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| Title | **Boys and Girls: Dos and Don’ts** |
| Objective | * Participants become aware of how boys and girls learn to become men and women * Participants understand that social rules for boys and girls change over time * Participants reflect on their own lives and how they grew up * Participants reflect on how society reinforces gender norms |
| Target audience | Men and women in the community |
| Group size | 20 |
| Estimated time | 70 minutes |
| Materials | Blackboard or flip chart |
| Printouts/  downloadable resources | * [Cartoon: A boy and a girl from school](https://www.threemountains.academy/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/a-boy-and-a-girl-from-school-vertical-small-1.jpg) * [Cartoon: The hen does not crow in the presence of a rooster](https://www.threemountains.academy/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hen-does-not-crow-medium.jpg) * [Hand-out with questions](https://www.threemountains.academy/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Hand-out-questions-Boys-and-Girls-Dos-and-Donts.docx) |
| Source | Adapted from *Towards Gender Equality in Your Organisation*, SNV Botswana |

**1. Steps:**

Small group work (15 minutes)

* Divide the group into smaller, single-sex groups.
* Ask the group to consider answers to the following questions (see handout):
  + What are girls encouraged to do and what are boys encouraged to do?
  + What are girls discouraged from doing and what are boys discouraged from doing?
  + Can you give examples of girls or boys who have gone against the gender rules set out by society? What happened?

Whole group work (20 minutes)

* Call the groups back together.
* Divide the board in two. Put the column heading ‘Boys’ on one side and ‘Girls’ on the other.
* Ask each group to share their answers to the questions and write key words from their answers on the blackboard. You could also make small drawings instead, to help participants who cannot read.

Questions to help guide discussion:

* What do we learn from these two lists?
* Who made these rules and why do they continue to persist?
* Do these rules restrict women or men in any way? If so, how?
* Do these rules change over time? Are there examples from the past that are not applicable today?

Pair work (10 minutes)

* Ask each participant to turn to their neighbour. You might choose to pair people of the same sex up, or pair men and women, depending on the level of comfort in the group. Mixed pairs helps to give men and women an understanding of each other’s perspective.
* Ask each pair to tell one another about their memories growing up. How did they learn to become a man or a woman, what lessons did they receive and from whom?

Questions to help guide discussion:

* Are there things your fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts said to you growing up which made you think you should behave in a certain way?
* Were there things about being a man or a woman that you really liked growing up?
* Were there things about being a man or a woman that you really disliked growing up?
* What messages did you receive from the church or popular media (television/radio/newspapers) about how to be a man or a woman?
* What messages did you receive at school?
* Were there any stories, songs, jokes or proverbs you remember that related to becoming a man or a woman? For example, the proverb: *Nta nkokokazi ibika isake ihari* / the hen does not crow in the presence of the rooster.

Whole group work (25 minutes)

* Ask a few pairs to share brief examples with the whole group.
* Finish with a group discussion on the following questions:
  + Which gender norms should we keep?
  + Which gender norms should we do away with?
  + How do you want to raise your own children?

**2. Key message:**

How boys and girls behave is learned growing up. Rules on how to be a good boy or a good girl change over time. Society plays a big role in how gender stereotypes are reinforced and challenged. If you are more aware of how this happens, you can make different choices for your own children.

**3. Notes for facilitators**

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| Gender socialisation is the process by which we learn social expectations associated with sex.  From birth, we socialise girls and boys differently.  In Rwandan culture, girls are taught to be passive, submissive, homely and quiet. They are taught to be good hosts and to undertake activities within the household, such as cooking and cleaning. At the same time, Rwanda is proud to host the highest number of female parliamentarians in the world, and to exercise advanced gender laws. Many agree that a lot remains to be improved for women in rural areas.  On the other hand, boys are taught to be tough, to be protective of their sisters, and to do chores that require more physical strength, such as fetching water or chopping firewood.    Girls are taught to be like their mothers, while boys are taught to be like their fathers.  These behavioural rules are not written down, but they are still unconsciously learnt. Often, you only become aware of these rules when someone challenges them or when you see someone behaving differently.  Read more on [Gender Stereotypes and the Socialisation Process](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/EP3-Marinova.pdf). |

On the website

**Boys and Girls: Dos and Dont’s**

From birth, girls are taught to behave like the ideal woman while boys are taught to act like men. Certain tasks are assigned to girls, whilst others are given to boys. Messages about how boys or girls should behave also come from schools, churches and the media. The expectation of what is right for boys and what is right for girls can change over time. In this exercise, participants reflect on how society reinforces gender norms and how these norms affected their own lives growing up. It also encourages them to think about what they want for their children.