

## EXAMPLE CASE STUDY

### GENDER AND PARTICIPATION

#### CASE BACKGROUND

An NGO working on women’s empowerment in the Middle East and North Africa region is starting a new programme in a Middle Eastern country. The goal of the programme is to strengthen the influence local women have on community initiatives at the local, provincial and national level. Before starting the programme, the NGO wants to see what the current perception of women’s participation in community initiatives is. The NGO wants to learn more about what kind of initiatives women are already participating in and what the prevailing ideas about their participation are in the community. To explore this topic, the NGO sets up a few meetings and invites women from the community to participate and interview each other using the following inquiry. You can find the online inquiry via <https://secure.sprockler.com/collector/a42ef>. In total, 46 women were interviewed through Sprockler.

#### INQUIRY

As usual, the inquiry starts with a story question. This gives the women the opportunity to hear each other’s stories and learn more about the current situation. After the story question, a number of interpreting questions are asked to learn more about the story and to get a more detailed insights. Next, a few context questions are asked to learn more about the perceptions of women in general.

**1. Could you share a story about a time when you or another woman tried to influence an initiative in your community or in the whole country?**

**2. My story is about... (Select maximum 2 options.)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of safety     | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal learning/training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water or sanitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food                | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace building processes   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter             | <input type="checkbox"/> Social relations           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS            | <input type="checkbox"/> Community life             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other health issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Family life                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem                |

- Creativity
- Freedom

Other, namely ...

**3. The main character in my story is...**

- Myself
- Another woman: a friend, family member or someone from the community

**4. In the initiative described in your story, you/another woman is a...**



**5. The tone of voice of your story is...**



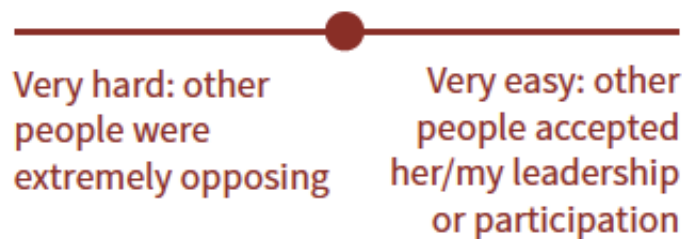
**6. This story makes me feel... (Select maximum 2 options.)**

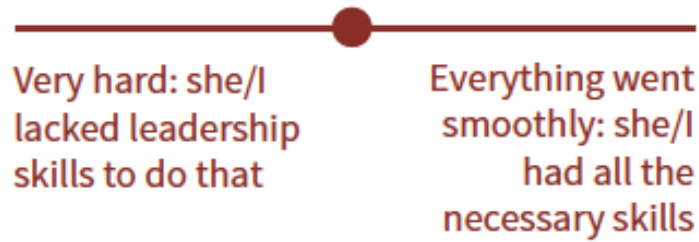
- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Worried      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Powerful    | <input type="checkbox"/> Alone        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proud       | <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrated   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hopeful     | <input type="checkbox"/> Disappointed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inspired    | <input type="checkbox"/> Powerless    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Determined  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sad          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connected   | <input type="checkbox"/> Angry        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surprised   | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indifferent | <input type="checkbox"/> Other...     |

**7. Events like the one in my story happen...**



**8. How easy/difficult was it for you/the woman in the story to participate in the initiative?**





Apart from questions about the story, a few more questions were asked to gain insight in the context of the storyteller.

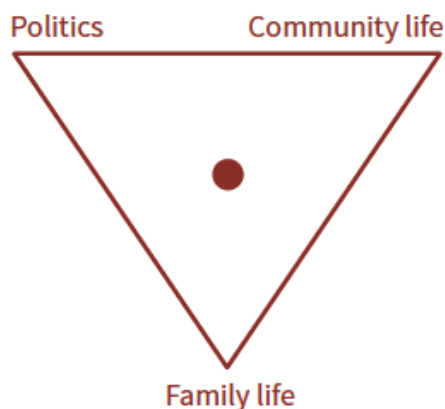
**9. I think of myself and other women as ...**



**10. My community thinks of me and other women as ...**



**10. I see inequality between women and men in my community mainly in the sphere of ...**



As a last part, some questions are asked about the women themselves.

**11. When were you born?**

- Before 1950
- Between 1950 and 1959
- Between 1960 and 1969
- Between 1970 and 1979
- Between 1980 and 1989
- Between 1990 and 1999
- In or after 2000

**12. What is your educational level?**

- Basic literacy
- Primary school – not completed
- Primary school completed
- High school – not completed

- High school completed
- College/university
- Other, namely ...

**13. Do you consent with your story being shared with others? It will always be anonymous.**

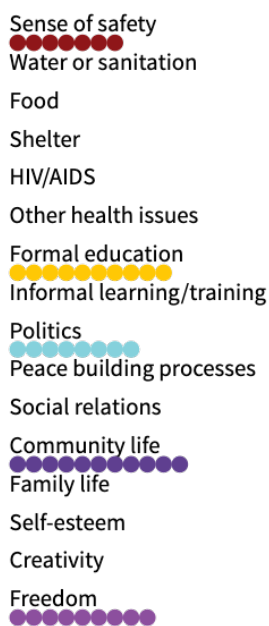
- Yes
- No

## INTERPRETATION

After having finished the data collection and having done some initial interpretation of the results, the NGO organised another meeting where they invited the women who had participated to go over the results with them and interpret them together. The NGO also took some time to discuss what the programme could entail based on their stories.

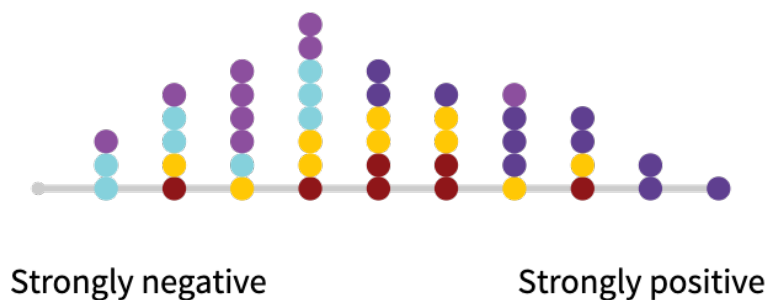
The results of the data collection can be found in the online interactive report: <https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/examplecasegender>. A few of the most interesting results are highlighted here.

**2. My story is about...:**



From the answers to the second question about what the story was about, we can see that women mainly talk about five areas of the community initiatives – sense of safety, formal education, politics, community life and freedom – which can indicate that these are the main areas of interest. It could also indicate that women do not feel confident to participate in initiatives related to other areas and further research is necessary to learn more about this.

If we continue with these five main areas, question number 5 about a negative or positive tone becomes visual like this:



From the image above, we can see that stories related to politics and freedom are negative, while stories related to community life are mainly positive. It will be interesting to read the stories about politics and freedom, which are indicated as more negative, to understand what is hiding there. The positive stories about community life are also worth attention as they provide positive examples of initiatives where women had a role in a community initiative. In the Visualizer and the interactive report, it is possible to click on the dots and read the story behind the dot to find out the whole story.

The image above can be compared with the image below where the answers to the question about how easily people accepted the woman's participation (question 8a) are plotted. It seems that one of the main reasons why the story was positive or negative could be similar to the extent to which other people accepted the woman's leadership or participation.

8.a How easy/difficult was it for you/the woman in the story to participate in the initiative?



Very hard: other people were extremely opposing

Very easy: other people accepted my/her leadership

When comparing the same image with the one below (answers to the question 8b) about the woman's skills), we do not see the same pattern. Apparently, the lack or possession of skills in one area or another is not the reason for the story to be perceived as positive or negative.

8.b How easy/difficult was it for you/the woman in the story to participate in the initiative?



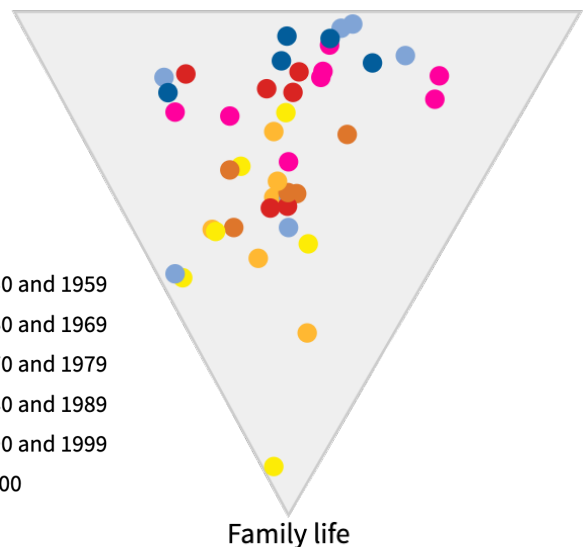
Very hard: she/I lacked the leadership skills to do that

Everything went smoothly: she/I had all the necessary skills

Another interesting result can be seen when comparing women's age to in which sphere they see inequality. More younger women who answered this inquiry consider this to be in the sphere of politics and community life and more older women consider it to be in the family life sphere

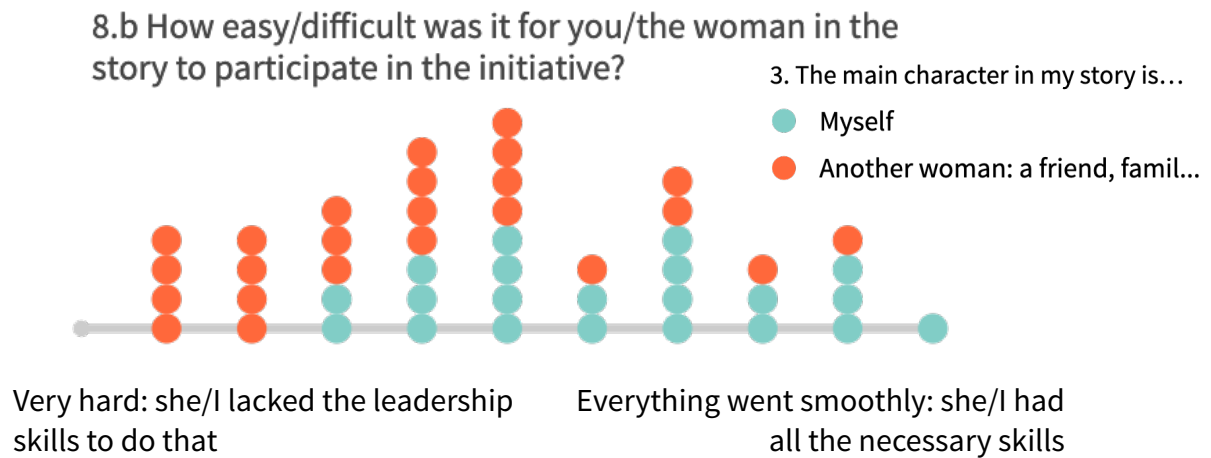
11. I see inequality between women and men in my community mainly in the sphere of ...

Politics Community life



- Age
- Before 1950
  - Between 1950 and 1959
  - Between 1960 and 1969
  - Between 1970 and 1979
  - Between 1980 and 1989
  - Between 1990 and 1999
  - In or after 2000

One more interesting case is that women, who talked about themselves in their stories, viewed their skills as not sufficient. In the meantime, women, who talked about other women, viewed their skills as more sufficient. This might indicate that self-esteem could be an issue worth addressing to assist these women.



These visuals provide interesting information for the NGO and can be useful when planning the programme. For example, it showed the fields where women currently undertake initiatives and showed that the older women who shared their stories have a different perception about where gender inequality mainly takes place than the younger women. By using these results and the ones from the other answers not portrayed here, the NGO can start the conversation about strengthening women's influence on initiatives.