

# MEN'S ENGAGEMENT FOR IMPROVING MOTHER AND CHILD NUTRITION SILA PROVINCE, CHAD

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**CONTEXT:** In 2016, Concern Worldwide conducted an assessment to understand the social determinants and nutritional barriers to maternal and child health. Key findings:

- Difficult for mothers to have a balanced and regular diet
- Precarious living conditions and multiple workload for women
- Restrictions on their access to resources
- Limited decision-making on their health and that of their children
- Control of husbands over finance and essential goods.

**Household work burden prevents women from fulfilling their potential and affects their well-being and that of their children.**

**DESIGN:** As part of a **5-year multisector project funded by Irish Aid** in Sila Province, Concern committed to improve health and nutrition outcomes. The project has embraced a **gender transformative** approach aimed at **engaging men as equitable and supportive partners, fathers and caregivers.**

### Main objectives :

- Improve nutritional status of women and children through active promotion of **gender equality** within the household
- Increase **men's understanding** on the negative impact of gender inequality
- Involve them in domestic task-sharing to **alleviate women's suffering**
- Promote **joint-decision-making and management of household resources**

### RESULTS:

- **Increased community awareness** relating to the conditions of women and girls
- **Growing interest** of men to take part in household activities
- **Commitments** to improve women's conditions
- More men **accompanying women & children to the health centre**

Women over time are **increasingly consulted** in household decisions for health-related spending (Graph 1).

### IMPLEMENTATION:

In order to provoke reflection and encourage change, female **Care Group Volunteers (CGVs)** and **their male partners** participated together in gender transformative dialogue sessions :

- Each CGV visits women in their homes **with gender-transformative nutrition messages**
- Men who are selected as **agents of change** are trained in the use of context-specific images to sensitize groups of men at community level
- The sessions include **12 context-specific thematic modules** focusing on gender transformation over a 12-month period
- **10 couples** per village are trained
- Led by Concern Worldwide animators, the 3-4 hour session can be **all male/all female or mixed**

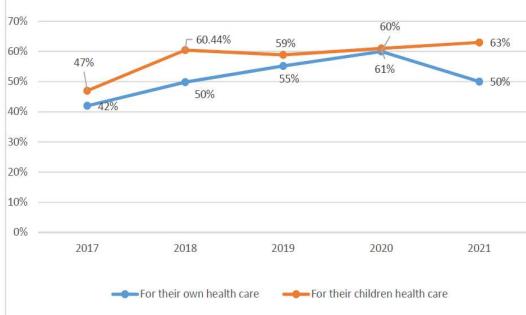
### Our observations:

- **Acceptance** of gender transformative approach by the community leaders
- Appreciation of the themes developed through **pictures & images**
- Women & men are **comfortable discussing gender issues** together
- **Active involvement & coaching** by the Provincial Delegation of Women and Family during mass sensitisation helped build synergies and improved coverage of the approach in the project area

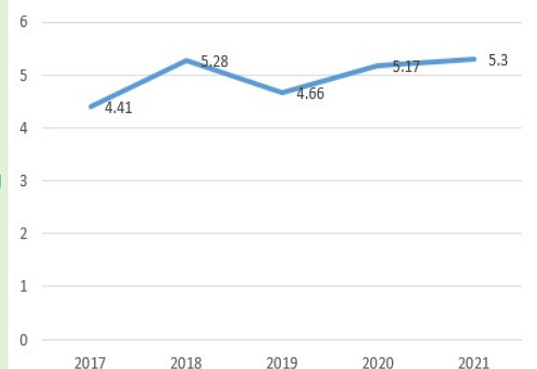


Men attending session with a father looking after his child, Kadjaske village, 11 Oct 2022, photo taken by J. M'pia, Concern Worldwide

Graph 1. Decision-making on spending household resources (source: Endline survey, October 2021)



Graph 2: Attitudes related to gender roles (source: endline survey, Oct 2021)



### LESSONS LEARNED:

Attitudes related to gender roles improved overtime, with the **Women Decision Making score increasing** (Graph 2)

### WAY FORWARD:

The promotion of **gender equality** remains one of **Concern Worldwide Chad's main priorities**. Promoting **male engagement** and supporting behavioural change in favour of **positive masculinity** are important elements **for advocacy**.



Session for men engaged in gender transformative, Doroti village, Photo : Concern Worldwide, May 2022