Activity: Directive and non-directive reflection

Time (approximate):   30-45 minutes
Materials needed: 3 or 4 decisions-making scenarios on slips of paper

Facilitators and community activists are often trying to encourage communities to change in different ways. Sometimes it is useful for an external person to give information or suggest actions. This is called being *directive*.   When using a *directive* approach, the facilitator often does most of the talking and they often only use *closed* questions.

However, when dealing with social norms, a *non-directive* approach is often most useful so that they do not feel pushed into specific actions and their actions are more likely to bring about sustainable change.   When using a *non-directive* approach, the community members often do most of the talking and the facilitator uses *open* questions.

This activity supports participants in distinguishing between directive and non-directive approaches and in making wise choices about when to be directive and when to support a group of community in sharing information they have between them and in making decisions for themselves.

The decision-making scenarios should be only 2-3 lines long and examples could be

- planning a community meeting to discuss early marriage
- networking with neighbouring communities to build a joint community health centre
- tackling gender-based violence in their community

Steps:
1. The facilitator explains the difference between *directive* and *non-directive* approaches when working with community groups and between *open* and *closed* questions
2. In groups of 4-8 participants, each group takes a decision-making scenario and discusses whether a directive or non-directive approach is most appropriate to support a community in carrying out the task
3. Each group devises 10 open, non-directive questions to support the community in deciding what actions to take to achieve their aim
4. The questions are shared and the activity finishes with participants saying how they might adapt their approach to be less directive when working with community groups.

Closed questions	Open questions
- Are girls getting married too young in your community? - How many school girls got married last year in your community? - Do girls drop out of school when they get married? - Do girls have problems with childbirth when they get married very young?	- What kind of issues are there in your community about the age that girls get married? - How do these make you feel? - If you were going to make any changes, what would you like them to be? - Who would support these changes? And who would oppose them? Why? - How can you bring about these kinds of changes? What are the barriers? What support would be helpful?