, with wives and family.

³ Colfer, C.J.P., Prabhu, R., & Larson, A.M. (2021). *Adaptive Collaborative Management in Forest Landscapes: Villagers, Bureaucrats and Civil Society* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003197256> Ch. 10 p245

5.3 Risks Occurred or Anticipated and Mitigation Measures

The macro risks to the innovation were similar to those affecting all FIT projects worldwide, that being the combined simultaneous storms of the pandemic, climate change and the economic impact of the ongoing war in the Ukraine making 2022 a very difficult year for the communities in Mwenzezi as in other global communities.

At the *testing level*, the additional risk to the innovation was a climate of fear by men that speaking the truth about gender equity would shame them and they would lose status and respect from family and community.

The pandemic was addressed by a three-pronged approach of a) partnering with the ministry of health for logistical support and approvals, b) provision of the right equipment and c) intense care in all meetings.

The climate of fear was addressed by a separate three pronged approach which involved a) partnering with local leaders at all levels to assure and explain at the outset that there would be no shaming or recriminations b) Engaging trusted men and women chosen by the participants to act as champions to model and resolve any disputes that might arise and c) regular informal visits to the communities and households of participants by team Gender Specialist, where great care was always taken to address any concerns and never leave if any disputes were unresolved. Some of these points are expanded upon in the following section on lessons and iterations to the workplan.

5.4 Lessons, Pivots and Iterations to Testing Workplan

The significant changes to the initial work plan centered around **validation**, given the experience during the Baseline. In the first iteration of the baseline, it was apparent that misinformation had been given out by many of the men, about the high level to which gender equity supposedly was a norm in Shona culture. The value of locality by the team and the close relationship with local leadership was quickly evident as they both agreed that this was not so. A lot of time and effort was put in by the team in partnership with local leadership to discover why this misinformation had occurred by conducting community meetings. Following that, a validation exercise was conducted concerning aspects of the baseline that were incorrect with regard to Shona gender norms in the family. Going forward after that, the team invested heavily in consulting with the participants and local leadership as the testing progressed. This emphasis on locality and giving power to the participants when decisions were needed, was paid back with trust and high levels of participation even during these difficult times of pandemic and drought.

The main Pivots/Iterations from the original pilot and plan were:

1. Instead of men being taught how to cook by a local Home Economics (HEc) teacher, and then being sent home to practice, the wives asked that the teacher act as a facilitator but that the wives come to the meeting place and help the men learn all the steps involved in cooking a meal and then practice at home as they were willing.

However, the fact that the teachers remained as facilitators proved to be very important, as they have now become the focal point for participants to connect with. The parents send questions with their children to school for the teacher about cooking and other matters and so the unintended benefit has been to strengthen the connection of families to school and teacher. This will help with sustaining the momentum of family/community engagement after the program has ended.

A related element was that similar arrangements were made for wives to come to the Forum sessions and meet separately to work on the curriculum and respond to the men's feedback from the week before.

2. The "Ongoing Questions" technique, facilitated the ability to track behaviour change and also to validate information, given by men about their change in behaviour. The technique involves asking

the same set of 2 - 3 questions at each training session, to both men and women's groups over a period of two months. These are basically Y/N questions. By comparing the number of affirmative responses on the questions, we are able both to track change in behaviour as well as have a quick verification of validity of answers given by men.

3. The last major change was the addition of homestead visits by the two Gender Specialist (GS) during the alternate weeks when there were no sessions. There were several unexpected learnings from this practice.

a) The participants gave a lot of weight to the testing sessions because they were visited. No group had done this before, come to their home, asked their thoughts and listened. It was stated that this gave them increased motivation to attend and learn new skills.

b) It also gave participants more time and space to open up on matters that they would not normally do within groups.

c) It gave the GS opportunities and space to give technical advice based on what we were seeing in the home.

d) It allowed women to show how they were branching out into activities they had not done before (showing structures they have built to assist the farm, or men showing home gardens they have been hauling water for etc.)

e) From the program side, it allowed for the activities and forums to be *updated and adjusted based on information gained in the visits*.

f) *It added another validation point, as other family members and children would confirm the general family climate and new practices by the parents of cooperation and planning.*

Lessons learned and action taken.

The main lesson, *reinforced*, rather than learned, was the power of locality to fuel *organic* growth in transformational change in gender equity behaviour. Almost all, of the project changes/adjustments were brought forward by the participants with a few by the local team, as ways to improve the impact of attaining the ultimate goal of changed gender norms in the home.

The resulting changes underline the hypothesis that, *in order for transformation change to happen in the family, any engagement of men must involve simultaneous involvement and input from the women in their lives*. In this case this was demonstrated by the involvement of women in designing the curriculum of discussions and in the training of home skills, this automatically ensured that the content of discussions as well as the practice of skills went home. The husbands could not "hide" what they were discussing/learning and doing from their wives.

The additional positive, unanticipated impact of having wives at both the forums and the cooking components was that, for about six hours, (often two-four hours travelling and four in training) every other week (for group 5), husbands and wives are talking or cooking together and being exposed to a new way and tools to improve their relationship and their family. This repetition of gender considerations and a set-aside time, public with the group and then private on the walk home has really changed the way the couple interacts with each other. Building a positive pattern and leading to new habits of family interaction. As one participant put it, "it is hard to remain silent for three or four hours while traveling in a cart". Anecdotally, we have heard that this is a good time for parent-child bonding. This would not happen in the typical life of a family in this culture.

From a testing perspective, the main lesson learned was to continually verify the testing information using multiple sources, in order to have strong verifiable data/ information regarding normative gender behaviour change.

The withdrawal of one of foreign M&E person early on although hard in terms of the loss of training, opened up the project to be even more localized than before. It forced the team to

consider the local strength they had in their own team including the ED, the Program coordinator and the team GS. By giving more space and responsibility to the two team GS, who were already known for their agricultural expertise, they developed the village HH visitation program, which the participants really appreciated. Outside groups had never come into their homestead and followed up on a project and engaged the whole family in this way. Participants stated it was one of the main reasons they came to almost every meeting when it was called, even on short notice. Leading to extremely high participation rate by all groups. The other Zimbabwean, a part time GS brought in three times on site, as well as in virtual consultations help fill the gap, opened new insights into ways men could be involved with their wives/family constructively, in other types of projects beyond just cooking/HH. This event, the loss of one member, has come to be seen more of an adaptation than a pivot and a chance for learning by the team.

From an organizational perspective, having a local social enterprise take on many of the logistical aspects of the testing, allowed for specialist, both in the CBO and the Social enterprise, to do what they do best. This led to

- Reduced cost of materials
- Increased capacity and time for trainers
- Increased economic benefits to the community.

What would you have changed in your project now that it is completed, if you had to redo it?

- More inclusiveness in defining “couples” enrolled i.e., accept two widows, single mom/dad/relative with child, or any “couple” wanting to enroll despite make up of the couple.
- A little more time overall, mostly with time in the middle for more reflective work with th participants as to how they would like to arrange the last half of the trainings.
- More time in HH visits in the second half.

What advice would you give to other SMOs working in the same/similar field?

- To Canadian SMO’s – trust your partners more than you might normally, spend more time with them in the field and in their culture.
- Weekly or quite frequent leadership check-ins between N & S leadership for cultural learning & encouragement.
- Intentionally look for ways to learn from them and about their culture
- Look & offer ways to increase their capacity outside of just your project.

5.5 Gender Equality Strategy Implementation and Updates

*Our gender strategy was considered to be an approach to testing, testing whether it could transform gender norms in a positive fashion within the family. The goal is to **remove barriers to equity, through culturally based solutions, which the local community (M&F) assists in developing and testing.** The strategy was shown to be very successful, based on the final behaviours demonstrated by both men and women.*

Connecting GES to Baseline and issues raised.

Our Gender Strategy applied the following basic principals.

1. Honour the culture, **but allow questioning** of how it has been interpreted, especially from a gender perspective.
2. To achieve *transformative gender equity*, **both/all genders** should be supported *in ways and areas, that **they** (the participants) determine, will lead towards equity* in the sector being addressed.

3. Provide a **safe place for both men & women** to discuss the cultural norms and fears and advantages of changing those.
4. Provide skills **requested by participants** to move both genders towards equity.
5. Use Gender Champions from within the community to **model alternative positive gender norms, behaviours and skills**.

The issues identified in the Baseline survey were addressed by the GES in the following manner,

- 1) **Overarching GES to address all issues.** *Having local, known, & respected male & female gender specialist do everything together, from forums to cooking to HH visits. Never leaving a visit or activity if there was a disagreement or argument between genders until it was peacefully resolved. This is both a safety consideration and a teaching/modeling opportunity to use all or selected principles of the GES. This was shown to be extremely important.*
- 2) **Harmful and/or limiting views of gender norms held by both men and women, both as applied to themselves and to the opposite sex.**
 - a) *The GS used the Forum method, which included having the Forum decide who would be the Gender champions, M&F, (respected cultural referee) in each group it defused many arguments as culturally, one is bound to listen carefully to a respected chosen elder. (GS 1&5) thus removing major barriers.*
 - b) *Using HH visits to follow up on Forum discussions, to follow up on Forums, reinforced safety, allowed both genders to demonstrate skills (GS #4) and equity behaviours.*
- 3) **Behaviours associated with gender were extremely unequal in terms of work load** and the corresponding skills (cooking & constructive dialogue) as well as even the “sandbox” (kitchen or village committees) were taboo to the other sex, in order to preserve male privilege and control.
 - a) *Using drawings allowed both genders space to visualize, unfairness, harm as well as visualize alternatives. (GS#3)*
 - b) *Deliberately introducing and discussing cultural taboo’s in the Forum and home visits.*
- 4) **Behaviours and norms associated with gender largely precluded any improvement in the lives of women as they largely precluded any access to decision making**, in the family or community, and *men were precluded* from any advocacy on behalf of women.

Using traditional cultural language and ideas

 - a) *Allowed for non participant leaders, village & government to be involved in discussions and support the ideas of equity in a public way.*
 - b) *Allowed the inclusion of the cultural “spiritual ideas” to be openly discussed and shown to support equitable behaviours which in term contributed to a firmer acceptance by participants to these new norms. (GS#1,3,5)*

The above two strategies were perhaps the largest reasons that traditional barriers could be overcome.

- 5) **Gender norms precluded fifty percent of the population (women) from access to family assets and decision making.**

By having both men and women involved in every activity and by opening up the topics of assets and advocacy in the forums and in the homes, as well as having champions that

modelled the effectiveness of viewing wives as partners, it only took a relatively short time before couples started to see the impact of this approach on their family life both emotionally and economically.

Using this Gender Strategy, the testing community demonstrated that, in order to remove barriers to equity, *two important components* must be utilized. First, **both men and women have to be able to explicitly understand the cultural norms of gender and the effect they have on both genders.**

Secondly, **both genders need to learn new skills in order to address the shortcomings of the traditional approach.**

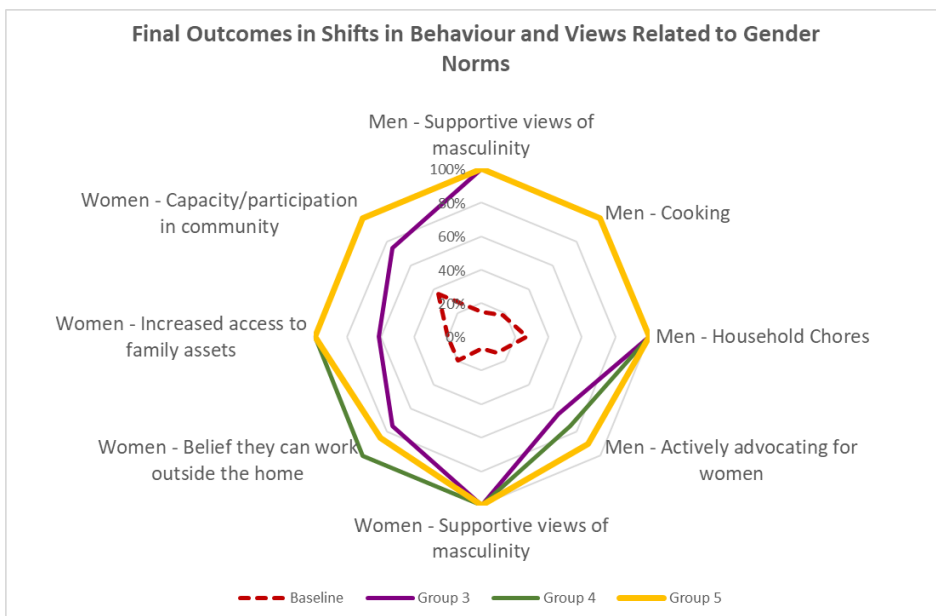
Why does this gender strategy work?

SCORE and the team inadvertently followed a successful & proven approach of a Framework called “*The Immunity to Change*”⁴ model or framework which emphasises a unique way of uncovering and addressing the underlying thoughts [norms] that are preventing change. Rather than addressing problem behaviors directly, Kegan and Lahey recommend identifying the “competing commitments” and “big assumptions” that are at the root of behaviors that are blocking you from moving forward on goals you desire but can’t seem to follow through on successfully and sustainably. *The SCORE gender strategy enables a safe and very culturally acceptable way to do this.* The frame work calls for the following steps:

1. Identify a goal
2. List all the behaviors that keep you from your goal
3. List your competing commitments
4. List your big assumptions
5. Test your assumptions in a safe way and implement the ones that work.

For Men can cook, the Forum was a safe way for the men (and women) to cover items 1 -4 and the home-visits and cooking classes were a way to cover 4 &5.

5.6 Connecting the data to the strategy.



What the data shows

When the principles of the strategy are applied in a culturally acceptable way with full engagement of both genders, along with sufficient time for couples to learn and talk together, then transformative change can happen in a relatively short period of time.

In general terms it appears likely that the principles of this approach, especially, #2 would be a beneficial to almost any community project to improve participation rates, gender equity and

⁴ □ Publisher : Harvard Business Review Press; 1st edition (January 13, 2009)

sustainability. One should refer to the discussion on replicability/scalability on p12 for more definitive thoughts.

Connecting components of the program to the Gender Strategy

With regard to understanding norms and their effects, a component entitled Men's Forum on Gender (MfG) was developed. It means having a safe place for men to discuss what it means to be a man. Traditionally, *a Shona man is defined by the behaviours they can and cannot do*. These are cultural norms that have been taught from birth. The same is true of women.

Local Gender Champions (M&F) lead by example and use traditional respectful dialogue skills combined with fun group skill learning activities like learning to cook, to show alternative ways of considering what it can mean to be a Shona man/woman. When this occurs, norms and attitudes can change quickly. As respected leaders, the role of these men and women is to help, both as examples of what can be done culturally, *and* to mediate any disagreements that may arise between couples, between sessions, or even with non-participants in their community. The champions have been called on in this testing period far less than in the pilot project, for outside mediation. According to participants, this is attributed to the fact of their presence and participation in all the forum discussions.

When men see other men role models discussing difficult issues like bride price, cattle and land joint registration, as well as the benefits to themselves and their family, they find it much easier to adopt alternative positive norms. In the same way, when women are involved by participating in both forum groups and in the cooking training they are assisted, both by skilled female gender specialists and by female gender champions, to understand what their husbands are trying to say and do and how they, as wives, can facilitate more skills and dialogue in the home. The local women champions assist women struggling with changes in the home, especially giving up sole control of the [very small] domain that has been theirs, the kitchen. Discussions show what a new partnership with their husbands can look like, demonstrating the benefits of trading some control of the kitchen for enlarged participation by husbands, more spare time, and more discussions of mutual interest. All of this is modelling constructive leadership, dialogue/discussion and even soft advocacy skills that are useful also in the community.

These components, combined, address key causes of the gap between what women would like to change and what men are willing to change. *The gap being that neither men nor women, prior to the testing, had the skills/tools (see below) or confidence to engage in discussions without provoking anger or violence. In addition, men did not have the skills or understanding to help at home.*

By engaging the wives in the cooking component, the strategy is turning cooking lessons into a **fun**, family-oriented time, and encourages men to participate in the testing/training. Wives & daughters would not have considered teaching the men in their lives, in household and family-related skills. Now, because of the joint cooking classes, men are more comfortable integrating their newfound skills into daily family life. In fact, as verified in family visits, they are encouraging their sons to learn the behaviour skills with them.

Part of the gender strategy is to let the community design as much of the testing as possible. Listening to and implementing the desire of wives *to directly participate* in the cooking component, thus eliminating the need for separate classes or visits to assist them in how to teach their husbands the skills around various household (HH) chores. Likewise, by implementing their desire to participate in the Forum discussions, it provided extra verification of what the husbands said they were doing at home, as part of their positive behaviour change.

Lastly, part of the Gender Strategy is to ensure that the practical needs and strategic interests of both women and men are considered at all stages of the innovation. In this testing process as part

of a gender lens when programming, it means consideration of children, including childcare during programming.

The other population of women who **benefited from the skills component** in the testing project were the women on the SCORE team. *More technical skills will provide more options (Activities 3.1.4, 5&.6).* Addressing the fact that family obligations often limit women staff ability to leave home for training, this testing project brings a small amount of equity by hiring role model(s), professional woman to guide and advise on project testing tools and curriculum design using WhatsApp and Zoom in ongoing, one-on-one training. These training sessions centered on data design, collection, entry, analysis and validation. Collaboratively sessions with SCORE staff on developing evaluation and curriculum tools were also part of this training.

5.6 Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

During the early days of the project, a PSEA document including Policy and Practice was drawn up by SCORE, in compliance with GAC requirements. It has been shared with the team and a poster put up in each office outlining that any type of sexual harassment or abuse is not allowed within the organization or any of its projects and ways to report it if it is known or suspected. Two organization-wide sessions were held while the SMRUC coordinator was there to explain the reasons, intent and consequences should any incidents occur or be suspected.

There were no complaints, formal or informal, of any cases of sexual exploitation, harassment or abuse incidences.

5.7 Environment Management Plan (if applicable) N/A

Not Applicable

6. Capacity Building Needs from FIT

- Accessed capacity building opportunities etc. from FIT? *Used and checked in on Slack, it was moderately useful for connecting with other team members. Rebecca consistently posted good leads & info.*
- Gain any knowledge through FIT capacity building? *There were some useful tools/charts.*
- Integrated FIT capacity building into practice? *Mostly to pass on to partner organization.*
- Was the engagement with the Slack Community of Practice useful? *Yes, in understanding what others were doing. Applied any shared knowledge to enhance your testing. No*

7. Sustainable Exit Strategy

SMRUC has, from the beginning, supported the philosophy which SCORE advanced as how SCORE would like to operate, that being the emphasis and approach of locality. Therefore, SMRUC has been in the role of a supporting partner. The initiation, planning and execution has been directed by SCORE. Their consistent approach to all projects, including this testing, of listening to the participants and integrating those ideas into projects will support the sustainability of the principals of transformative gender relations in the family. This was supported by SCORE being present and presenting information at the two, hour long meetings we had with the Ambassador at the High Commission in Harare. Good connections were made with the project staff at the embassy with regard to Embassy funds & other upcoming Cdn grants.

This was demonstrated above with regard to the wives participation, the involvement of teachers and the support from stakeholders.

Further, based on the trust gained by SCORE, the team was able to have a public dialogue with the chiefs and village heads at the wrap up activity with all the Gr. 5 participants present. The

dialogue was with regard to the ancestral support of the new behaviours and norms learned with regard to equity. When asked “What do you think those [elders] who have gone ahead are thinking about these changes in the behaviour of men in the family? The village heads/elders said” They are happy with this, otherwise we would not have been able to come to these meetings this year, they would have prevented it.” This public affirmation of the spiritual elders’ support will definitely lead to more consideration of equity in the community and contribute to the sustainability of the behaviour.

This has been verified by the continuing engagement and application of similar lessons learned by participants in the pilot program from 3 years ago whose members are still advocating and practicing similar behaviour. One village has been completely reorganized by a former participant into caring groups with widows and single woman headed households intentionally included in each group. In another village a widow from the pilot project has trained over 40 men in her village how to cook and become better husbands. In fact, several of the SCORE board members (M&F) are former McC participants from that pilot program. The few physical assets (printer, computers etc.) have been turned over to SCORE.

8. Financial Narrative

Narrative for any variance between the forecasted and actual financial expenditures budget. Include the approved budget with actuals in Annex 2

The financial aspect of the program has progressed broadly on target with some revisions requested and accepted during the course of the testing program.

Please note:

- Receipts & bank statements are uploaded to FIT in monthly batches along with Finance report to that date. (i.e., an FR would be November to January but Receipts etc. would be only January in that folder.
- Section 1 – Staff salaries some overage due to decline in value of CDN to US exchange rate.
- Section 2 – Local subcontractor line not utilized fully due to other volunteer Gender Specialist input.
- Section 3.1 – Travel line over budget due to bringing in SCORE Executive Director to augment some of areas that would have been covered by Canadian subcontractor who withdrew and to help support SCORE in last two weeks of reporting when other Donors were also arriving on site for other projects. His connections and knowledge were invaluable in the highly unpredictable environment of Zimbabwe. In addition, a SMRUC professional Change Management volunteer paid her own airfare out to help with the analysis and presentation of findings in the final report. Most of her “in country” expenses were covered here. Also, a promised 4WD vehicle did not materialize greatly impacting this line as it was necessary to rent locally whenever monitoring visits were carried out.

Section 3.2 Conference line was not used as it had to be canceled due to many potential attendees having a conflict with that date. Funds partially utilized to share results with three participants groups and stakeholders in their locality.

- Section 3.7 this line was over spent as a 4WD vehicle that was promised by another doner early on, failed to materialize thus putting a heavier wear and tear on leased motorbikes and which then needed to be returned in good condition with spares used from supplier during the year. In addition, this failure of the donation necessitated renting local transport for a variety of task.

- Section 4.5 PPE/Covid – Fortunately, Covid dropped down quickly after spiking and therefore less PPE was needed.
- Section 6 – There were various pivots and changes to the “classes/sessions”, both Men Forum and cooking, which enabled us to decrease the expenses while increasing the efficiency and efficacy of the classes. Based on the Gender Strategy and localization philosophy/approach, these changes were suggested by the participants to decrease the amount and time involved in travel/attending the sessions.
- Section 6.7 – A large increase due to government regulations concerning the % charged on every USD withdrawal from 2% to 4% around mid project.

9. Annexes

Note:

Performance Measurement Framework

Uploaded separately, the Updated performance measures with progress to November 30, 2022.

Updated Finance Report and files to November 30, 2022.

Budget with Forecasted vs Actuals Expenditures, includes any variance uploaded separately.

Annex 1 – Performance Measurement Framework (or other measurement framework) with progress to date uploaded separately.

Annex 2 – Budget with Forecasted vs Actuals Expenditures, includes any variance.

Annex 3 – Disposal of Assets Form - uploaded separately.

Annex 4 – Communications – Stories of Change.

Annex 5 – Demographic Data on Interviews with Officials and Family

Annex 1 - 3 Uploaded separately

Annex 4 – Communications – Stories of Change.

The transformation of Jairos Wachi

1. What is the main point the story intends to make or illustrate?

As he talked about his enjoyment when his children come to him and ask him to cook their favorite food and then hung out helping and talking with him while he cooked, or listening to Jairos discuss the fact that his wife has real skills, that he does not have, and that this has made a big economic difference in their family, it is difficult to imagine that this is the same man that was known in the community as a domestic violence perpetrator. A man known to regard & treat his wife basically as a slave, because he had “bought her” with the bride price [Labola]. It was fascinating to hear from him, how the different pieces of the project prompted transformative change in his world view, when it comes to gender equity in a marriage, changes the staff and community saw over the course of the testing project.

2. Baseline situation What was the situation before the innovation was introduced in their lives?

Jairos was working quite a distance from home, in a different province, where he engaged in illegal gold panning. His wife, Chiedza, stayed in their home here in Mwenezi, due to persistent eruption of domestic violence in the household when they were together. Jairos would maintain that his wife was useless, could not think or use resources well, including money. Early in the project, when we visited their home, he indicated that he never leaves money to his wife saying that she wastes the money. He said, “I used to send money from mining, but she has done nothing with the money”.

When in fact he sent so little she could barely survive. The oldest son told us that their father had abandoned them. "We had poor education as our father does not take care of us". "The houses and poor structures at their homestead is a result of poor relationships between our parents who do not plan together and pool money in the same direction." Wachi, in justifying his position said, "I paid for this wife in form of lobola so she has to submit to me and receive what I hand over to her". What I do not want, I will not do. In retaliation to the husband's behavior, the wife became harsh, adamant and resistant to instruction from husband. They live a difficult life that would normally end in quarrelling, conflicting and fighting. At which point he would go drinking with other men that also shared his view of life in general and the worthlessness of women in particular.

3. What was their experience with the innovation testing activities?

After Chiedza was selected and attended the first meeting it opened her mind to possibilities, she returned home to challenge her husband to come. According to Chiedza, she told his husband that the greatest project benefit comes to men.

Jairos' first meeting was on discussing about sharing roles and duties in the home. He was against most of the things that were discussed. He was against sharing duties because it was inherited from our forefathers, thus reversing it will be a betrayal of our tradition. According to him the duties his wife performs were paid for through lobola. Jairos stood away from the cooking teams very unwilling to cook. Neither did he fetch some water nor firewood. When coming for the training sessions, he and his wife would arrive at different times or one would absent him or herself on particular days. Gradually, however as the meetings continued and he heard how other men (Gender Champions of his community) were living with their families. He started seriously considering how he thought about his wife.

On the day the Men's Forum discussed Access, Ownership and Control of family resources, he began to slowly understand why it was important to practice both cooking and participate in forum discussions. Then, a weeks later, he almost lost all the gains in attitude he had acquired. The Forum discussed "Conflicts and Gender Based Violence" in the household. This coincided with a week that Jairos had a heated dispute on resource use and control with his wife. Chiedza sold her groundnuts and wanted to buy a phone whilst Jairos, who was slowly changing (but the wife had not realized) proposed buying a scotch cart. Chiedza argued that Jairos only wanted to buy resources that men controlled, whilst she still did not have her personal phone. The dispute erupted into violence with the elder son supported and defended his mother, ganging up against his father. Jairos was brave to phone the gender specialists, saying that he no longer wanted to continue with the program because in trying to implement it, it has now given him problems. He was encouraged to be patient and promised that the community gender champions, which he and his wife had voted into that job, would assist in resolving the matter peacefully and get the matter addressed. When gender researchers and champions did a follow up on the matter, Jairos indicated that his wife was not understanding his point. He said, "Following what we have learnt from FIT, I have realized the value of sharing duties, so I am of the view that if we buy a scotch cart, we will use it to do tasks like fetching water and firewood, as I help my wife". However, Chiedza had thought the cart was a way of taking away her money. Utilizing the skills learned in the Forum, the community champions were able to remind the couple of the value of communication in the home. That this type of communication includes discussing why they were desiring to do something, and making sure the other partner understood and were in agreement before taking action. Both sides realized they had not done this and the dispute was resolved.

4. Results How did the innovation impact the life of the beneficiary?

Soon after this there was a function in the ward where the Gender Specialists saw Jairos cooking and serving food together with another man in his group, Hosea Mpofu. Jairos approached us

confidently to share that the project had gone a long way in changing his life. “Guys, honestly this project is a game changer in my life. I have witnessed many good things that never happened with me before. I am now very close to my children and I appreciate how my wife holds me to goals that we jointly have made and agree on.” “I used to be very harsh. People including the police know that I was harsh. People in the community were very afraid even to meet me on the road, especially women”. Now they are accepting me and I am helping in community events like this one. That conflict over the scotch cart has “helped me experience the process of transformation”, adding “I am happy that I am learning many things from this program.” I realize that much of my problem came from the limited world I hung out with, the only friends I had were men who enjoyed drinking and used fear to bully people to do what they wanted. So that’s what I thought real men did. The forum exposed me to an alternate way of looking at the family, a new group of friends, a group of men from my community that were doing well and had the respect of their wives, families and neighbors through thoughtfulness and sharing. I was given a shirt at the cooking completion today that says, “Men can Cook” on the front and “Walking together [with the wife] on the road called respect.” I am going to drop in on my old group on Monday, wearing this shirt and see if I can get them to start thinking about this.

Jairos Wachi’s story as told to Gender Specialist Paenda Obert & Caroline Pugeni following the 2022 Men can Cook testing program.

#2

FIT STORIES FOR THE TESTING PROGRAM

A teenager that can comment on the family dynamics over time

TITLE - WE WERE ALL SOMEONE ELSE YESTERDAY

Name of story teller- A family effort – by Lionel Irvine Chakauya (13) aided by

Father- Mirirai Chakauya-43 years. **Mother-**Zvinatsei Ndlovu-31 years. - FIT group 5

Area-Alpha Joy -

Demographics

Lionel, a very serious grade 7 boy (13) is the oldest of 4 siblings. Next is his sister Define (10), followed by sister, Aplonia, (8) and Notice, an infant brother (2).

Part 1 Why go to FIT training,

Lionel was complaining to his mother, “Father says, the secret to success is determined by your daily agenda, so why do you waste your time traveling such a long way (4 hr walk RT) to and from Alpha Joy only to be taught about gender and gender roles? At your age don’t you know anything about those topics? Why do you waste your time learning such simple things that will never apply in your life. Why choose to waste time which you will never recover. You should use your time for other fruitful tasks and events here at home”. Hearing the conversation, his father, Mirirai, invited his son to have a talk. He started by saying “Our fathers used to live in clans where people with common beliefs lived together and had guidelines for their day to day lives. The guidelines

included a division of household tasks, as well as who should own certain things, and who was in charge of what. These guidelines assigned lots and lots of work and responsibility on women. Luckily, the SCORE FIT program came to train us on another way to look at gender issues. By meeting together, we can now decide what parts of the traditional guidelines are unfair and harmful to our family. We have learnt that we should include women in planning so that we can hear their views.” After explaining all this to his son, Chakauya asked him, do you still have any question or anything before I continue? Lionel said “my friends laugh and scorn me saying your mother and father always leave work at home and go to Alpha Joy for juice and sadza. Don’t you have sadza at home?” His father softly told him, “What I want you to remember is that, a successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the stones others throw at him. Your friends are throwing stones at you, be sure to take those stones and build your firm foundation. Great things in business are never done by a person; they are done by a team. That’s why you see me and your mom regularly going to Alpha Joy. I and your mother go to FIT training because that’s where we meet other couples and we are trained by experts on life issues and we as participants share experiences. Then we come home and try new things each day, and we are successful because we have ample time to discuss issues that uplift our family as we travel back and forth from the FIT training sessions.”

PART TWO – The past

Mirirai went on speaking telling his son that, he used to cling to his traditional guidelines where all domestic work was put on his wife. “I used to give your mother endless list of tasks, Those tasks didn’t even include looking after you children or cooking, fetching water and firewood. Your mother was so tired that she would sometimes sleep without bathing herself. She used to wake up very early whilst I was asleep, prepare food, and warm water for you children to bath and go to school. Then she would strap your sister Aplonia on her back and go to the fields to weed our crops. She would be happy if the girl slept while suckling and she would lay her down and weed vigorously to hit the target in order to please me, as her husband. I would find her, around 10 or 11 o’clock and tell her ‘I am hungry I want food’. If she complained, I shouted insults at her saying I bought you (paid bride price) so that you can cook for me, bear me children and do all things I ask you to do, now leave what you are doing now, go home and cook for me, and please prepare water for me to bath I want to go and have some time with my friends.

After my departure, she would go back to do the weeding until late afternoon. Then she would return home to welcome you from school and prepare supper for the whole family. She would collect firewood on her way home, then go to the borehole to fetch water for cooking and washing up. She would make fire and start preparing supper. Lionel sat listening attentively to his father

and started crying but Mirirai said “*don’t cry it is OK. This Score and FIT program, to me is like the Angel of the Lord, who spoke to Moses from a burning bush on Mount Horeb. I am now a new person because of the FIT program. I have tried to explain my life experience to you, my son. Tell me my son, whether you prefer the old me or the new me.*”

Part 3 – WHAT IS a Woman - What was their experience (over time) with the innovation testing activities?

Mirirai continued, trying to explain why he had behaved this way to his wife, Zvinatsei. “*As a boy, I grew up being trained to be bold like a man. One day my uncle gave me very clear instructions and guidelines on how to regard women, ‘you should not seat or warm yourself with fire in the kitchen. All things done in the kitchen are associated with female. Men are different from women. Men should be brave, should do masculine tasks like digging anthills and cattle manure whilst women carry it and spread into the fields. Men should never associate with women because they will be said to be weak and if married never allow your wife into decision making because she is not your relative, you are unrelated. One day she may be a spy. Your family issues are confidential and are for you only’.*”

“So, Mirirai continued, “*from the time my father shared this information, I worked to live like a good Shona boy and desist from associating with female since it was against our culture, according to my uncle. I did not associate with my sisters or even my mother.*”

Lionel, now starts to explain to Alice, the Gender Specialist from SCORE/FIT, “*after this discussion I had with my father, I appreciated my father’s efforts, taking time to explain all his previous life experience which brought more harm than good, to my mother and other females. This allowed me to figure out real life and I am now eager to support the new situation in my home, improve my life and that of my friends as well. I wish if my friends’ families could get such valuable information which will help them transform their lives and those that stay with them. I will assist my mother and sisters to do all domestic chores. When I grow up and marry, I will help my wife in everything.*”

Continued next page

How did the innovation impact the life of the beneficiary?

Life in our family

I and my father can now cook, do with my mother, fetch water and sit discuss burning issues that relate to enough, my uncle and my alive and we sometimes go to visit them firewood, water and sometimes asked where we got this expertise



the weeding in the fields together in the kitchen to family wellness. Luckily grandmother are still them. We also bring cook for them. They and we told them that it's the FIT program which

engages our culture and our community to change harmful gender



guidelines, Dad uses a new word “norms”, and attitudes. *“ I think those old ideas are like germs, slowly engulfing our true culture and robbing women of their time to do other things like socializing with friends and resting. Now, my mom can rest whilst my father cooks or bath my young brother, my father is excellent at caring for us children and spends a lot of his time with my baby brother, Notice. He now draws pictures to illustrate and convey messages to school children and our friend as well as neighbors. We a really happy with the program since it is transforming our lives, too bad it as a short life span but it has had a great impact.”*

Annex 5

GENDER MAKE UP AND NUMBER OF LEADERS IN BOTH GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY LEADERS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND CHILDREN INTERVIEWED

TARGET ROUP	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Government Workers			
1.Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development-Ward coordinators and District head	03	04	07
2. President’s Office	02	0	02
3.Ministry of Education-Teachers	03	03	06
4.Ministry Of Health and Child Care-Nutritionists	02	01	03
5.AGRITEX officers	03	01	04
Total	13	8	21
Community leaders			
1.Village heads	07	02	09
2.Chief Representatives	02	0	02
3.Councillors	03	0	03
Total	12	2	14
Family Members			
Adults	30	29	59
Children	20	22	42
Totals	50	51	101

Compiled by Alice and Paenda (12December 2022)