



**AIRBEL  
CENTER**

DESIGNING & TESTING SOLUTIONS IN CRISES

# Becoming One: Pilot Insights

December 13, 2017

***“It's like there was a scan to get what was most meaningful and needed for the generation.”***

**Christopher, Faith Leader**







# Project Goal

Through iterative and  
participatory methods

Broadly defined

Develop and test interventions that have a  
meaningful and sustainable reduction in IPV.

Most helpful to the  
individual female  
survivor

Change in behavior (in  
male or female) stays  
after intervention  
stops

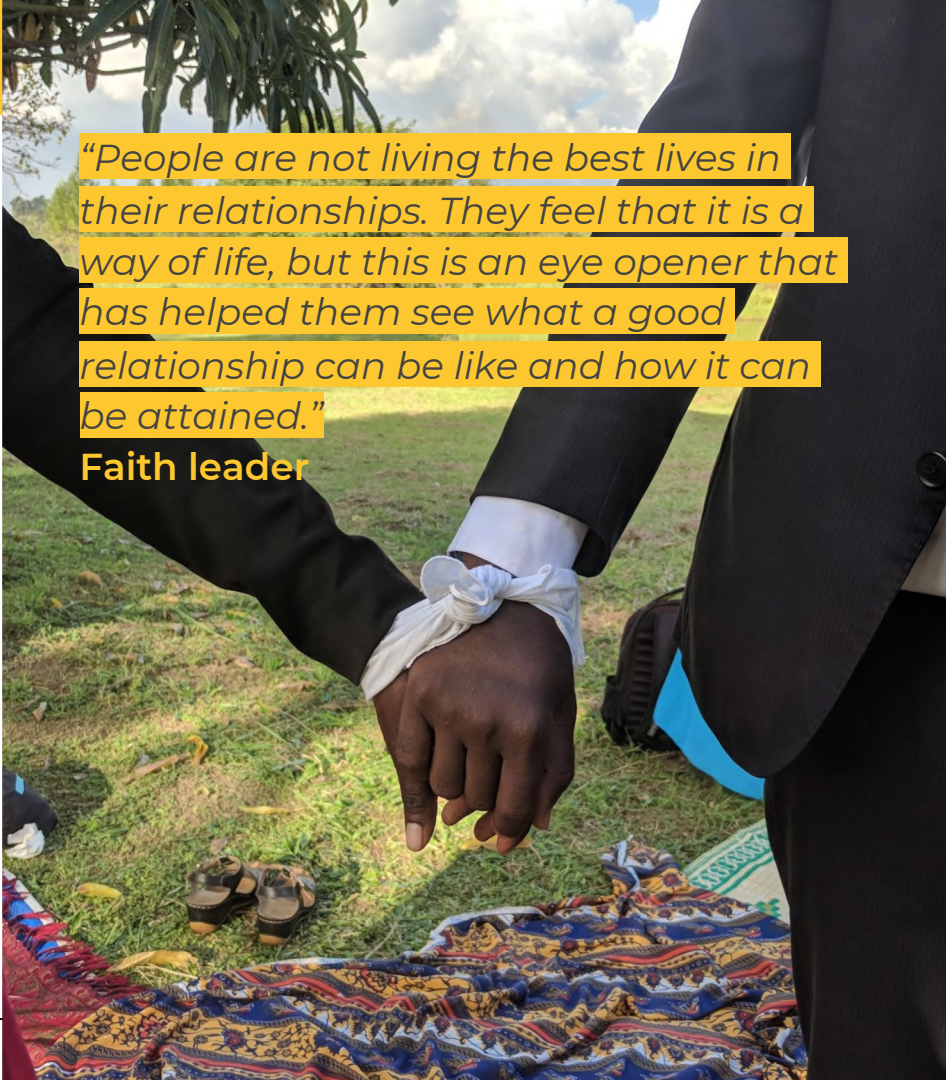
Large drop  
in IPV  
instances

Sexual, emotional,  
physical and  
financial violence

# Healthy Skepticism

We consistently heard about behavior change across nearly all of our skill based goals. We challenged ourselves to understand how this positive feedback might be skewed.

- People are overly positive
- In reporting, people overly estimate the changes they will make in the future
- Relevant information is scarce, so good information is powerful.
- Consistent change that lasts far beyond the program may not happen
- Researchers developed relationships with many users and there was a personal incentive to share good news

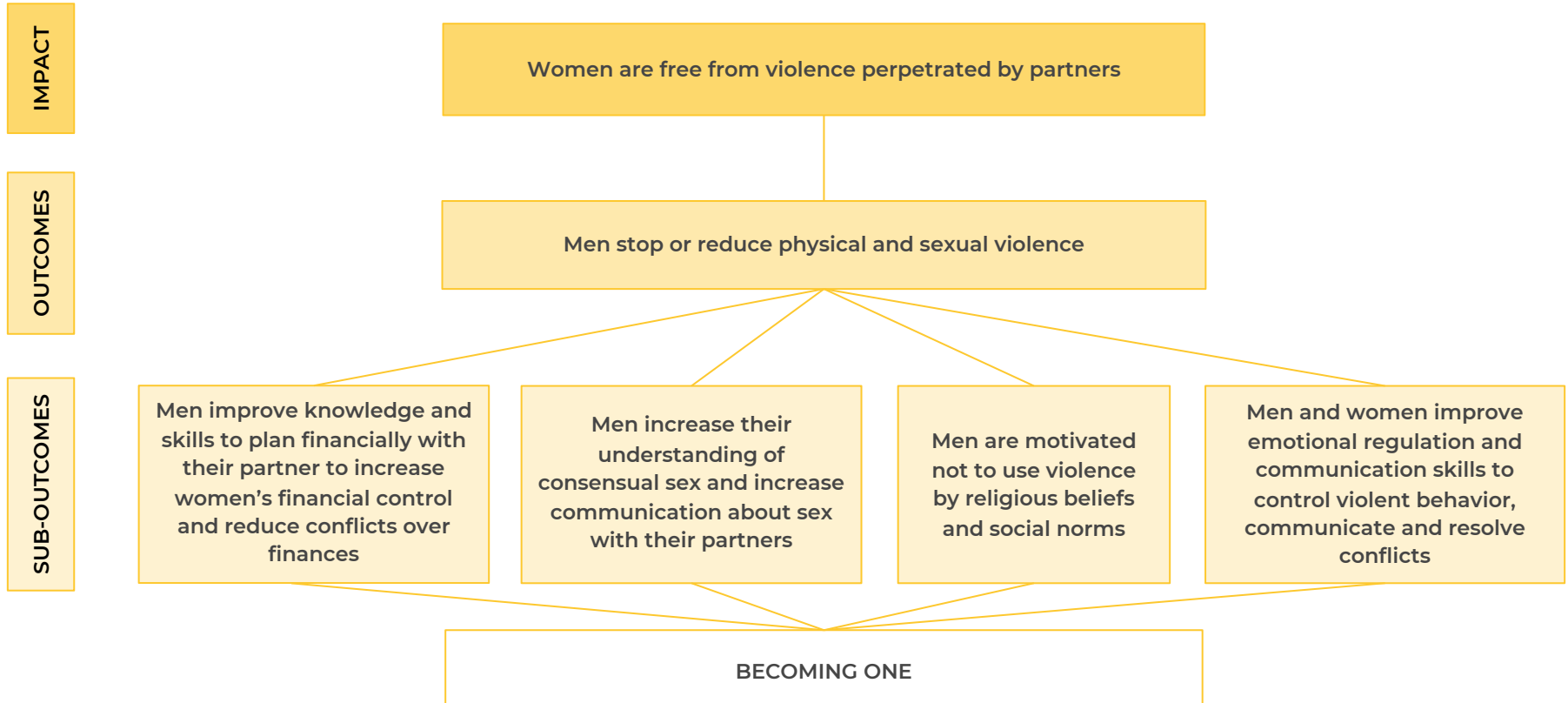


*"People are not living the best lives in their relationships. They feel that it is a way of life, but this is an eye opener that has helped them see what a good relationship can be like and how it can be attained."*

**Faith leader**



# Theory of Change



# Pathways to Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence

To lead to a reduction in IPV, Becoming One needs to address the following pathways

1

Motivate men not to use violence

2

Improve men and women's skills to communicate on difficult and potentially contentious topics, problem solve, and to regulate their emotions. This leads to better communication between partners and reduces conflict related to violence.

3

Increase women's decision making and control over household finances

4

Change social norms and religious beliefs to support men's non-violence and women's equality

5

Increase understanding of consensual sex and communication about sex with their partners



## Our Theory of Change builds off of the following pieces of research

1

### Communication Skills

IMAGE and SASA! Included communication skills in their intervention to help increase positive communication between partners, although these components were not specifically evaluated given the intervention included many components (Jewkes et al.; Abramsky et al.).

2

### Sexual Consent

In many places it is men alone who get to define the timing and conditions for sex (Wood and Jewkes 1997). Men and women in these settings often lack the communication skills and specific vocabulary to express sexual desires and experiences (Wood and Jewkes 1997). Thus, interventions which increase sexual knowledge and communication skills may decrease instances of physical and sexual assault. Several successful structural interventions have included these components in their gender training to reduce IPV (Jewkes 2008; Pronyk 2006).

3

### Financial Control

Feminist and Economic theory suggest that increasing female control and access to financial resources could lead to reduced violence by increasing a women's bargaining power in the household. (Bloch and Rao 2002). In practice, interventions that have sought to increase women's economic empowerment within the household have resulted in reduced violence, particularly when combined with training challenging gender norms (Vyas and Watts 2009).

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**What Happened**

# What Happened



*35 Faith Leaders*

*~350 Couples*

35 Faith Leaders were selected to participate in the Becoming One program, a biblical couple's counseling that builds skills with the aim of preventing intimate partner violence.

Each Faith Leader was asked to mobilise 17 couples to participate and complete 12 sessions in 8 weeks.

There was a wide spectrum of participation. Some Faith Leaders were able to mobilize upwards of 25 couples and some only worked with 4. On average Faith Leaders were able to mobilize 10-12 couples for the extent of the Becoming One program.



# Research Methods

**50** *Semi-structured interviews with men and women*

**44** *Post-session debriefs*

**67** *Semi-structured interviews with Faith Leaders*

**37** *Observations of Becoming One sessions*

## METHODOLOGY

- Weekly 3 hour Synthesis sessions with the global team where research data was turned into design insights.
- 3 Researchers from Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA) conducted qualitative research for the duration of the 8 week pilot.
- Interviews with men only and women only as well as with the both were conducted with the participants in the Becoming One sessions

## BENEFITS

- Specific and open feedback
- People brought up changes that we didn't anticipate
- Grounded in observations, not just self-reporting

## DRAWBACKS

- No observations or interviews of couples who didn't participate in Becoming One
- This is not in comparison to anything else
- Interviews are self-reported and people may try to please the interviewers



# Who Came: Couple's Profiles

## WOMEN ATTENDING ALONE (& SOME MEN TOO)

- 30% of attendees
- Women whose partners were “guilty”
  - ◆ The male partners perceived the program as attacking their specific marriages and their behavior in it. .
- Women whose partners were busy or worked remotely
  - ◆ Men were concerned about what women shared when they weren't present.
  - ◆ Women were able to change the behavior of men through their own change.
  - ◆ When partners were unable to come, the women still communicated the sessions and activities back to the men and the men learned lessons through the women.
- Women whose partners believed it was the woman's responsibility to improve the home environment.

*“The session is good because it is bringing positive change in my life as a person and marriage. We share after every session when he misses to attend”*



# Who Came: Couple's Profiles

## COMMITTED COUPLES

- 40% of attendees
- They characterize their change as bringing a benefit they didn't know was missing. They describe the change as bringing new life back into their relationship, as though they were first dating.

## COUPLES WHO DIDN'T INTERACT

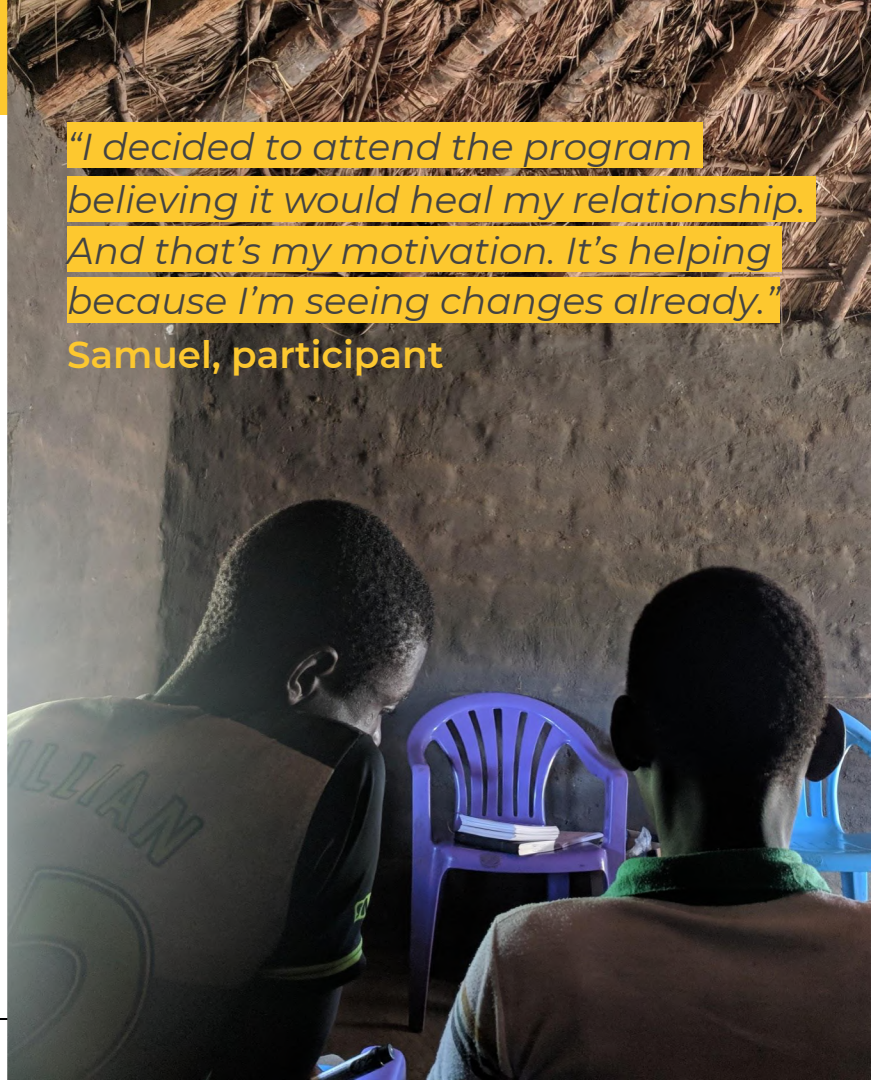
- 20% of attendees
- These were couples who lived together but had minimal interaction, especially outside the home. Inside the home, they fulfilled their separate roles without acting as a single unit.

## YOUNG DATING COUPLES

- 10% of attendees
- The couples were primarily interested in the Sex sessions. They were not committed to each other and were in and out of the sessions. These couples required follow-up from the Faith Leaders to try to achieve regular attendance.

*"I decided to attend the program believing it would heal my relationship. And that's my motivation. It's helping because I'm seeing changes already."*

**Samuel, participant**



# Characteristics of a Successful Faith Leader

## FAITH LEADER CHARACTERISTICS THAT DRIVE SUCCESS

- Age
- Education
- Marital status
- Church congregation of more than 20 individuals
- Leadership position in the church and the community (not all recruited Faith Leaders were in fact leaders in the church)
- Experience in counseling

## THESE CHARACTERISTICS DETERMINE

- Topics that they are comfortable moderating
- Their interpretation of the materials
- Their mobilization capability
- If couples turn up after mobilization
- Perceived credibility from participants
- Attendance fluctuations
- Ability to modify and improvise with the materials in a more engaging way

*"It is very easy to recreate, also because I am a facilitator of life skills, which involves teaching and parenting"*

## Pastor Ocakacon Nelson, faith leader

## FAITH LEADER COMMITMENT & QUALITIES

- The best FLs followed up with couple's, called them, did home visits, and made themselves available by phone 24/7.
- Good and Bad FLs were evident from the beginning
- FL were incredibly supportive - they watched others and attended other's sessions to learn, led sessions for those who are not experienced (eg. a priest who couldn't lead a sex session).
- WhatsApp was a motivating community where FLs "reported" progress and success in mobilization to one another. They would post photos of their sessions. It was a forum in which they could hold each other accountable.
- However, WhatsApp negatively spurred FL to combine sessions when they felt they needed to "catch-up" with others who were reporting that they were on a later session.



**Why People Said it Works**

# Desireable Tools



*"The pictures have such powerful impact on me. I have learned a lot from it. I want to be like the happy couples who look so supportive."*

**Vicky, participant**

## BEAUTIFUL VISUAL OBJECT

- "I will keep referencing to the couple's kit as a reminder. Just in case I forget something."
- "We were able to learn from this kit during the session and it kept reminding us during our revision at home, during our free time"
- "Just by holding it, you feel changed" - Michael
- A man gave a testimony of how he initiates home practice by putting the guide on the bed as a sign that they have to do the home practice
- Couples are excited to use this guide to share what they learn to other couples or their children who did not attend the sessions.

## ASPIRATIONAL IMAGES

- The pictures on the front page of the finance section is what motivated a couple to start saving together.
- "I was inspired by the picture of the man saving together with his wife. They look so happy doing and from that, we have decided to start saving together next year."

# Desireable Tools cont.

## WORKS FOR ILLITERATE USERS

- *"The guides have motivated them a lot. Some may not know how to read and write but they can always refer to them"*
- *"If you can not read English very well, the pictures can explain to you. For example, the picture in sex where the man is thinking about sex and the woman is thinking about the garden." - Sunday Willy, Faith Leader*

*"When I compare with the materials of life skills, these ones equip you in a way that is different. Some pictures even speak for themselves - people understand these more."*

**Pr Ocakacon Nelson, Faith Leader**







*"It is God's word from the Bible that reminds me to practice these."*

Michael, participant

# Biblical Foundation

*"We are now learning God's plan for man and woman through the sessions."*

*"It is bringing God into your home."*

Couples have confidence and are motivated to participate in the program because it is grounded in Biblical principles and verses.

- Couples trust that it is God's plan to have peaceful marriages
- The program is perceived as vessel through which God's will for their marriages is being manifested
  - ◆ "The pastor relates every question to the bible, He has the ability to read more and internalize the bible. It is encouraging." - **Jessica**
  - ◆ "I am a committed Christian, this program is a good one because it is backed by Biblical texts" - **Solomon**
  - ◆ "The training is guided by Biblical content making me courageous and contented that it's not any other training."



# Storytelling

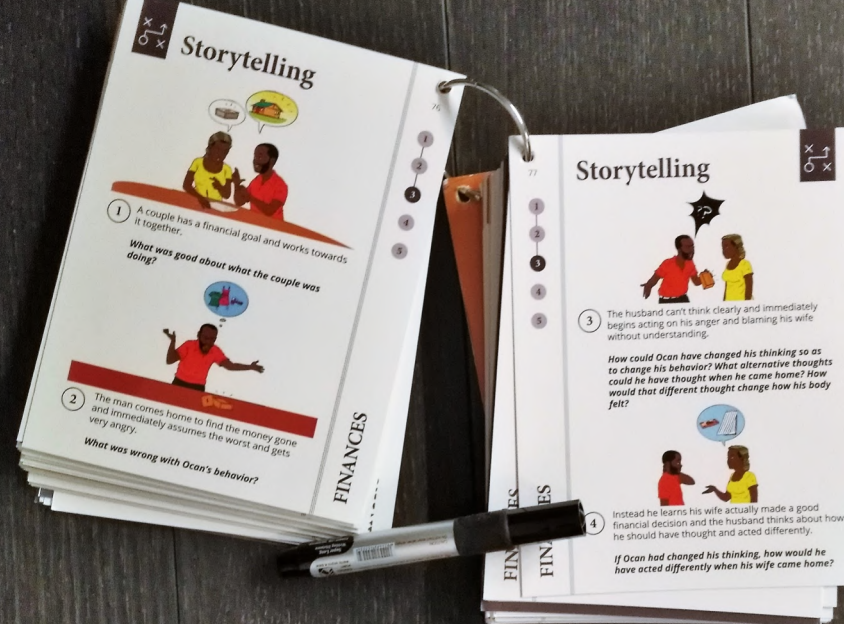
Storytelling was an essential activity in Becoming One that was expressed in two ways

## PERSONAL STORYTELLING

First, Faith Leaders, their spouses, individuals and couples told their own stories in the sessions. They would give testimony about the challenges they faced, how they solved them and provide practical advice to others in the group. This allowed participants to feel like they weren't alone in their challenges. It also gave greater credence to Faith Leaders when they could show vulnerability and personal experience in areas that were relevant to couples.

## BECOMING ONE STORYTELLING

Second, written stories in the FL guide resonated with couples. The characters shared the same names, situations and struggles as the participants. The solutions and messages of the stories also resonated and proved motivating. Whether the story was about emotional regulation or growth mindset and our ability to change, couples used them as guides for when to apply certain activities in their own lives.



*"Stories make people understand so fast and with ease. It is from Atim and Okello's story that was read in the session that I awakened on finance and learnt the importance of saving and so stories should be included in couples kit. It is so powerful what a relatable story can do in our minds."*

# Putting Theory into Practice

Teaching practical skills that were widely applicable are much needed in the church context. Rarely are Faith Leaders able to take biblical theory and find a relevant and practical application for it.

In Becoming One, Faith Leaders never shared a theme or principle or activity that didn't have an applied action.

Becoming One suggested activities that were simple, easy to share and teach and provided people with concrete things to do at home that left the guess work out of it.

"Some of them  
have suffered in  
their marriages,  
they are looking  
for solutions"  
Concy, Faith  
Leader

"I believe that these themes  
address the issues that  
couples encounter and so  
this is an opportunity that  
has found them and they can  
not let it go"





# Fail Safe Design

## EVEN IF ONLY A WOMAN CAME...

- She would go home and change her reactions, communication, emotional regulation and the husband would notice the change and positively respond. A positive feedback loop was created. Successful change in communication does not require both parties to attend the program.
- "One woman's husband has never attended but the woman goes back to share the session and there is change in their relationship" - Faith Leader

## EVEN IF NO OR LITTLE HOME PRACTICE WAS DONE...

- Couples would still apply what they learned to their daily life. The skills were relevant, the situations they addressed common and easy to frequently apply. Their "favorite" activities represented the actives that were most relevant to their relationship challenges.
- A husband admits to not having TIME to sit and actually do home practice, but he is applying in his marriage lessons learned from the kit and from the session.

*"I calm myself mostly by giving her space when she is angry at me. I also don't talk to her when she is angry or in public about confidential matters."* - Samuel, participant





# Fail Safe Design cont.



## EVEN IF A FAITH LEADER DIDN'T PREPARE...

- They could still deliver a meaningful and engaging session by improvising with the FL guide.
  - ◆ Their skills allowed them to improvise successfully.
  - ◆ The guide was clear enough for them to deliver the sessions at a glance

*"Even if one hasn't prepared for the session, you can still facilitate."* - Faith Leader

## EVEN IF A FL WAS UNSKILLED OR MISUNDERSTOOD ACTIVITIES...

- Couples could still receive some benefit just by using the Couples Kits and having the most simplistic activities communicated by the FL.
- "We have started doing home practice on our own because we were not given directives on this."

*"It has good illustrations that you can see and do before you are even given insight to it. It's clear and that's one thing I have loved about the book."* - Christine, participant

**Surprises**

# Physical Proximity & Intimacy

## BEFORE

- Couples didn't move together, they would travel to the church separately. They would travel everywhere separately.
- Multiple men said they could only recall one or two times when they travelled with their wife.
- Men and women never sat together
- They didn't make eye contact

## AFTER

- FL have to repeatedly remind men and women to sit together
- FL reinforced the idea of spending "quality time" together
- Men and women first leaned away from each other when seated together, but since they shared a book they began getting used to sitting together and leaning in. By the end, they would both lean in, in public.
- At the final ceremony there was touching and even kissing in public. People yelled, "You, close the gap!"
- There was an increase in couples being seen in public together and being affectionate in church
- There was an increase in eye contact when talking
- Men and women would embrace and the man would take a woman back to her seat
- Men testified that they now moved together with their wives



*"Man and woman were living in different directions before. Now they felt that there was need to move together."*





# A Couple's Motivation

## IMMEDIATE REWARDS

- Partners see and feel the immediate benefits of changing their own behavior with home practice
- A cycle of positive reinforcement occurred with much of the “home practice.”
- Changes in their own behavior led to positive reactions from their spouses which motivated both parties to continue to make changes and seek a positive response from their partner.
- Men often choose to help their wives out with household tasks. The initial rationale for these changes was to work together, “equality” in the bible was also emphasized as the reason to initiate changes.
- Roles were blended - men would help out with “women’s” jobs and see the happiness this would bring their wives.

*“Feels like encouragement can also come in the form of appreciation. When my wife cooks and I appreciate her, it encourages her to cook better food another time.”*

*“They have been interested since they’ve seen the benefits.”*

**Freeman Sunday,  
Faith Leader**

## LEARNING FROM & BECOMING ROLE MODELS

# Design Experiments



# Redesigning “Training”

## LOVE POINTS FOR HOME PRACTICE



The hearts represent love points that can be earned for the couple's home practice. Some practice must be done as a couple in order to earn the points, but some may be done separately. The symbol on the cards can help guide you.

### AT HOME: QUALITY TIME



26



*Clear explanation of “love points” in the new manual*

## LAUNCH

We launched our first cohort of 35 Faith Leaders with a 2.5 day training session.

Initial challenges included:

- Targeting of unqualified faith leaders
- Lack of clarity on purpose and usage of Love points
- Lack of clarity on how to identify in class activities versus home practice activities
- Confusing explanation of component parts and how it all integrates together
- Excessively long and expensive 2.5 day training time

## REDESIGN

The team created two low touch “training” experiences to address the above challenges and understand how minimal an in-person training could be:

- Manual + Videos (no in person training)
- Manual and 1.5 hour workshop

## RECRUIT & RELAUNCH

The team then recruited two Faith Leaders to test out the new training tools and evaluated their comprehension. The FLs had:

- Higher education
- Experience in couples counselling
- Excellent facilitation skills
- Ability to easily understand the material
- Adequate credibility

# Redesigning “Training” cont.

## INSIGHTS WE LEARNED

- We conducted observations and interviews with the new Faith Leaders.
- The less training the more people follow the guide strictly.
- Manual/Videos completely negated the need for an in person training.
- People still prefer videos to reading. The videos replicated the manual and people preferred the videos or 1.5 hour workshop over the manual. *“If you want to keep something away from Africans, you put it in a book.”*
- Generally, the manual content should be in the Faith Leader Guide.
- The minimal training was only tested with educated Faith Leaders who fit the ideal Faith Leader criteria. Both Faith Leaders expressed concern that this minimal training be used with Faith Leaders who were less adept at using new technology or less educated.
- Interestingly, the Faith Leader community is a highly connected one and very supportive of each other particularly within similar parishes or sub counties. One Faith Leader, who was recruited because he had no prior exposure to Becoming One, still called Norah, one of our successful Faith Leaders from the first cohort to evaluate him and lead a finance session.

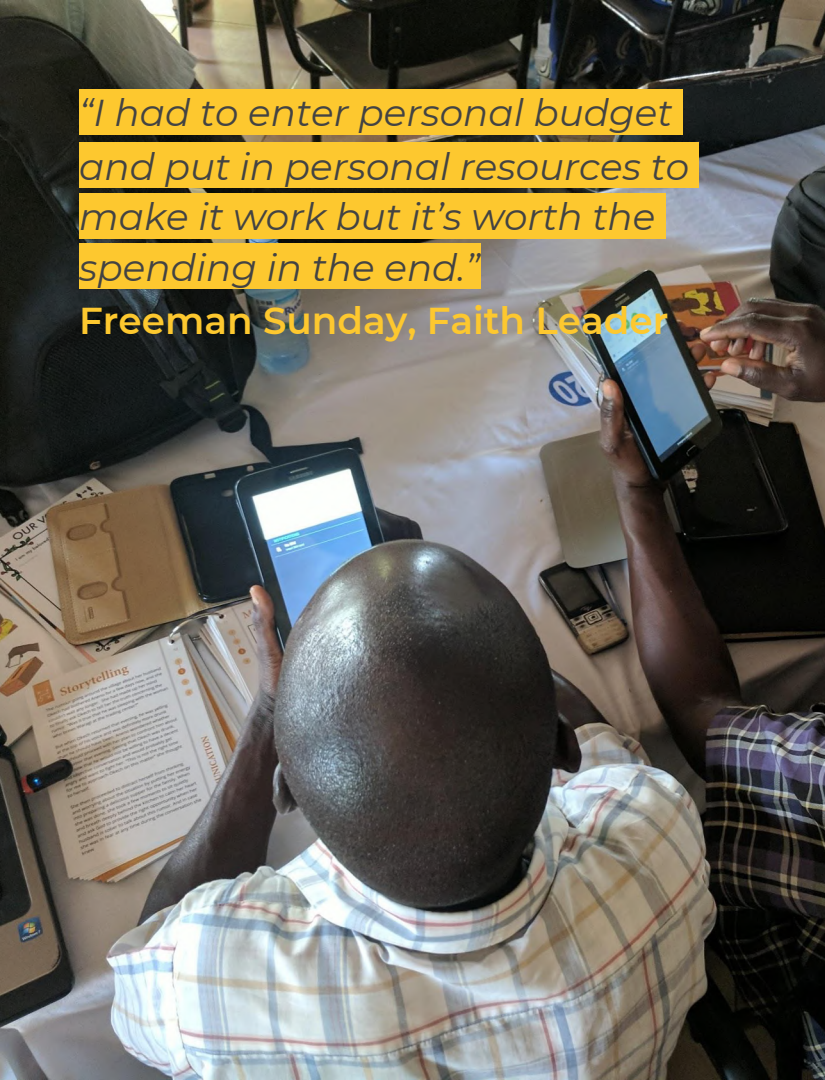


### WHICH COUPLES?

- **For couples** who are dating, engaged, or married
- **For couples** who are motivated to improve their relationships
- **Not for couples** who are already experiencing violence in their relationships
- **Refer** couples experiencing violence to places where they can get help (see page 7 for details)



Guidance on couple's recruitment for the new cohort



*"I had to enter personal budget and put in personal resources to make it work but it's worth the spending in the end."*

**Freeman Sunday, Faith Leader**

# Business Model: Monetary Value

## PERSONAL INVESTMENT

- People were willing to invest their own money into supporting Becoming One
  - ◆ Couples will contribute food and pool resources
  - ◆ Faith Leaders will spend their own money to mobilize couples, provide refreshments and retain them. Often assuming the costs NGOs normally cover.

## MONETARY VALUE

- It was generally challenging for people to estimate the value of something. The tendency was to estimate how much something cost. Because of the tablet we received high estimates when we asked about "value."
- However, value and a Faith Leader's willingness to pay is contingent on:
  - ◆ Couple's being willing to pay
  - ◆ It showing immediate benefit
- Many couples said that this kind of program is one they would normally have to pay for.
- As a result of Becoming One, some Faith Leaders experienced an uptick in couple's getting married, which is a profitable activity in churches.
- One FL suggested a freemium model where the communication theme is given for free and then they would pay for the other themes if they see its value.



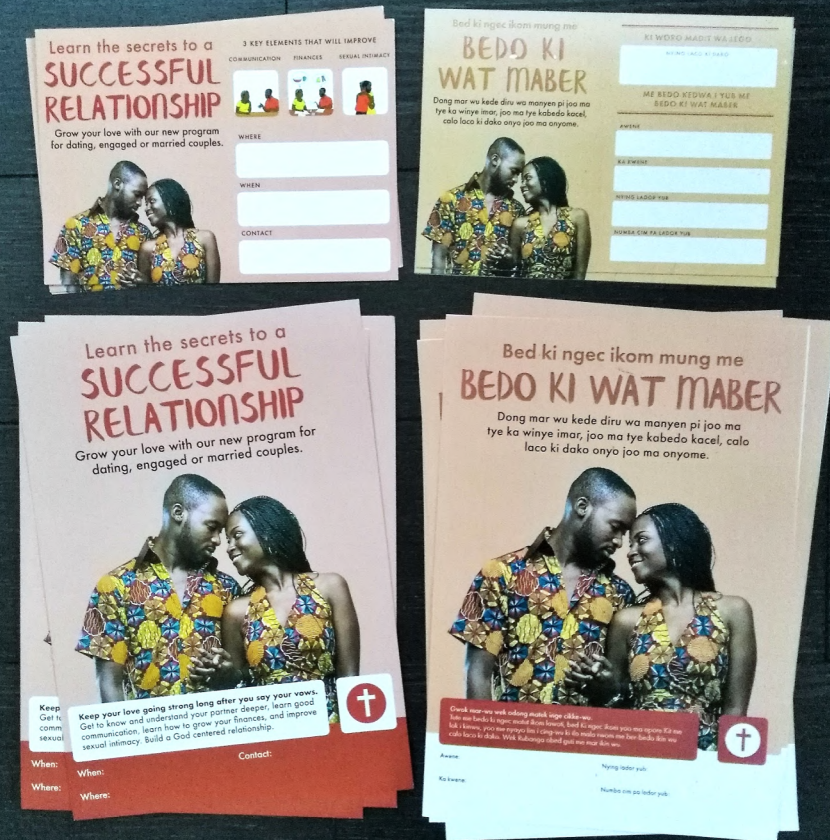
# Recruiting Tools

## PURPOSE

- Recruiting couples was a major concern expressed by faith leaders during the training session, *before* they began recruitment with the help of the posters and invitations we had supplied
- We responded to the FLs' concern by exploring alternative or additional tools that might help FLs feel more confident in recruiting couples

## DESIGN CHANGES

- We designed a small card that FLs could hand out to introduce communication rules (one of the elements taught in Becoming One) to test if giving out a program sampler could be more effective at mobilizing couples
- We adjusted the posters and invitations by translating the content and by designing a better space for FLs to customize the tools



# Recruiting Tools cont.



## LEARNINGS

- The small giveaway cards were not effective because
  - ◆ There was no image that would capture the essence of the program or grab attention
  - ◆ The rules required too much explanation from the FL
- We learned, instead, that our existing posters and invitations were effective because
  - ◆ The image of a happy couple was a powerful aspirational motivator and helped FL explain what the program was about
  - ◆ The personalized invitations with their names made couples feel special and believe that the program was designed for them

*"The mobilization poster is catchy enough. People will see the picture and it will catch their eye. The cards are good for inviting another and will honor that person. They will honor it."*

Pastor George, Faith Leader

**Change in Couples**



# What Women Say

## INCREASED COMMUNICATION

*"I have learned to bring up a hard conversation. My daughter got pregnant and it was hard for me to bring up. But with good communication approach it was not easy to share with him but I managed with the help of the guide, to open up after he found out the test results. I was surprised how calm he was because I've been sharing the couple's guide."*

*"This program is my auntie."*

**Francesca,  
participant**

*"There has not been any form of violence not even any small quarrel between us since we started attending this program"*

**Jennifer, participant**

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION

**Men take time to think before they react. He believes that he has realized some great improvement in the way and the tone he used to express himself.**

*"Now he talks with some level of understanding." - Deborah*



# What Women Say cont.

## FEMALE-FOCUSED SEX

"I was not aware on how to **satisfy the sexual desire of my partner**. I used to have sex but I learned that it was not the best sex I could have with her. And I believe that I am now becoming much better with sex as a man." - Douglas

"We were told to also ask for sex since we are equal and free to express our feelings. I asked my husband for sex because if he can not give it to me, who will he give it to. He did give me the sex"

Stellah, participant

## INCREASED TRUST

"Before the program, we never used to sit and have a decent conversation and he could drink a lot and was never open with his finance. He used to shop all food stuffs even onions but since the program, **he has started leaving money** for me to buy the food stuffs. We even have a **peaceful and loving conversation**. It is surprising that he has proposed that I should **start a small business** with his support something that he never agreed to at all before"



# What Men Say

## RESPECT

Decrease in public displays of disrespect and increase in encouragement.

## INITIATIVE

Men often initiated home practice and were able to lead the positive change happening at home.

*"I have learned more to respect my partner and not be quick to judge him or talk ill about him in public. I also encourage him when he is feeling down."*

**Vicky, participant**

*"The sessions are very meaningful and helpful in modelling better husbands and the generation. This will provide peace in relationships and the society as a whole."*

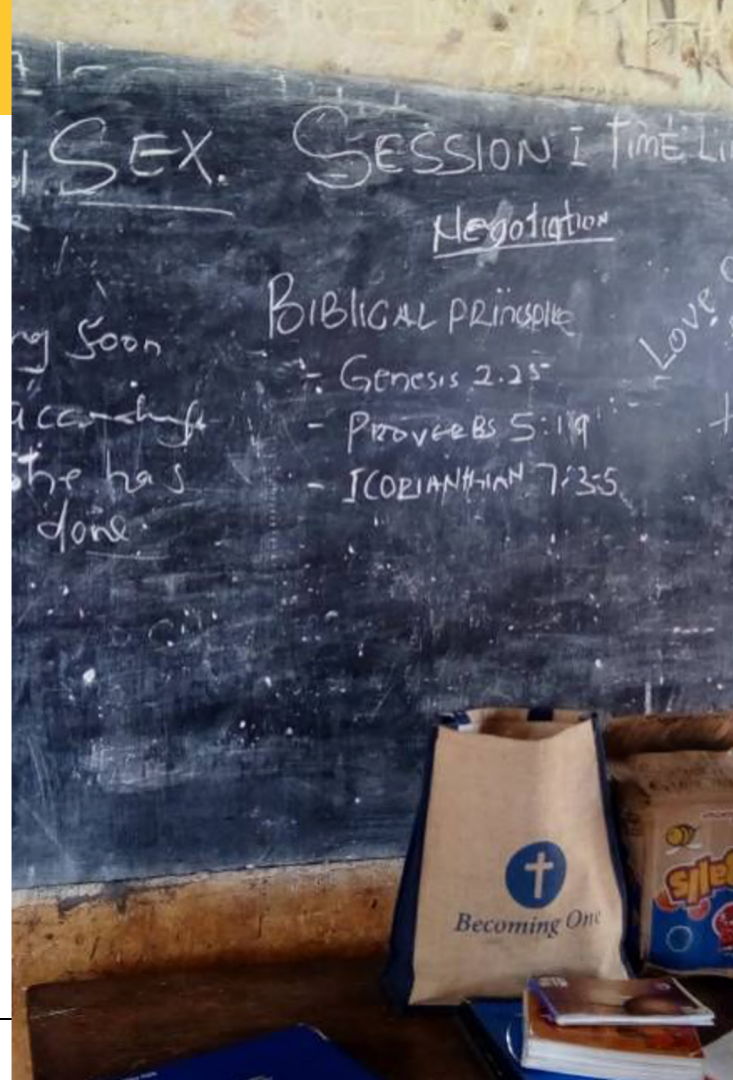
**Michael, participant**

## FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Men have increased control and transparency into women's income.

## SEXUAL AWARENESS

Men are gaining more insight into the pleasure of their partners. Women are also expressing a desire for sex instead of waiting for men to initiate.





# What Couples Say

*"I got married without experience and no one guided me. So this knowledge has helped me to understand a lot and change."*

**Douglas, participant**

## COMMUNICATION

- *"I used to keep quiet and do my household chores when i'm upset but facilitator shared that we have to open up and talk respectfully about pressing issues to get solutions and with prayers it has worked for my case"*
- *"My husband has noticed a change in me in line with communication. He told me that I have changed because I used not to talk." **She would just keep quiet and cry when hurt. She can now express herself because the materials say that it is important to talk.***
- ***Husband also seeks her opinion for every plan that he has and he said** "If you were this open to talk before, we would have been more developed and better in our relationship."*
- *"We now know how to communicate, even in pain."*

## WORKING TOGETHER & SHARING ROLES

- *"Working together is what we have adjusted to. To do all work without saying, 'This should be a man's work or a woman's work.'"*
- ***Men help with housework. Women help with decisions in finance and other family matters.***
- *"The kit has spiced up our relationship. We used to help each other but our knowledge towards that just improved. He helps me cook and take care of the children. I also help him equally." - **Vicky***

# What Couples Say cont.

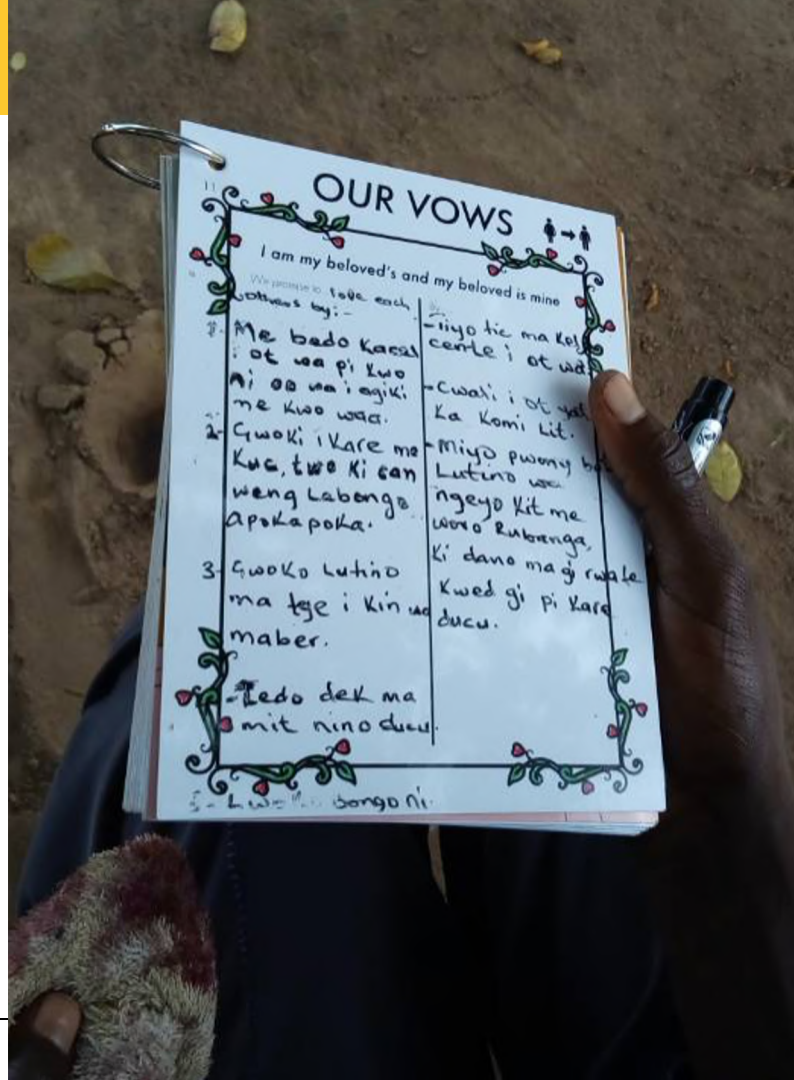
## SHARED FINANCE

- Opening of joint accounts and savings
- Saving on a daily basis together to take to the weekly savings group
- A couple was able to start saving after the training. "It is a discipline and financial management, we have started now."
- He and his wife are both adding money to the box. "I was able to start saving when I learned about the goal box from the kit. I tried practicing it and it motivated me to start saving."

## BUILDING COMMUNITY & ACCEPTANCE

- Couples realized they weren't alone in their challenges and that many have even larger challenges.
- "I learned best through sharing of experiences and made me understand that what seems to be hard for me but is not only hard for me but many people also have similar challenges. And it's easy to get a solution when you share." - Douglas

"We have experienced change in our behavior. On how we handle our finances and how I can now satisfy the sexual desire for my partner and how we talk to each other. We now talk to each other with respect."





# What Faith Leaders Saw

## PHYSICAL PROXIMITY

- Moving together rather than separately
- Couples sitting together
- Living in harmony

## FINANCIAL AWARENESS

- Awareness of spending patterns
- Promises to cut costs

*"We've been wasting a lot and were tied up in poverty."*

## EMPATHY

- Hurt & Blessing Activity

*"People were doing things they didn't realize were hurting each other. You could see tears coming. It was good because some didn't know when they hurt each other. They ask for forgiveness and practice the blessings."*

## UNDERSTANDING PARTNER'S PREFERENCES

- Love language Activity - people learn the love preferences of their partners

## HANDLING FINANCES TOGETHER

- Women are brought into making financial decisions
- Planning together
- Saving together

## PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF PARTNERSHIP

- "This is my husband." "This is my wife."
- People wonder why he has been coming back to church and holding his wife's hand. Man tells them, "Change has happened to my life."



# What Faith Leaders Saw Cont.

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION

- Listening and giving space for someone to think
- Use of Calming Methods - Testimony of a man coming home drunk and woman waited for him sober up before talking and he was appreciative.

## SEX ENGAGEMENT

- Couples were able to understand that sex is not supposed to be done out of duty. They should prepare for it and think of it as an important role in their relationship. People were coming up with specific days and scheduling sex.

## COMMUNICATION

- Relationship between a man and a woman - seeing things in the other's perspective
- *"After understanding, you can come together."*
- Tone of voice, body language, and action words - these three things make people diverge. If words are different from body language, a person can tell.
- Communicating with respect and care

## EXPRESSIONS & ACTIONS OF LOVE

- It's like they had just started to come together, like they were young again
- Expressions of how much they love each other, giving gifts
- Kissing, embracing, carrying wife back to her seat

## "HOLY MATRIMONY"

- 4 couples that are planning to get married officially



*"Love became hot again."*

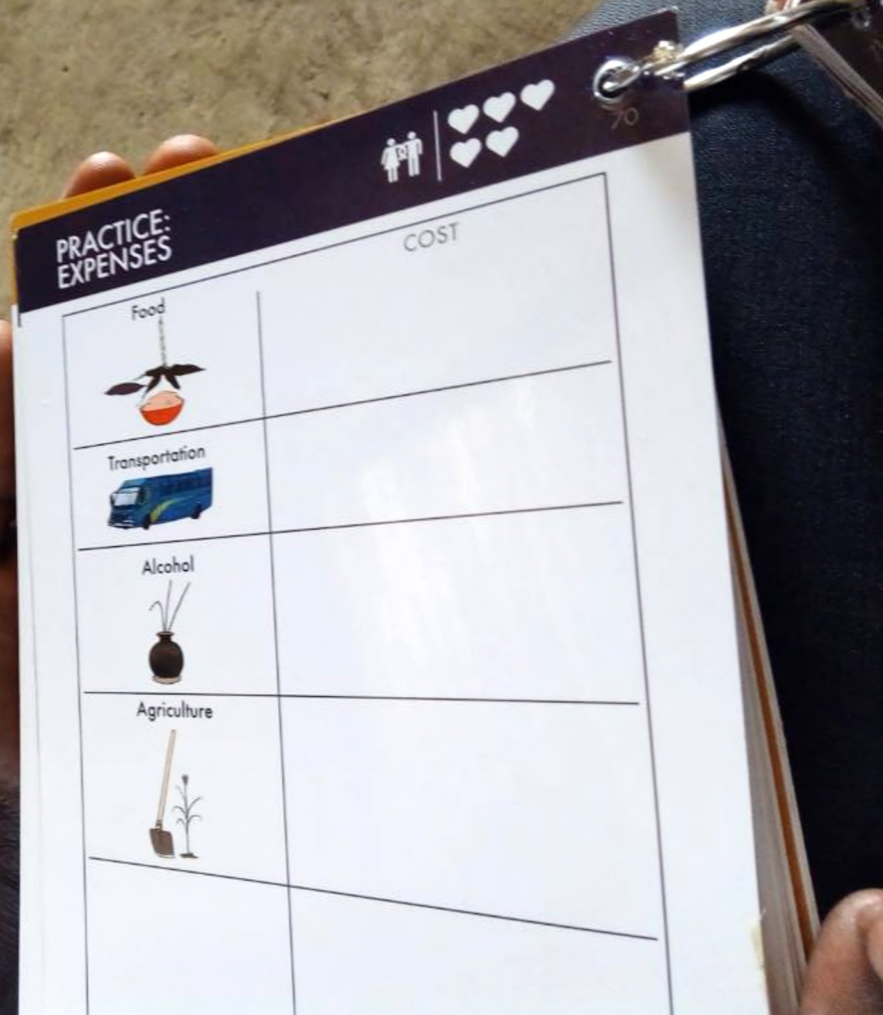
# Finance Theme

## UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

- Many of women are also earning money so encouraging “transparency and combining finances” may have had unintended negative consequences. See Measurement.
- One unintended result was that women shared their separate finances with men. This led men to be particularly enthusiastic about the “transparency” section of the financial theme.
- Additionally, some of the messaging may have been interpreted to indicate that women should also work and bring in money, adding to the burden they already have. (I don't think any women actually said this though.)
- “My wife thinks it's only my role as a man to do all these things related to finance. Like buying food stuff, health and school fees and other things related to finance.” - Samuel

*“My spouse is transparent in finances. It was hard for me to be open to him about my finances. The session has taught me otherwise, and now I feel and see the need to be transparent if I am to build a successful relationship.”*

**Stellah, participant**



# Communication Theme

## WOMEN'S EMOTIONAL REGULATION

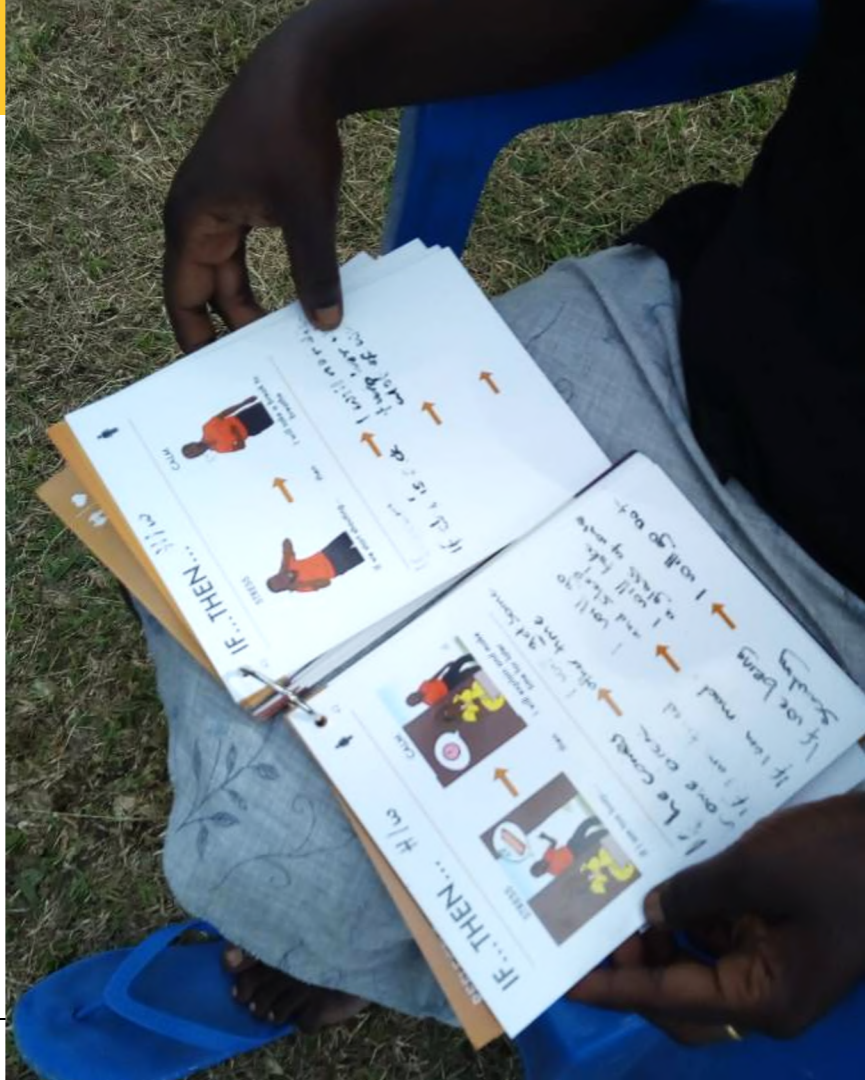
→ CBT with rumors and distrust of their husbands

*"Since the kit was given I have been meditating how to apply and when to apply what the book says and I have learned to communicate effectively and with respect to my husband. The kit has helped me especially because I am very high tempered person because I have learned to regulate. I am a person who like fighting a lot about every rumor I hear."*

## APPLICATION OUTSIDE OF PARTNER RELATIONSHIP

→ Women and men both report using the Communication rules with their children and in-laws.

*"When you are married into a family like mine, my mother in law is trouble. We had stopped talking and I didn't even eat her food because she quarrels a lot. At times she would even follow me to the garden to pick a fight. Before this program, I used to answer her back and put her in her place. We would fight with words, but since this program, I have learned to control my temper. She noticed change in me because when she picked a fight, I would give her space and keep quiet. She realized that and now she talks with respect and I have forgiven her."*





# ToC Reflection

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- (Increased sharing, listening and responding)
- At home practice of multiple easy-to-apply tools that resulted in immediate rewards
- Understand the importance of communicating, sharing your feelings, and having knowledge of when you're causing pain or pleasure to your partner
- Sharing opinions
- Activities: CLEAR Rules, Blessings and Hurt

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION

- Using the calming methods to stop heated arguments before they begin.
- Choosing the right time to converse about hard topics
- Activities: Calming Methods, If... then...

## SEXUAL PLEASURE & CONSENT

- Men increase their understanding of consensual sex and increase communication about sex with their partners
- Increase discussions on women's sexual pleasure.
- Women increased agency in asking for sex

## SHARED FINANCIAL CONTROL

- Men improve knowledge and skills to plan financially with their partner to increase women's financial control and reduce conflicts over finances
- Men and women create shared goals and save together.
- Men are more likely to trust their wives with money.
- Couple's start investing together
- Increased transparency with personal savings.
- More discussions about finance

## SOCIAL NORMS

- Couple's see equality in the home as being what God wants
- The Guide and Faith Leaders reinforced messages of equality in the bible.
- Increased feelings of a more supportive environment where traditional roles are less strict
- Activities: Biblical Principles, Guiding Principles
- Men are motivated not to use violence by religious beliefs and social norms

# ToC Reflection cont.

## PARTNERSHIP & SHARED GOALS

- Couples discussed shared household goals and relationship goals
- Teaching one another and children the tools learned in the class
- Activities: Vows, discussion and saving for shared financial goals, understanding of what everyone can and should contribute.

## WHAT WE STILL NEED TO LEARN

- We don't explicitly discuss violence - should we? What are the risks of this?
- What Increased physical proximity means
- Women sharing their separate finances
- Women using emotional regulation
- Women taking on the burden of changing first

## ADDITIONAL "PATHWAYS" EVIDENT NOT ON OUR TOC

- Healthy Relationship Awareness\*
  - ◆ In class sharing and discussion of challenges and rewards
  - ◆ Activities: Best Behavior, reporting on home practice, home testimonials
  - ◆ Awareness of other couple's challenges and successes
- Positive Interaction Cycles\*
  - ◆ Partners try out what they've learned and receive positive feedback from their partner
  - ◆ Most rewarding changes were around communication- how and when people spoke, and tasks and responsibilities they helped each other with.
- Intimacy and Trust\*
  - ◆ Intimacy -People spoke openly about sex, pleasure and desire. For many women, they had their first experience asking for sex.
  - ◆ Partners were transparent about their finances. For many women and men, this resulted in planning together and believing that they're partners were capable of increased financial responsibility and trustworthy.
- Building Community / Increase Social Network
- Decrease in public "disrespect"
- Increase in women's leadership roles at home

\*As identified by Elizabeth Starrman, [Exploring Couples' Process of Change in the context of SASA!](#); a violence against women and HIV prevention intervention in Uganda

**What's Next**



# Sustainability: Faith Leader's Plans

## FAITH LEADER'S PLANS

- Monthly and annual check ins with all couples
- Additional sessions in other churches or with new couples
  - ◆ "I already have a church with 22 couples that have invited me to facilitate the sessions." - Komakech
- Training theological students
- Integrating it into sermons and social gatherings
- Sharing with youth
- Communication can be shared with everyone and is the most applicable
- Going to couples in their homes for 1:1 sessions
- Challenging the participants to be ambassadors of successful relationships
- Encouraging family departments to integrate these in their programs

*"I am planning to continue with other couples that are interested especially on a one on one and smaller groups in the community. I have already started having sessions in the evenings with neighbors that are married."*

**David James, Faith Leader**

*"I seriously intend to use them. Mainly for pre marital counselling, bridal showers, mother's union meetings. We always do a lot of trainings. This is going to help a lot"*

**Rev Norah, Faith Leader**

## LACK OF COUPLE'S GUIDES

- Faith Leaders do not view the lack of couples guides as a limitation to their facilitation after the sessions
- In the absence of couple's guides, FLs still plan on continuing the sessions and having couples write in notebooks
- "A church is requesting me to go and facilitate already mobilized couples. Even with no couples guides, I will be writing on flip charts." - Ocakacon Nelson, Faith Leader

# What's Next

## PILOT FOLLOW UP

- IPA returning to Gulu for 2 weeks of research
- Check in with couples
- Learn how Faith Leaders are continuing to use and adapt the material

## RESEARCH DESIGN

- Measures
- Strategies

## PARTNER EXPLORATION

- Implementation with World Vision
- Church hierarchy exploration

## REDESIGN

- Revising Biblical financial content
- Adapting to new context
- Revising and editing components
- Aligning Couple's and Faith Leader Guide





# Field Team

This pilot wouldn't have been possible without the collaboration, openness and hard work of this truly interdisciplinary team.

- We're incredibly grateful for the dedication, flexibility and daily insights coming out of the IPA research team, Jackie, Daisy and Francis.
- Justina Li showed passion and perseverance and brought her design skills and problem solving to the most precient problems.
- Vincent Langaniti brought his insider knowledge of the Faith community in Gulu to motivate and guide Faith Leaders on WhatsApp, keep us connected to World Vision and ensure we stayed focused on the unique needs and values of our users.



VINCENT

JUSTINA

JACKIE

DAISY

RACHEL

FRANCIS



# Advisors, Extended Team & Resources

## ADVISORS

- Kelwyn Browne
- Lori Heise
- Carter Millican
- Betsy Paluck
- Elaine Pountney
- Berna Twanza
- Ambrose Were

## EXTENDED TEAM

- Jeannie Annan
- Shirin Ahmed
- Shirley Rodriguez
- Sarah Cornish
- Nicole Behnam

## RESOURCES

- World Vision's Channels of Hope: Gender Facilitator's Manual By CABSA & Elaine Pountney
- Model Marriage By Dag Heward Mills
- Tuko Pamoja: Family Intervention Manual By Eve Puffer ??
- The 5 Love Languages By Gary Chapman
- NYTimes ["36 Questions that Lead to Love"](#) By Daniel Jones

# Appendix

# Detailed Insights



# What Worked: Activities and Themes: General



*"I used to think that I would never get anything good from trainings but this training has opened my heart and has changed me to a new person" -Faith Leader*

- All three themes were seen as highly relevant and the common challenges faced by both participants and FLs.
  - Rev Kolo David *"They were impressed. Their reaction looks interested. They were touching the real realities in their homes."*
  - Pr Sunday Willy *"Content of the kit is really fine, especially the ordering from communication to finance to sex. The most important one is communication because couples have testified that they are lacking communication skills at home"*
- Most popular, frequently cited and impactful activities were those that had repeated application and were clearly and easily understood by FLs
  - Goal setting and Saving together
  - Love Languages
  - CLEAR Rules
- Quality Time was also brought up throughout the sessions. It was mainly practiced as having a meal together.
  - Sharon -Immaculate Church on quality time *" My husband went to town and when he came back he had bought a kilo of pork, rice and milk, I was so surprised and we really had a nice time that day, such had never happened, thanks to the becoming one class"*
  - Christine- St Matthews *"After work in the evening, I initiated it when my husband came back from work. I prepared juice and a nice meal to welcome him and we shared together as we talked"*

# What Worked: Activities and Themes: General



- Blessings and Hurt was an illuminating exercise for many couple's who had previously not shared what hurt with each other. It also led couple's to problem solve and adjust those moments that had created "hurt" in the other. *"I was able t understand what hurts him and now I know how to approach him. He doesn't like doing things without his consent. He also learned that it hurts me when he doesn't support me, like when I ask for money and he doesn't give. So we resolved that when I am in such a condition, I can borrow money from the group and he refunds it when he gets money."*
- *Highly Relevant Stories* - Couples Appreciate the fact that the sessions have relatable stories that they share and discuss about in class
  - Appreciate when they are given time to share testimonies and give their opinions as well as experiences
- Couples are motivated by discussion and an audience centered facilitation (One where the facilitator gives them time to share)
- Couples said they learned from others sharing their challenges and it gave them confidence that 1) things could be worse 2) things could improve
  - Jessica- Gospel Assembly *"The facilitator gives room for contributions and discussions"*
  - *"I like the examples reverend gives, it helps us understand , he even allows us to share amongst us and through that, we understand better"*
  - Hope -Life line ministries- *Feels that the facilitator is doing a good job because she throws the questions back to the participants " as we discuss we get the reality of life as we share and not far from the session"*
  - Christine- St Matthew Church -*"I liked classroom interaction because it helps us understand better from others experience and it makes us more confident of ourselves. I thank reverend for this particular activity"*
  - Maurice-church of the living saviour *"Facilitator should allow the congregation to ask questions in order to be more engaging"*

# What Worked: Communication



*"We now know how to communicate, even in pain."*

*"Due to the teachings from the book at least these days I know how to handle situations, I used to react immediately to everything because I am a short tempered person and the kit is helping me learn how to control my temper by using the calming methods and clear rules" - Priscilla*

People were able to apply the Communication activities and referenced the CLEAR Rules the most. FL also said they saw the most change in a couple's communication and heard testimonies that this change was having the most effect.

## **Clear rules applied and used in the latter themes**

- Communication was cited as a prerequisite to Financial and Sex changes.
- Clear rules Applicability extended to the other themes of Finance and sex
- Believe that for every theme to be fully practiced, the CLEAR rules should be applied and used just like they are taught in the communication session.
  - These are also believed to be able to be applied in any other social Relationship outside of a man and woman relationship
  - Nancy and Dennis - On Communication "It is a key to the rest of the themes, For sex to be good, there has to be good communication , for everything to fall in place, communication is always number one"
- Sharon -FL Sunday Willy *"This session is really good, I had never attended something like this, for example I like using the clear rules so much these days. These days we talk one at a time, since these sessions started, I have witnessed change in our communication"*



# What Worked: Finance

Saving with a purpose, together and using the Goal Box were the activities that resonated most with couples and Faith Leaders

- Flavia- Gulu Baptist Church- “I had a poor saving culture and bad habits in spending. But with the finance session, we have started saving money with a purpose”
- “We sat down after the finance session and talked about finances. This is something that never used to happen but now I have seen that positive change in my husband in regards to talking about money”
- “Since our marriage I wasn't happy especially on the area of finance, I don't work as yet but now he has improved so much and he even leaves me money to buy things before I even ask for it”

FL had challenges relating the biblical verses and principles to the activities. While the home practice was useful, the in class lessons seemed the most abstract.

- “When we were doing the communication, we mentioned that we shall always be reflecting on the vows but in finance it's not there. I asked them instead to state vows that can be supported by financial agreement”
- “My challenge was in Finance. The biblical principles were hard to explain because they do not relate to finance. I struggled a lot. I explained it in a way that mutual submission leads to financial decisions Rom 12:3. Also relating the measure of faith to finance was hard ”
- “The difference is that in Communication there was a lot of involvement but in finance, it was a bit challenging because men control their money, they do not discuss their Financial Issues , It was challenging to them and switching blame to the others. There were a lot of challenges in Finance”

# What Worked: Sex



Couples report to having understood their Spouses better through understanding their Love languages

- “I liked love languages, It made us learn and understand ourselves. Our love language is red meaning gifts. It was very interesting”
- “We also started practicing love language and I feel very good and loved when I am practicing with my wife”
- “There is one thing that I have realised. His love language is physical touch and acts of service comes second and it even matched with mine in the same order
- They do appreciate that they are directed towards how best they can please and love their partners.
- They extend the love language exercise to their homes
  - The kit however limits practicing with a spouse that did not attend a session because the couples kit does not provide the questions that determine one's love language

They also love the warm ups and signals that the partners can practice to show that they are in the moods for sex

- Douglas- He believes that warm up was more interesting because now he understands the condition to have sex and how to have it

# What Didn't Work: Activities and Themes



- Grow your Love- Newlywed game was too complex and not practiced in class. This in class activity was intended to be justification for Grow Your Love. We never gave explicit reasoning for the questions in grow your love. We never said that communication should also be about knowing more things about one another. There was also no description of the activity in the couple's kit.
  - the couple's kit should work independently of the FL Guide
- No FL accurately gave Love Points and communicated them to couples - couples were motivated to do the practice regardless. Couples believe that the more you practice, the happier one gets. Most FL awarded Love points based on attendance or participation in class.
  - *Maurice- Church of the living saviour "The facilitator did not explain well how to earn points"*
  - *Santa-Ocakacon- "Earning points does not make sense"*
- Finance biblical principles seemed the most abstract and disconnected from the practice. Skilled FLs like Nora could make the connection well but many found it difficult. We are working to develop new Biblical Principles and content for this section.
- Sex Negotiation -culturally there is no "going half way with kissing or cuddling." Kissing means sex. Additionally "delay" raises fear in the woman that the man will go elsewhere
  - Maybe we have to find a "half-way" that ends in orgasm for the man
- Lack of differentiation between Home Practice and in class activities. Most FL turned in class activities into Home Practice.



# What Didn't Work: Components



*"FL Guide is More effective than videos, because Vincent's videos are not detailed enough"*

- Tablet - Despite being asked to consider the tablet as a church assets, people immediately wrote their names on the tablet cover and inserted their SIM card. It was clearly valuable to people for communication and creating a sense of community through the group's sharing on WhatsApp while also creating a sense of reciprocity, but we don't know if it added significant impact in terms of comprehension of the materials. We speculate that the videos offered significant benefits in the early comprehension but offered significantly less value as FLs became more comfortable using the guide.
- Couples Facebook page - There was virtually no uptake of the couple's FB book because most couples did not have a smartphone or the ability to access FB. We will be eliminating this component.

# Challenges

## Mobilisation

- *“I had to enter personal budget and put in personal resources to make it work but it is worth the spending in the end “*

## *Kit + Guide Matching*

- *“ At first matching the pages of the FL guide and the Couples Guide was hard but then, you adapt to how it works” - Rev Jane Todora*

## Pacing

- 12 sessions is a good
- Sessions should be once a week, not twice a week
- Many FL combined two sessions in order to complete them all in the allotted time
- “Its is really good because it gives room for practice but to people's busy schedules, if they keep coming, they are as well missing out on something else. If it was up to me, I would do it once a week, combine two sessions and then give them a whole week to practice”

## Details in the couple's kit

- Stories should be added to the couple's kit
  - “Stories make people understand so fast and with ease. It is from Atim and Okello's story that was read in the session that I awakened on finance and learnt the importance of saving and so stories should be included in couples kit. It is so powerful what a relatable story can do in our minds”
  - “More details should be added to the couple's kit and more explanations and stories to reflect on”
- Include full love language quiz in the couple's kit
  - Couples are interested in being channels of these sessions to other people as well.
  - Also, in case a spouse has not attended the session and this has to be done at home.

# Adaptations + Improvements

## FL Improvements to BO

- Final Ceremonies - couple's making food, park rental, activities, testimonials and introductions of pet names, physical affection
- Additional support to couple's beyond sessions
- Husband and Wife Facilitation
  - Many FL asked their spouse to join in facilitating the sessions. This lead to more support, credibility, and more opportunities to open up, testify and be relationship models.
- One on One teaching
- FL demonstrating activities with their partner first - giving their own testimonials
- FLs co-teaching with their partner - "Many times I have eaten and gone to bed without appreciating my wife. I feel like this is the first area I will apply in my process of Becoming One."
- Elevated group sharing- this was testimonials on home practice but also throughout sessions. As couples said, "it kept it lively"
  - "I learned best through sharing of experiences and made me understand that what seems to be hard for me but is not only hard for me but many people also have similar challenges. And it's easy to get a solution when you share."  
- Douglas



# Sustainability: User Advocacy

## Couples recruit other couples

- Also couples that felt deeply the applicability of these sessions to other couples in their communities by default mobilised them to join the sessions
  - These include other couples who they are friends with as well as neighbors to come for the sessions
    - Todora- Announced the first time in church and 6 couples registered
      - Others joined later “Recommended to by the ones attending”
    - Couple’s recruiting others is also a mobilisation strategy to get more couples and inconsistent spouses
      - Opakasi - “Everyone who participates is supposed to bring another couple another time”
      - Father Kolo - “Used the same participants to find out on some that were missing out sometimes”

## Sharing / Teaching/ Advising

- Wanting to share exercises, and model their changed behavior

# Sustainability: Branding



## World Vision Branding/ Association

- Komakech -Believes that they attended mainly for the content and not because World vision was behind it
- “I believe that these themes address the issues that couples encounter and so this is an opportunity that has found them and they can not let it go”
- Three FLs have reported to not using world vision because of the expectation it would put into the minds of the participants
  - “If I had mentioned World vision, then the couples would have come not with an interest of learning but focused on the possible support”
  - “There would have been a very big difference if I had used world vision, I would have had a lot of attendance fluctuations in case the couples came for the first few times and were not receiving anything, they would not come back”
  - “I introduced the programme as a church programme which was an advantage and made it sustainable. When you say World Vision, the expectation of the people will be too much”

# Tablet Value



*"You can use the Faith leader's guide without the tablet but you can not use the tablet with out the FL guide" - Freeman Sunday*



# Gender + Equality

## The Genesis Mandate and Gender

- The genesis mandate is a strong platform to begin discussions of gender equality in the home.
- *Simon- John Wodke* "I went to the Market for the first time and bought passion fruits and came and made juice before my wife and children. This was strange to the family members. My 12 year old daughter asked me 'Daddy why are the one making juice today, is mummy sick?' Then I told my family that we are all equal and so I can do any work in the home just like mum. It was amazing to the family, now even the children have started doing extra work without supervision or instruction."
  - He believes that it was because of the Biblical quotes - Genesis Mandate -in the kit accompanied by the clear illustrations of a successful family. And that cooperation between him and his wife in home practice is making him realize the benefits of the program.
- *Prossy - rev kolo-* "To me as a lady, this session is good because it points out the equal opportunities for us as human beings and I felt that I am more protected as a woman from the content of this training"
- *F-" Men would think that they are more superior than women, but here is the bible telling us about our equal opportunities"*

## Potential Risks

- "If only the woman comes to the session and learns these things, she would come home and say 'Yes, we are all equal'. The man would then think she is trying to change the norms of the family. The Faith Leader should make sure both are participating so it does not become a source of conflict."
- A few FLs who had been through CoH training were still not convinced of women's equality as expressed in the Genesis Mandate and suggested it should be revised and that clear roles for men and women in the home should be spelled out.
  - "within communication what has to be improved is the Genesis mandate critical explanation on man being the head. The hierarchy should be set in every home there should be leadership"
  - "it doesn't matter how good the woman's idea is it has to come as a suggestion then the man can decide"

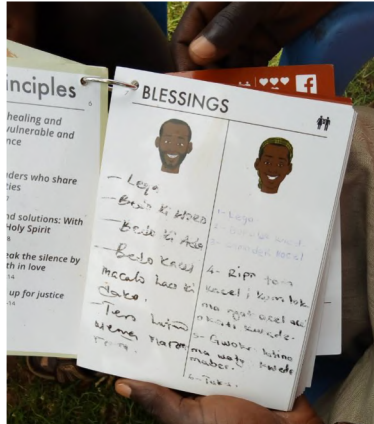
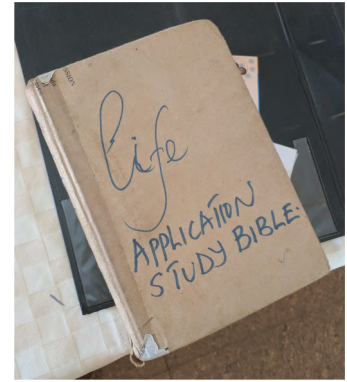
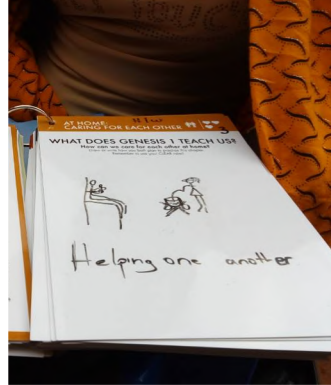
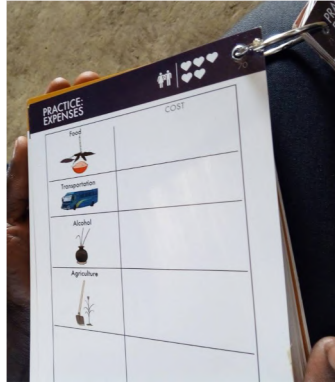
# Recommendations from Couples



## Recommendations from couples

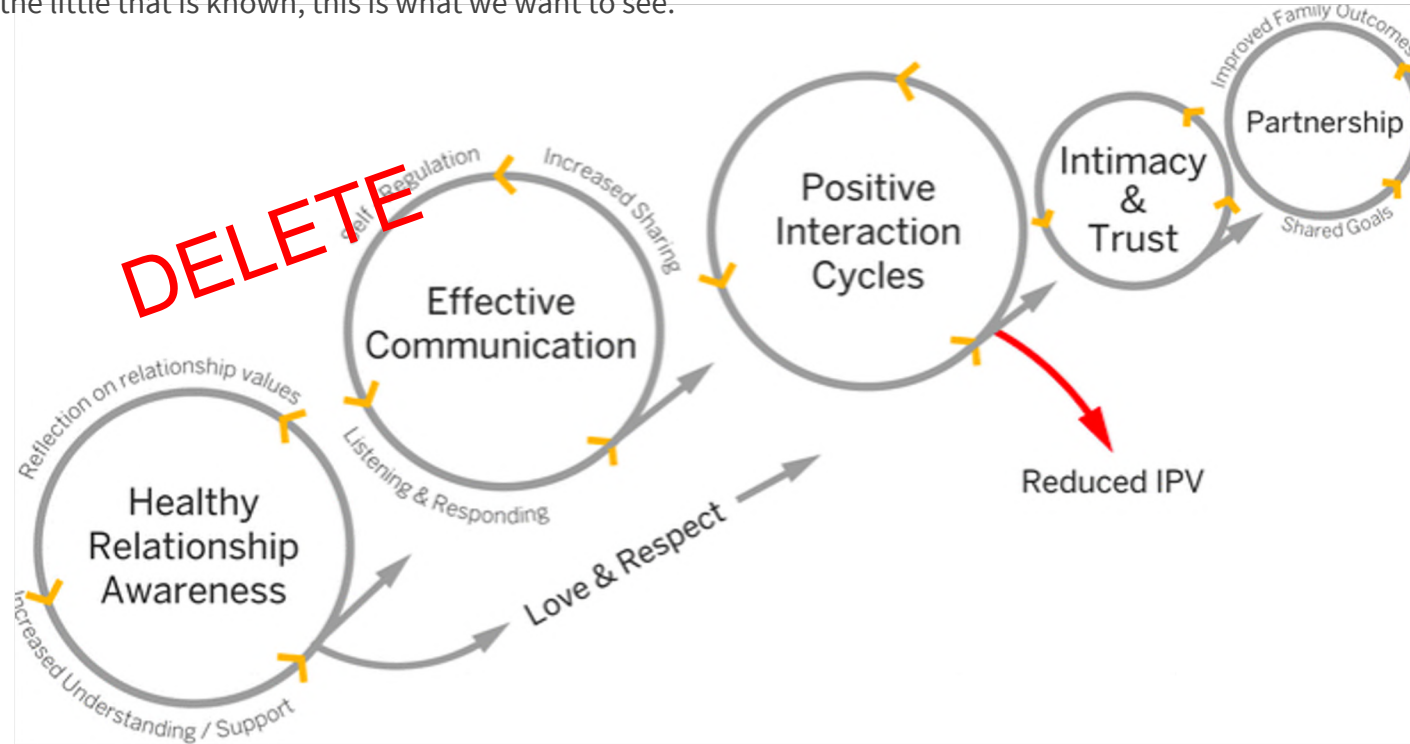
- More kits for more couples
  - "It would be great for program to be introduced and organized at Village level to capture all their targets not just those who go to church. Everyone needs this kind of program." - Samuel
- Longer program
  - "The training should be given more time because it's developing christians and couples"
- More themes
- Include youth intending to be married
- There should be a leader/ representative among the couples. This person could also do the recaps
- Broadcast the program on the radio so many people can benefit. Wants it on a particular radio station.

## Scratch page - extra photos here



# Process of Change\*

In a program with studied and proven impact, the below changes were seen in couples. From the little that is known, this is what we want to see.



\*As identified by Elizabeth Starrman, [Exploring Couples' Process of Change in the context of SASA!](#); a violence against women and HIV prevention intervention in Uganda