Enhancing Gender Equity through Participatory Communication

Developing Media and Outreach Tools

FHE has developed media and outreach tools to improve gender equality and women's empowerment. These tools were developed based on a gender barrier analysis.

What are these tools?

- **Gender Outreach Group**
- **Image Box**
- **Comic Book**
- **Participatory Theater and Cinema Screening**

What Challenges Do These Tools Address?

- The power imbalance between husbands and wives
- The gap in women's involvement in community decision making
- Women's low levels of participation and poor development outcomes
- Unlocks the husband and wife's capacity to combat harmful traditional practices (e.g. Early Marriage, FGM)
- Encourages men and boys' engagement in domestic chores
- Enhances female headed household's ability to be involved in diversified livelihood activities.

How are the Tools Implemented?

Gender Outreach Groups (GoG) are couples from 15-20 households.
- The participants are selected from the same or adjacent villages and meet bimonthly to discuss eight gender themes
- Community volunteers selected by the community leaders and members are trained to play a facilitation role.
- The volunteers use the **Image Box** and **Comic Books** to lead discussions on topics such as:
  - ✓ Harmony between husband and wife for improved family life
  - ✓ Mutual respect in the family
  - ✓ Parents as role models for joint decision making on household assets
  - ✓ Women's participation in development structures and the impact on the household and local economy
  - ✓ Girl's education and food security
  - ✓ Women's access to extension services
  - ✓ Men's support in household tasks

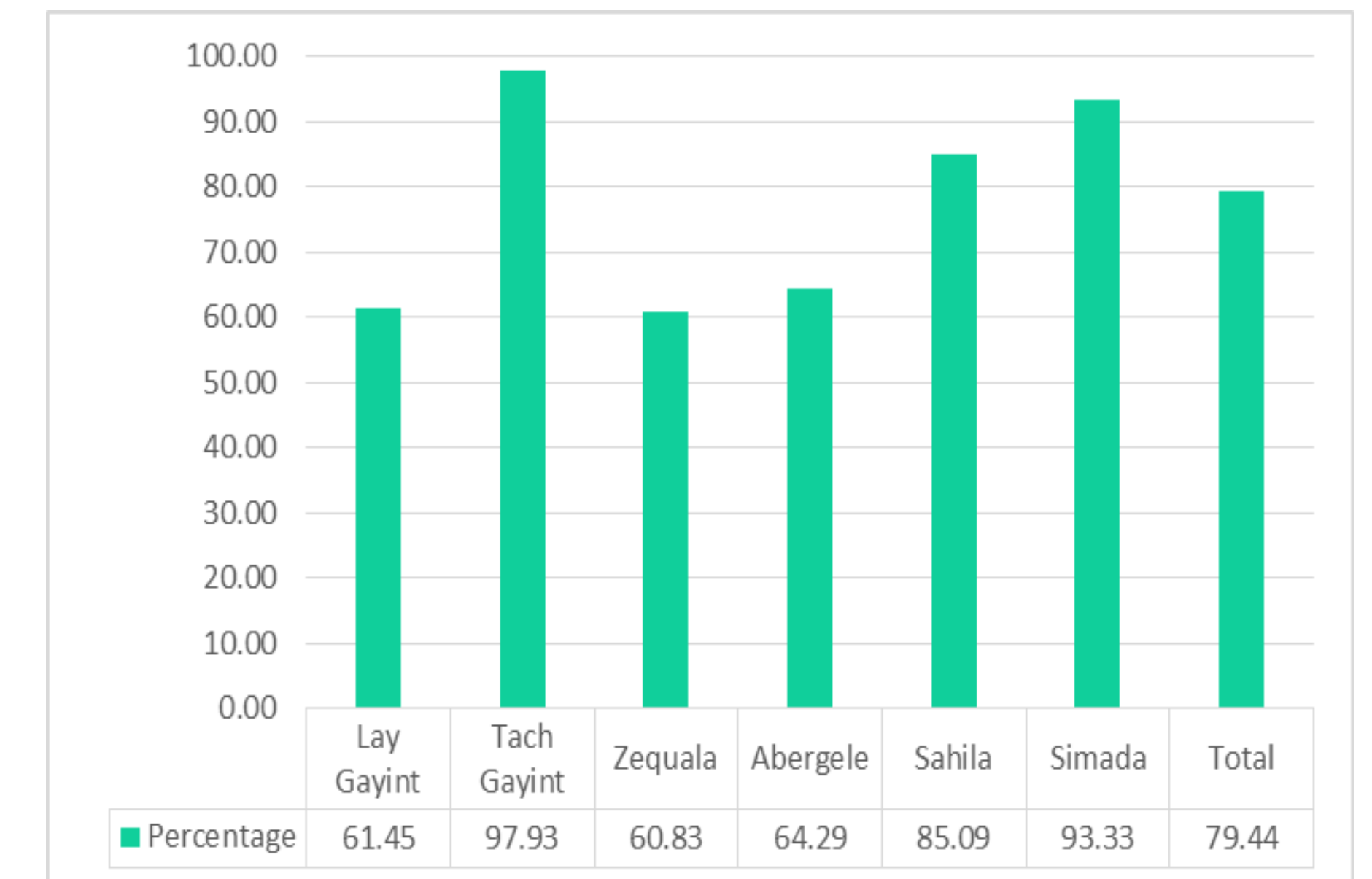Community Facilitator for a Gender Outreach Group

Improved Gender Relations

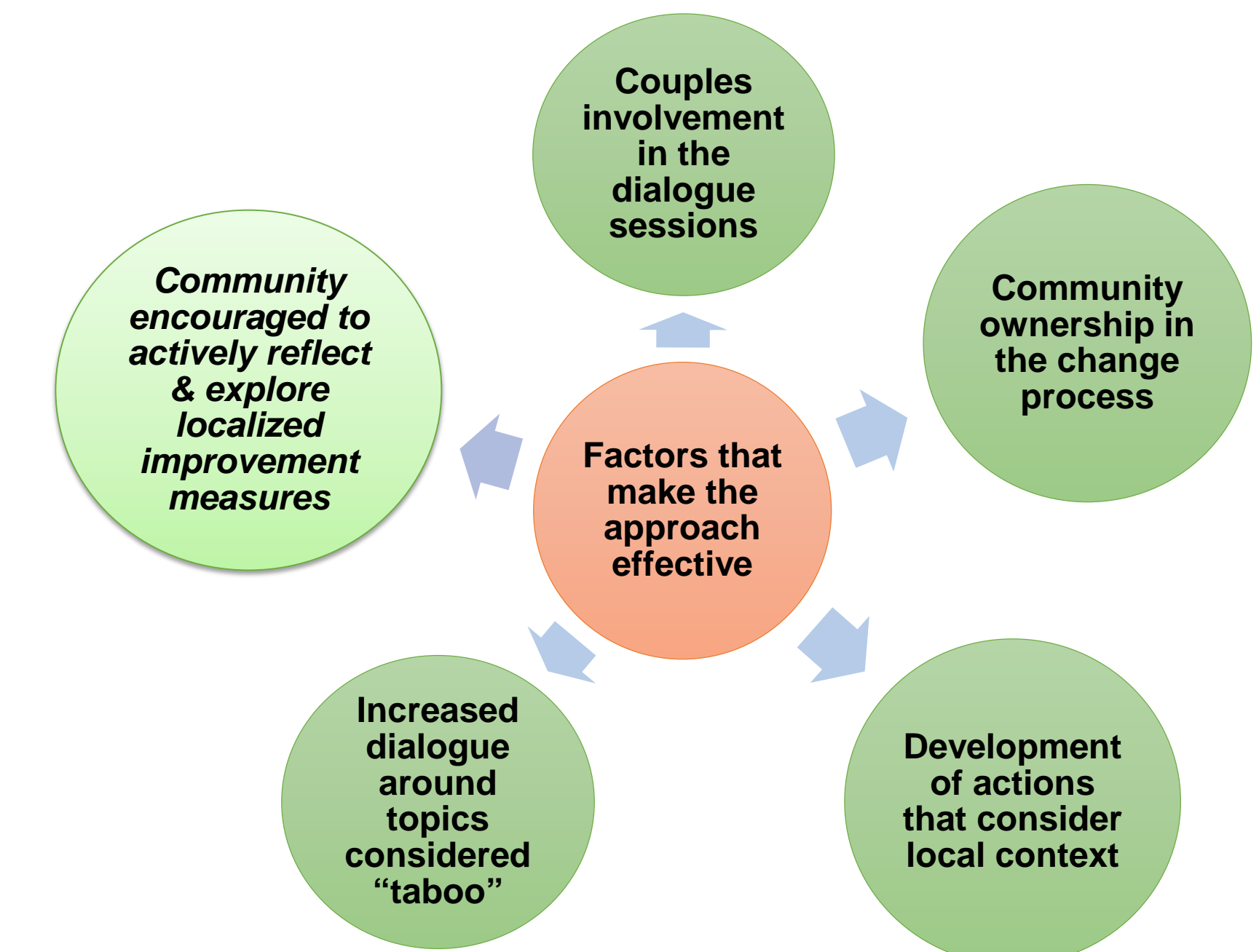A survey conducted in 2017 and monitoring data indicate incremental change in:

- ✓ community motivation to take the lead in promoting positive norms and joint decision making
- ✓ increased levels of women's engagement in decisions at the household and community levels
- ✓ fewer disputes between husbands and wives due to improved joint decision making practices
- ✓ strengthened social networks among the GoG members
- ✓ collaborative action towards combating gender based violence
- ✓ involvement of men and boys in domestic tasks
- ✓ Increased access to services for women

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Percentage of Men Engaged in Domestic Chores

	Lay Gayint	Tach Gayint	Zequala	Abergele	Sahila	Simada	Total
Percentage	61.45	97.93	60.83	64.29	85.09	93.33	79.44

Factors that make the approach effective

- Couples involvement in the dialogue sessions
- Community ownership in the change process
- Development of actions that consider local context
- Increased dialogue around topics considered "taboo"
- Community encouraged to actively reflect & explore localized improvement measures
- Factors that make the approach effective

Further Needs
- Familiarization of the approach with relevant government structures and non-government organizations to enable scale-up
- A stronger system to measure change over time