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| Title | **Gender Socialisation** |
| Objective | * Understand how gender socialisation contributes to gender discrimination |
| Target audience | Community members |
| Group size | 20–25 mixed male/female participants |
| Estimated time | 1h |
| Materials | Flip chart, marker, pens and notebooks |
| Printouts/downloadable resources | Two cartoons:  [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)  [Gifts for a boy and girls](https://www.threemountains.academy/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/boys-and-girls-playing-small.jpg) |
| Source | Adapted from the [Make it Work Campaign](http://www.makeitworkcampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Gender-Box.pdf) |

* + - 1. **Steps:**

Introduction (5 minutes)

* Introduce the topic by explaining that ‘socialisation’ means the process of how we learn gender roles, and show the two cartoons.

Whole group work (50 minutes)

* Ask participants what they see when they look at the first cartoon, and how they interpret it.
* Ask them to make a list of what society thinks is, and is not, acceptable for boys and girls to do, then ask why.
* Next, show the second cartoon to the group, and ask:
* Do we give different toys to boys and girls? If yes, why?
* What are we teaching boys and girls about their roles in society with these toys?
* Lead the group in a discussion using the following questions.

**2. Questions to help guide discussion:**

* Was there ever a time in childhood where you were told not to do something, or not to behave in a certain way, because you were a boy or a girl?
* Was there ever a time when you were told to do something because you were a boy or a girl?
* Were these experiences positive or negative to you at the time?
* Why do you think boys and girls are socialised differently?

**3. Key message**:

The main message of this exercise is to explore the idea that gender socialisation is learned and that it can be changed or unlearned to avoid gender discrimination.

**4. Notes for facilitators**

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| Gender socialisation is the process of learning the social expectations associated with your sex.  From birth, we socialise girls and boys differently. In Rwandan culture, girls are taught to be passive, submissive, homely and quiet. They are also taught to be good hosts, and to undertake activities within the household, such as cooking and cleaning.  Boys, on the other hand, 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.  Children also learn behaviour from their parents. Girls are taught to be like their mothers, while boys are taught to be like their fathers.  Through this socialisation process, girls and boys are constantly told how to behave like an ideal woman or an ideal man. However, this is not always a pleasant experience because girls and boys are prevented from doing what they want to do as individuals.  We start training our children from an early age to behave in certain ways. This can often lead to gender discrimination surrounding a child’s abilities, activities and responsibilities. We assign certain tasks to girls and other tasks to boys, which perpetuates stereotypes.  If you remember a time when you were prevented from doing something you didn’t want to do, or asked to behave in a way you didn’t enjoy, how might you avoid creating a similar experience for your own children?  We need to reflect on this process and challenge it wherever possible. Any behaviour that is learned can be unlearned. Boys and girls can both achieve anything.  Read more in [Gender Stereotypes and the Socialization Process](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/EP3-Marinova.pdf) |