

SESSION 3
OUR MANY IDENTITIES

One Step Forwards

Statements and character cards – India/Nepal



You are a well-known,
respected and influential leader
within the majority relig^{ion} community.



You are a mother of three
who was forced to leave your village
due to flooding and landslides.



Statements and characters cards

– India/Nepal

In this document you can find character cards and statements to edit, print and use when you run the One Step Forwards exercise (found in Session 3 of the Local Changemakers course). These cards and statements have been tailored to the contexts of India and Nepal. Use the following guidance to select which characters and statements to use and to adapt them to your group's particular context.

Statements

Guidance for selecting statements

You will need 12-15 statements. A list of around 30 statements is provided to choose from. The statements are presented in the following five categories:

- Societal respect and personal confidence.
- Ability to make choices.
- Material well-being and security.
- Vulnerability to discrimination or violence.
- Freedom to have and practice your religion.

Choose at least 2 statements from each category, basing your choice on the scenarios you think are most relevant to your context. Adapt the statements if necessary.

SOCIETAL RESPECT AND PERSONAL CONFIDENCE
Your language, religion and culture are respected in your society.
You feel that your opinions matter and that your views are listened to and sought after by those around you.
You are comfortable speaking in public and expressing your opinion.
You feel that your competence is appreciated and respected by those you are close to and the wider community.
ABILITY TO MAKE CHOICES
You are involved in making decisions about major purchases for your household.
You can meet friends and take trips to meet family without asking anyone's permission.
You can go to school, and study and follow the career of your choice.
You can fall in love with the person of your choice, even if they have a different religion than you do.
You can get a divorce if you need to, without fear of being punished by those around you (for example through exclusion from your social networks).
You can vote in national and local elections.
You can have whatever hobbies, play whatever sports, or see whatever films you want.
You can take decisions about your body – for example how many children to have and when.

MATERIAL WELL-BEING AND SECURITY

You and your family are not vulnerable to natural disasters.

You have adequate access to medical care and to social benefits/a safety net in case of illness or unemployment.

You can give your children what they need to grow up healthy and are not afraid for their future.

You know what to do and where to turn for help if you get into difficulties.

You feel that you will be able to progress in your career as you want to.

You have access to plenty of information about HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

VULNERABILITY TO DISCRIMINATION OR VIOLENCE

You have never felt discriminated against because of your ethnicity, caste or religion.

You are not afraid of being stopped by the police and have never been arrested.

You feel safe at home and on the street and are not worried about abuse, sexual harassment or street harassment.

School textbooks give/gave you the impression that people like you are good members of society who can achieve anything.

Your religious, ethnic, or other identity is positively portrayed in the media.

You don't have any problems getting a new ID card, and using your ID card doesn't lead to discrimination.

FREEDOM TO HAVE AND PRACTICE YOUR RELIGION

You can celebrate the most important religious festivals, both with the people close to you and publicly.

You can travel abroad for a pilgrimage, to meet co-believers or to attend an international seminar.

You can pray openly in public and attend your place of worship.

The religious community you belong to can build or open a place of worship without facing problems from the authorities or other groups in society.

You can be open with your worldview to family, friends and colleagues and talk about it in social media without fear of repercussions.

You can acquire, read and share information about your religion or belief freely.

You will not lose your friends or social status if you convert to a different religion.



Character cards

Guidance for selecting and adapting characters

You will need 1 character per participant. The characters proposed on the pages that follow are presented in 5 categories:

- Characters with social, political or religious power and/or relatively few vulnerabilities.
- Characters with vulnerabilities related to the intersection of religion/belief and gender.
- Characters with vulnerabilities related to religious or belief identity.
- Characters with vulnerabilities related to caste, class, migrant status or other factors.
- Other characters.

ADD OR DELETE CHARACTERS

Think about the list of characters provided:

- Are any characters irrelevant for your context – delete these or edit them to make them relevant.
- Are any really important characters for your context missing, for example a person from a particular religious, ethnic or social group? Add these, keeping the character description short. (NB: Do not add many! Unless you have a very big group, you will have to cut characters to match the size of your group.)

SELECT CHARACTERS

- Make sure you include characters from every category.
- No more than one in six characters selected should be from the category with power.
- Choose how many/which characters to select from other categories based on which vulnerabilities are most relevant and important to highlight in your context.
- Include a range of religious/belief identities and a balance of male and female characters.

TAILOR CHARACTERS IF DESIRED

Participants will be able to engage with the characters more fully if you spend a little time contextualising characters to your national context. For example, you could edit the characters to specify the place the character lives, name the state agency they work for etc. This is not essential for the exercise to work.

CATEGORY

Characters with power and/or relatively few vulnerabilities.



You are a well-known, respected and influential leader within the majority religious community.



You are a Western woman working for a development NGO in the capital city.



You are a Pujari at a local Hindu temple.



You are a devout, upper-caste, middle-class Hindu who believes all Indians/Nepalis should return to Hinduism.



You are a parliamentarian representing the party currently in government.



You are a high-ranking military officer.

CATEGORY

Characters with vulnerabilities related to religion and gender.



You are a Hindu woman who is severely beaten by her husband.



You are a Christian woman who is severely beaten by her husband.



**You are a 16-year-old Muslim girl.
Your parents are devout and conservative,
and you live in a small town.
You want to go to university and
do not want to marry at a young age.**



**You are a 16-year-old Hindu girl.
Your parents are devout and conservative,
and you live in a small town.
You want to go to university and
do not want to marry at a young age.**



**You are an unemployed single mother
living in a morally conservative
Christian community.**



**You are a Hindu woman
engaged to a Muslim man.
Both families oppose the marriage.**



**You are a Buddhist woman
who is married with 2 children.
Your husband has converted to Islam.**



**You are a Sikh transgender woman.
You wish to come out to your family.**

CATEGORY

Characters with vulnerabilities related to religious or belief identity.



**You are a Dalit woman who has converted
from Hinduism to Christianity.**



**You are a young Muslim man from a rural area.
You don't have a birth certificate to prove your
citizenship status.**



**You are a scheduled caste Muslim man
working as a street vendor in a small city.**



**You are a young man
from the Ahmadiyya community.**



**You are an Adivasi man and follow
the traditional religion or your tribe.**



**You are an atheist man. Your activism
for secularism is well known.
The BJP has long held power in your city,
where the RSS is very active.**



**You are a young woman
from the Zoroastrian community.**



**You are a 16-year-old Muslim girl living in
a camp for people displaced by communal riots.
Your parents are worried about your safety and
honour and are considering your marriage.**

CATEGORY

Characters with vulnerabilities related
to caste, class, migrant status
or other factors.



**You are a Dalit woman working as a
daily labourer on local farms in a rural area.
You are a widow with three children.**



**You are a 12-year-old boy living on the streets
in Mumbai/Kathmandu.**



**You are an elderly, disabled man
in a rural area. Your son is moving to
a major city with his family.**



**You are a mother of three.
You have lost your home due to an
earthquake/landslide.**



You are a male, uneducated daily labourer with no fixed abode in a small city. You were forced to leave your village during the Maoist insurgency and feel you have lost your identity.



You are a Bhutanese refugee girl. You want to go to University but cannot enroll as you lack identity documents.

CATEGORY

Other characters.



**You are a Hindu man and run a small business. You are actively involved in the RSS and have participated in a communal riot.
(India)**



**You were a member of the Communist party of Nepal - Maoist. You fought in the people's war.
(Nepal)**



(Add additional characters here.)



(Add additional characters here.)



(Add additional characters here.)



(Add additional characters here.)



(Add additional characters here.)