

4.3 The River Code

Purpose: to critically analyze issues of dependency syndrome & other negative cultural norms within different groups of a community. Groups can be motivated to suggest possible solutions for the problems they face.

Role Play - River Code is conducted with the help of three people (one woman & two men).

Participants: The role-play can be facilitated with youth and adult groups

Duration: 30-45 min

Materials: sufficient space to do a role-play (preferably outside). A road can serve as a river

Process: The facilitator explains to the 3 people what their role is. The three prepare to perform the role-play. After the role play has taken place, the facilitator asks the audience (community members) a number of questions to reflect on what they have seen.

The role-play is about a couple who need to go to a wedding. This is on the other side of a river. They go and travel. When coming at the river, they see that the water is very high. It is hard to cross. There is a strong farmer at work. He volunteers to assist them. The husband accepts the assistance. The wife does not. In the end the husband asks the farmer to be carried to the other side. The wife starts looking along the river, and in the end, finds a bridge that brings her to the other side.

Reflection after the role play:

What did you see? What did you hear? Who are the characters in the play? If it were you, which character would you want to be, the two men or the lady who refused to be carried? Why?

Look at all these characters and think of them as your relatives. If the strong man (farmer) was your father, brother, son or husband, what advice would you give him? If he insists on carrying them, what should be done with him? What advice would you give to the man who was carried? What advice would you give to the lady?

Looking at development, what is the river? The wedding? The farmer? The two men? The lady? Give examples of such projects. According to you, why are there many projects failing? As the people who know, what should we do to avoid these failures? But you had not consulted them in the beginning, so how do you come and tell them to take over what they had not owned?

