

# Hot Seat

Type: Sharing Ideas, Practicing



## What Is It?

Participants in the “hot seat” read a case study and respond to questions from other participants.

## Why Use It?

Provides a lively way to explore issues and how people feel about them

Helps participants understand the motivations and feelings of people in specific situations

Addresses myths and misunderstandings

## How to Use It

1. Before the activity, prepare case studies for people to explore. These should be real-life dilemmas, written in the first person. For example: ‘I am a woman who gets sick because I ...’ or ‘I am a community leader. I find it difficult to help community members find safe water because...’
2. Ask for a volunteer to sit in the ‘hot seat’. This means to sit down in a chair or on the floor in front of all the other participants.
3. Ask the person to read out the case study as if he / she was the person in the case study.
4. Invite the rest of the participants to ask questions, addressing the volunteer as if they are that person’s friend – for example, ‘Why do you believe...?’
5. When questions require information that is not provided in the case study, encourage the volunteer in the hot seat to fill in the details by thinking about how they might feel and respond as though they were actually the character in the case study.
6. Repeat the activity with other volunteers and other case studies.
7. When the activity is complete, encourage the participants to discuss what they have learned.
  - Why was it easy or difficult to respond to the questions?
  - What choices did the person have?
  - What did the responses show about people’s knowledge and attitudes?

## Trainer Notes

Encourage a relaxed atmosphere. It can be less threatening if two people take the hot seat at once – for example, both the woman and her husband or child.

Stress that the case study does not necessarily reflect the experience of that person.

Don’t pressure people to take the hot seat if they don’t want to.