

Focus on Families and Culture: a guide for a participatory assessment on maternal and child nutrition

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Session objective

- To introduce the conceptual framework, steps and tools included in the Focus on Families and Culture Guide and elicit discussion on the usefulness of all three

Key session topics →

- Background to the *Focus on Families and Culture* (FFC) assessment methodology
- Six underlying concepts
- Collectivist vs individualist cultures
- Steps in the assessment methodology
- Discussion (small groups) of the several data collection tools
- Conclusions

- Ibrahima's story

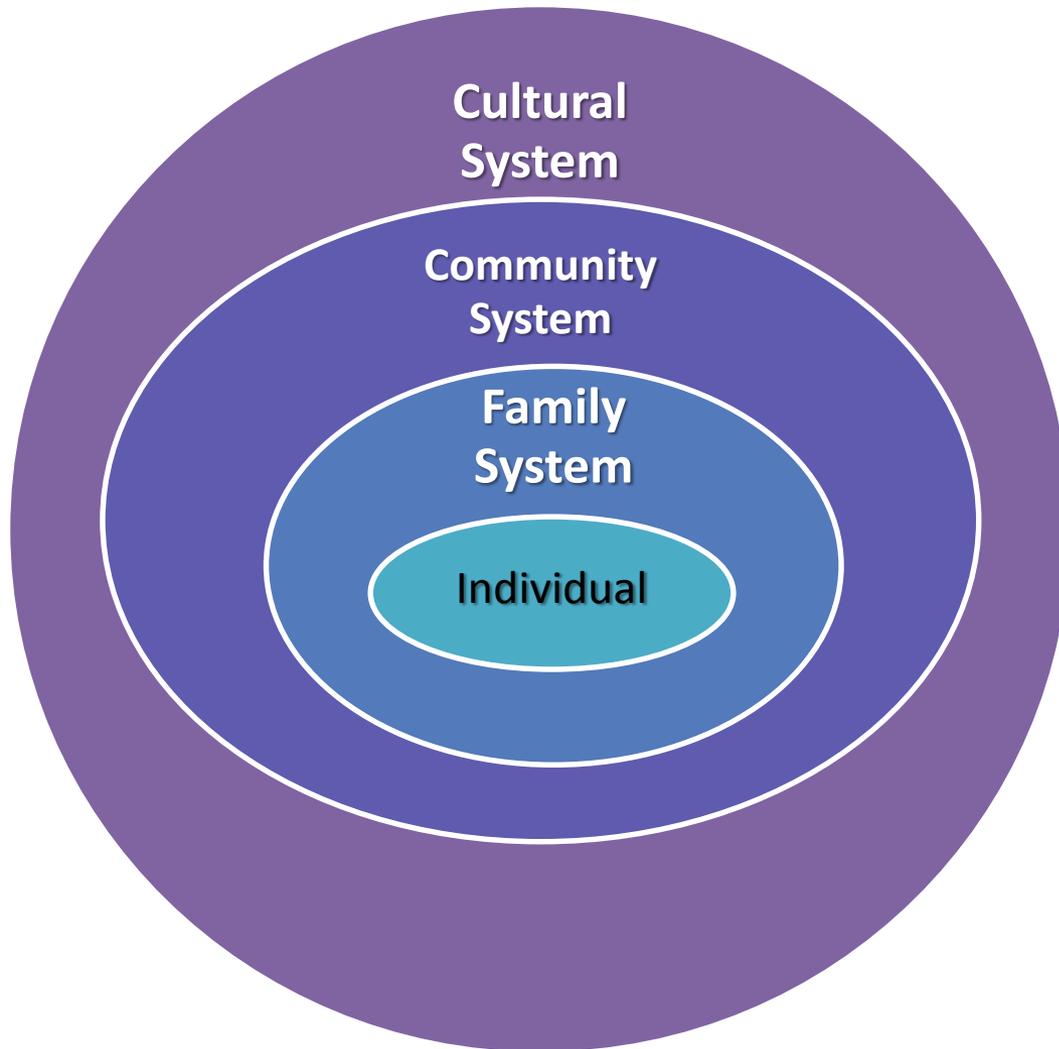
Background to the
Focus on Families & Culture
methodology

Six underlying concepts

1. Two facets of culture
2. Family systems
3. Characteristics of collectivist cultures
4. Gender specific roles
5. Household Production of Health

Two key facets of culture

- Cultural norms and practices/behaviors
- Social structure of families and communities



Onion model

Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*





Collectivist & Individualist cultures

- A collectivist culture is one « in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often the extended family, which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. »

Hofstede, 1984

Gender-specific roles

Gender specific roles











Role of elders

**“ In Africa when an elder dies it is
as though a whole library had
burned down.”**

Amadou Hampâté Ba
Malian philosopher (1900-1991)



An elder woman sitting on the ground can see farther than a young person who is at the top of a tree.

Household Production of Health

- 1) There are various categories of people within families, in addition to mother and father, who interact with/care for children.
- 2) Roles related to MCHN with the household are gender and age specific.
- 3) MCHN norms and practices adopted by family members are dictated by the cultural context, rather than by individual choice.







