Girls Empowerment Star

The Girls Empowerment Star helps monitor girls’ perceptions of the opportunities and empowerment in their lives. It involves focus group discussions with girls ages 12-16.

Materials include:

1. Girls Empowerment Star
2. Process Summary
3. Guidance Notes
4. Observer Worksheet: Translation Workshop
5. Observer Worksheet: Ratings Tally Chart
6. Focus Group Report Form
7. Programme Unit (PU) Report
1. Girls Empowerment Star

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Key Question</th>
<th>Response (circle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Household work</td>
<td>Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School</td>
<td>Do girls complete at least nine years of school?</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Speaking up</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Feeling valued</td>
<td>Do girls’ concerns matter in this community?</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
Girls Empowerment Star: Discussion prompts

1. Household work: Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?

   Discussion prompts:
   - Girls’ versus boys’ household roles and responsibilities
   - Girls’ available time for their studies
   - Girls’ time for recreational activities

   Scale examples:
   1: Never. Girls/women do all the work in and around the home.
   5: Always. Girls/women and boys/men share all household chores and childcare equally.

2. School: Do girls complete at least nine years of school?

   Discussion prompts:
   - Girls’ feelings about school
   - Girls’ completion of primary school
   - Girls’ transition to secondary school
   - Community leaders and parents opinions about the importance of girls’ education

   Scale examples:
   5: Always. All girls complete secondary school.

3. Speaking up: Do girls say what matters to them in front of an adult male?

   Discussion prompts:
   - Girls’ freedom of expression
   - Girls’ ability to ask for what they need
   - Girls ability to express priorities and concerns

   Scale examples:
   1: Never. Girls do not say what matters to them when an adult male is present or can hear them.
   5: Always. Girls openly say what they think when an adult male is present or can hear them.

4. Money: Do girls help decide what to spend money on?

   Discussion prompts:
   - Girls access money
   - Girls control money
   - Girls influence how money is spent in the household

   Scale examples:
   1: Never. Girls never access money or make decisions on how to spend it.
   5: Always. Girls access and control money, and influence household expenses.
5. **Marriage: Do girls decide when they marry?**

**Discussion prompts:**
- Girls’ age at marriage
- Girls’ ability to choose a spouse
- Girls’ ability to say whether or not they want to marry

**Scale examples:**
1: Never. Adults decide if, whom and when a girl marries.
5: Always. Girls decide for themselves if, whom and when they marry.

6. **Pregnancy: Do girls decide if they get pregnant?**

**Discussion prompts:**
- Girls’ knowledge of pregnancy and how to prevent it
- Girls’ role in deciding whether or not to become pregnant
- Girls’ role in deciding when to get pregnant

**Scale examples:**
1: Never. It is never a girl’s decision whether or when to become pregnant.
5: Always. Girls always choose whether and when they get pregnant.

7. **Safety: Do girls feel safe in this community?**

**Discussion prompts:**
- When, where and why girls feel safe or unsafe
- What girls do about feeling unsafe
- Who protects girls
- What girls or others can do to improve girls’ safety

**Scale examples:**
1: Never. Girls do not feel safe at home, at school or in the community.
5: Always. Girls feel safe everywhere at any time.

8. **Feeling valued: Do girls’ concerns matter in this community?**

**Discussion prompts:**
- Girls’ concerns are heard and addressed
- Girls are viewed as decision-makers
- Girls have role models and mentors
- Girls have safe places to meet with peers and mentors
- Girls have someone to go to for help

**Scale examples:**
1: Never. Girls’ concerns are never treated as important.
5: Always. Girls’ concerns are always treated as important and addressed.
### 2. Process Summary

#### 1. Plan process
- Identify 2 Programme Units (PUs) with programmes that engage girls ages 12-16.
- Select 3 communities per PU where there are project Because I am a Girl (BIAAG) projects/programmes implemented.
- Select 4 female facilitators who normally work in other PUs, and train them on the tool.
- Invite 8-10 girls ages 12-16 to a language adaptation workshop.
- Invite girls ages 12-16 per community for focus groups after the translation workshop.
- Conduct informed consent process with caregivers who agree each girl can participate.
- Plan focus groups with 6-8 girls maximum, for a total of four focus groups per community.
- Schedule focus groups, and plan for an alternate location and time.
- Print enough copies of the tool for one per participant (up to 32 per community).
- Prepare flipchart paper and markers for a large tally chart of ratings for focus group discussion.

#### 2. Hold translation workshop
Hold a workshop to translate the tool into the language girls speak:
- Discuss the tool and develop translation that girls understand.
- Write translations for key questions in Observer Worksheet: Translation Workshop.
- Write a glossary to foster common understanding and translation across Plan facilitators.
- Hold a meeting with facilitators to ensure consistent approach to tool translation.

#### 3. Conduct focus groups
Set up and run 4 focus groups per community of 6-8 participants each of girls ages 12-16 who participate regularly in BIAAG project activities:

**Facilitator:**
- Conduct informed assent process with girls.
- Exercise 1: Ask each girl to mark her own responses on her own copy of the tool.
- Exercise 2: Ask girls to discuss reasons behind their ratings and any differences of opinion.
- Play dynamic games around girls’ empowerment themes at start, in middle and end of activity.

**Observer:**
- On flipchart paper or a chalkboard tally the chart with ratings per question for discussion.
- Use the Observer Ratings Tally Chart to document ratings, and take notes on key discussion points and examples.
- Photograph chart of tallied ratings to submit with reports.

#### 4. Complete forms
After the focus groups:

**Facilitator/Observer team:**
- Summarize participants’ main discussion points and quotes in a Facilitator Focus Group Report for each group.
- Include examples and reasons participants gave for different ratings.
- Include observations on differences in opinion in each group.
- Save photo of large Observer Ratings Tally Chart as .jpg file.

**PU focal point:**
- Summarise numbers of focus group participants across communities in focus group participant summary report.
- Review ratings tally charts and focus group reports.
- Reflect upon key questions and write responses in PU Reports.

#### 5. Submit forms and share results
**PU focal point:**
- Please e-mail to BIAAG global M&E technical lead (jennifer.schulte@plan-international.org):
  - Observer Ratings Tally Chart indicating clearly which focus group the chart came from.
  - Photographs of Tally Charts in .jpg format.
  - Focus group reports.
  - PU Reports.
- Prepare reports/presentations of findings for girls/communities.
- Discuss the findings with communities during the Annual Participatory Programme Review (APPR) and identify action points for communities, other organisations and Plan.
3. Guidance Notes

Step 1: Plan the process

Establish a timeline of activities.

- Develop a detailed schedule of manager, facilitator and observer activities throughout steps 1-5.
- Ensure that scheduled activities respect school schedules, local holidays, elections or other significant events.
- Ensure that there are enough female community development facilitators available to form four teams of two—Facilitator and Observer—to conduct the translation workshop, and the focus groups.

Select two Programme Units (PUs) and three communities per PU.

- Choose PUs that implement Because I am a Girl (BIAAG) projects in communities.
- Choose communities where BIAAG projects works directly with adolescent girls ages 12-16.
- Identify a staff focal point for each PU to manage the process and submit reports.

Select female community development facilitators from other PUs to lead the translation workshop and focus groups with girls.

- Please ensure the facilitators do not normally work in the selected communities.

Select female Plan staff as observers to take notes on the translation workshop and focus groups.

- Observers document girls’ ratings, and write down key discussion points, examples and quotes.

Hold a 2-day training of the facilitators and observers on this tool. Please include sessions on the following:

- Facilitation skills and techniques
- Gender aware and girl-sensitive approaches
- Child protection and ethics, confidentiality, and informed consent
- Girls empowerment and its different dimensions
- Girls’ Empowerment Star tool and process
- Completing and submitting reports

Hold an information and informed consent session with community leaders and caregivers.

- Conduct information sessions with community leaders, women and men.
- Obtain caregiver informed consent for each girl’s participation in a focus group.
- Schedule focus groups, with an alternate time and location.

Invite adolescent girls ages 12-16 to participate in two-hour focus groups of 6-8 girls each:

- Invite up to 32 girls ages 12-16 who attend school for 4 focus groups. Focus group participants should be as similar to each other as possible.
- Other social and economic profiles of girls, such as those out of school, married, young mothers, or those with mobility impairments, for example, will require 4 additional focus groups per profile of girl. If there are not enough girls of a given profile, consider individual interviews, instead of focus groups.
- To include additional profiles of girls, you can consult Plan programme registration data, education or health programme monitoring data, or population-based statistics that provide demographic information to identify different profiles of girls in a project catchment area.
- If basic data on girl programme participants are not available, ask PU staff to describe the programme target group, and to define different sub-groups of girls in each community where you will implement the tool (e.g., young mothers, disabled, out-of-school, ethnic groups). Then decide whether to do additional focus groups.
- Decide carefully how much time, staff and budget you have to conduct additional focus groups, and plan accordingly.
**Step 2: Conduct a translation workshop**

Plan a 1-2 hour translation workshop in 1 PU.

- **Purpose:** To ensure facilitators know how to translate key questions and discussion prompts in a language girls understand and speak daily.
- **Note:** If there are substantial language differences between the three communities, you may need to run separate translation workshops.
- **Invite 8-10 girls ages 12-16, who regularly attend school to participate in a translation workshop.**
- **Make sure that girls are representative of communities selected for focus groups.**
- **Plan gender-sensitive and child-friendly participatory games at the start of the workshop, and whenever girls’ focus or energy level seems low.**
- **The workshop should include these sessions:**

  **Introduction**
  - Welcome, introduce purpose of the translation workshop.

  **Translate issues, questions and response examples for ‘never’ and ‘always’**.
  - Introduce tool, its issues, key questions, and the response scale.
  - Adjust wording in local language as appropriate throughout the workshop.
  - Ask girls to discuss each issue, question and response option, and what it means for them in their own words. Use discussion prompts provided below.
  - Ask girls for locally relevant examples for the responses: 1 (Never) and 5 (Always).
  - Record examples given on the Observer Worksheet: Translation Workshop.
  - Observe and note how examples may differ for girls with different living situations.
  - Ask girls if they think the issues are relevant for girls like them, or for other profiles of girls.

  **Conclude:**
  - Repeat key points back to the girls.
  - Ask if you have summarised them correctly.
  - Ask for any additional comments.
  - Thank the girls and close the session.

  **Create glossary:**
  - Document local language glossary of key terms for the tool.
  - Share glossary with all Plan facilitators and observers who will implement the tool.
  - Hold a meeting with facilitators who will implement the tool to go through the glossary together.
  - Foster a common understanding and spoken translation of tool for the focus groups.
Step 3: Conduct focus groups
(maximum 2 hours each)

Facilitator:
- Ensure girls are ages 12-16.
- Allow a maximum of 6-8 girls so each has space and time to participate.
- Pace activities for two exercises (see 1 and 2 below):
  - **Group exercise 1**: Rate empowerment issues individually (about 30 minutes).
  - **Group exercise 2**: Discuss as a group different responses to each key question, and examples to illustrate responses (about 1 hour).
- Conduct informed assent process at start of focus group with girls ages 12-16 who have caregiver consent.
- Play participatory games on girls empowerment themes after informed assent process, and after about the first hour (10-15 minutes per game x 2 = 20-30 minutes total).
- Encourage girls to discuss how to improve girls’ empowerment in their community.
- Use focus group discussion prompts and scale examples below.
- Refer to Observer Ratings Tally Chart for discussion of views.
- Ensure that all girls in a group feel comfortable expressing their views and taking turns speaking.
- Explore why different participants rated issues differently.
- Ask why some dimensions are more positive than others; and find out what some underlying reasons might be.
- Emphasise girls’ rights and existing community strengths in the discussion.
- Ask participants if there are profiles of girls not represented in the group.
- Ensure diverse profiles of girls participate in groups for this or future implementations of the tool.

Observer:
- Write good notes on key themes, quotes and examples discussed.
- Help the facilitator make groups feel comfortable, and draw out quiet participants.
- Note any unequal dynamics in the group in the Observer notes.
- Use the Observer Ratings Tally Chart format to draw a group ratings chart on large flipchart paper for discussion.
- Write notes throughout discussion, including key discussion points, examples and quotes. Quality notes are needed to write the final report with the Facilitator after each group discussion.
- Photograph Observer Ratings Tally Chart and save to .jpg format file.
- Complete an electronic version of the ratings tally chart to include with reports submitted.
Step 4: Complete forms

After the focus groups:

- **Facilitator and Observer (as a team):**
  - Summarise participants’ key discussion points in a short written *Facilitator Focus Group Report*.
  - Include observations on differences in opinion in each group.
  - Write down examples and reasons participants gave for different ratings.
  - Save photo of *Observer Ratings Tally Chart* as .jpg or .gif file to submit with reports.

- **PU:**
  - Hold debriefing meeting between facilitator/observer teams and PU manager to reflect upon findings.
  - Summarise numbers of focus group participants across the three communities in a *Participant Summary Report*.
  - Review focus group reports and ratings charts.
  - Reflect upon key questions and write responses in *PU Report*.

Step 5: Submit forms and share results

- Focal point should submit completed forms to *BIAAG global M&E technical lead* (jennifer.schulte@plan-international.org):
  - Photograph of *Observer Ratings Tally Charts* (1 per group)
  - Focus group report forms (1 per group)
  - PU Participant Summary Report
  - PU Report
- Prepare reports/presentations of findings for girls/communities.
- Discuss the findings with communities during the Annual Participatory Programme Review (APPR) and identify action points for communities, other organisations and Plan.
4. Observer Worksheet: Translation Workshop

Please write down local language translations that the Facilitator and girls work out in a translation workshop.

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<th>Translations:</th>
<th>Key Question</th>
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<td>a boy is around?</td>
<td>Do girls say what they think when a boy is around?</td>
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<td>2. School</td>
<td>Do girls complete at least nine years of school?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Speaking up</td>
<td>Do girls share household work equally, including childcare?</td>
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| 2. School | Do girls complete at least nine years of school? |
| 3. Speaking up | Do girls share household work equally, including childcare? |

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| | | | | | |
| Do girls help decide what to spend money on? | Do girls feel safe in this community? | Do girls decide if they get pregnant? | Do girls decide if they get married? | Do girls help decide what to spend money on? |
| | | | | |
| Translation: | Translation: | Translation: | Translation: | Translation: |
| | | | | |
| Do girls' concerns matter in this community? | Do girls feel safe in this community? | Do girls decide if they get pregnant? | Do girls decide if they get married? | |
| Translation: | Translation: | Translation: | Translation: | Translation: |
| | | | | |
| Girls' local examples to explain a 'Never' response | Girls' local examples to explain a 'Always' response | | | |

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</table>
5. **Observer Worksheet: Ratings Tally Chart**  
(1 per focus group)

**Instructions:**
- Please tally ratings on flipchart paper for group discussion using this format.
- Please take a photograph of the large chart. Save photo as a .jpg file for submission with focus group reports.
- Please also type results into this form and save as an electronic file for reporting.

**Community name:**
**Date:**
**Total number of participants:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Key Question</th>
<th>Write # of girls per response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Household work</td>
<td>Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?</td>
<td>Never Seldom Sometimes Often Always</td>
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<td>7. Safety</td>
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</table>
**6. Focus Group Report**

**FACILITATOR/OBSERVER TO DESCRIBE FOCUS GROUP DETAILS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and Programme Unit (PU):</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because I am a Girl (BIAAG) programme or project name:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of focus group:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number participants:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Participant profiles:</td>
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<td>Please describe in writing, for example:</td>
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<td>• Rural or urban</td>
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<tr>
<td>• In school or out of school</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Married or unmarried</td>
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<td>• Disabled</td>
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<td>• Orphaned</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ethnic minority</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Please note here any disruptions during the focus group:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitator name:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observer name:</td>
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</table>

**PLEASE WRITE KEY DISCUSSION POINTS, QUOTES AND EXAMPLES FROM GIRLS ABOUT THEIR EMPOWERMENT STARS.**
FACILITATOR/OBSERVER PLEASE REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

- Did participants rate some issues very high and others very low?
- What reasons and examples did girls give for different ratings?

CONCLUDE:

- What are the key empowerment issues to address?
- Which girls are most affected by these issues? Why?
7. Programme Unit (PU) Reports

SUMMARY REPORT OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of PU:</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community names:</th>
<th>Total # girls in focus groups:</th>
<th>Dates of focus groups:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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PU MANAGER’S REFLECTION REPORT

- What are the key girls’ empowerment issues to address? For which profile(s) of girls?

- What 2 actions can the PU take to strengthen programming/projects for girls’ empowerment over the next year?