

# Gender workshop methodology



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Gender is a concept that has become “trendy” in recent years. One reads about it everywhere. Everyone is talking about it. And yet, many people don’t realize that the concept of gender, while maybe not discussed as a concept, has existed for centuries. Men and women all around the world are assigned different tasks by society. These ascribed tasks are passed on from generation to generation, with only minute changes. It is exactly these minor modifications that have made the concept of gender so fascinating to many members of our current society; traditionally female and male roles are being reevaluated in order to achieve more equality between men and women. But equality is not the only effect of the adjustment of tasks. Communities that integrate women in the day-to-day business can work more efficiently. Therefore, it is the goal of the gender workshops HRNS has established in various countries to increase the communication and cooperation within the family.

In the district of Ocotepeque, Honduras the gender workshops take a different approach than in some other countries. Instead of attending the workshops as couples, men and women go to several separate workshops. So-called “**leadership workshops**” establish a stronger sense of self in women. Furthermore, the women become more self-confident by expressing character traits they value about each other and by presenting their thoughts to the group. It is essential that women in these communities realize that the work they carry out on an everyday basis is significant to their family and the community; without the woman, the household and town would not be able to function.



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In “**masculinity workshops**” men evaluate what it means to be a male in their community, what tasks they carry responsibility for, and what roles their wives and daughters should take on. In the end, participants realize that tasks may not be divided evenly and that their family could work more efficiently if there was more equality between husband and wife. After both men and women go through several masculinity and leadership workshops, they participate in a “family workshop” together to join their newly acquired knowledge and discuss how it can be integrated into their daily routines to improve family productivity and efficiency.

To this day, members in several different communities have been able to attend the first two masculinity and leadership workshops respectively. The workshops are greatly appreciated by both, men and women, and are typically well attended. The communities are about to go into the third round of workshops!



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