

# 5

## THE PLACE AND VALUE OF WOMEN

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## SESSION 5

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### Aims

To enable students to gain insight into the place and value of women in their own society, and to become advocates for women in their care.

### Objectives

On completion of Session 5, students will be able to:

- Identify factors which place women at greater risk of death than men in a similar situation.
- Discuss how social position may, directly or indirectly, affect the health of women and girls.
- Identify persons who can influence and initiate the changes considered necessary to raise the status of women and improve their health.
- Discuss how the midwives can become advocates for women in their care.

### Plan

Discussion based on cards from the learning game in the previous session (1 hour).

### Resources

Instructions for Group Work.

*LIVES*. Articles in this newsletter may provide useful background information for this, and other sessions in the module. The newsletter is available free of charge from: The Partnership for Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health, World Health Organization, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, web site: [www.safemotherhood.org](http://www.safemotherhood.org), email: [lives@safemotherhood.org](mailto:lives@safemotherhood.org)

## INTRODUCTION

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*This session is based on the cards from the learning game “Walking where Mrs X walked”.*

*Students should work with a partner in order to discuss the cards they picked up during the learning game in Session 4. Give each pair a copy of the Instructions for Students, provided at the end of this session.*

## DISCUSSION

*Feedback from each pair forms the basis for class discussion on the following:*

- *the place of women in society*
- *the value of women in society*
- *the problems that exist*
- *how these can influence safe motherhood*
- *what must happen in order to improve the place and value of women in your own society*
- *who can influence the situation and bring about change*
- *how the midwife can act as an “advocate” for the woman because the woman needs her.*

*Make sure that students understand how midwives can support women, because they can provide the link between the woman and the health care system.*

*Discuss:*

- *the meaning of the word “midwife” (English literal translation is “with woman”), and*
- *the meaning of the word used to describe the midwife in your national or local language.*

*Ask the students:*

*“Have you ever acted as an advocate or spokesperson for a woman in your care?”*

*If they answer yes, ask*

- *how?*
- *when?*
- *where?*

- *why?*
- *how did it benefit the woman?*
- *was it a positive experience for the student?*

*Concentrate on the action necessary to prevent maternal death.*

*Summarize the discussion.*

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP WORK

Look at the cards of the game “Walking where Mrs X walked” and ask the following questions for each card:

1. Could this place the woman at risk of maternal death?
2. Could this condition/situation/factor have been caused, or made worse, because the person is a woman?
3. What must be done to reduce the risks for women in this situation?

### Example:

The card reads, “You suffer with malnutrition”.

Possible answer:

1. Malnutrition can cause anaemia which will place the woman at risk of postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) and infection.
2. Yes, malnutrition would have been worse for a woman in our community because women and girls always eat last. They do not have the same opportunity as men to eat nourishing foods.
3. a. We need to discuss this custom with, for example:
  - community leaders
  - religious leaders
  - older women
  - TBAs.b. We need to help families and community members understand the importance of nourishing food for girls and women.  
c. We need to provide information and practical help about sources of good food which the family can afford.

