

World Vision



Refocusing Rhetoric Into Action

Investing in Women: Why It Matters

World Vision Australia

2009



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Executive Summary

Gender equality needs to be prioritised in order to achieve effective and sustainable development. Substantive attention must be placed on resourcing, empowering women and striving for gender equality. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) was a significant step in articulating women's issues as a matter of international importance and expressing an agenda for women's empowerment. Almost 15 years on, the ideals, aspirations and commitments of Beijing still require emphasis. The Millennium Development Goals - in particular Goal 3 which promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women - echoes this imperative.

'[S]tudy after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, or to reduce infant and maternal mortality. No other policy is as sure to improve nutrition and promote health—including the prevention of HIV. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation. And I would also venture that no policy is more important in preventing conflict, or in achieving reconciliation after a conflict has ended. But whatever the very real benefits of investing in women, the most important fact remains: Women themselves have the right to live in dignity, in freedom from want and from fear.' Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary-General

If we want to achieve gender equality, we need to engage with both women and men, and to better empower women to become more than just rhetoric, but a strategic and intentional focus of all humanitarian and development interactions.

This document has been to provide a reference, highlighting the compelling issues facing women across the world, synthesising existing secondary data and reinforcing why we need to invest in women's empowerment. To provide context and depth to these statistics, we have included reference to the most appropriate legal mechanisms and well respected international opinions on these issues. Where appropriate, we have also provided examples of successful programming approaches and have highlighted a case study from World Vision Australia's work in the area, identifying both challenges and successes. We have tried to make this document as accessible as possible, for practitioners and supporters alike, so that its contents can be used in the preparation of speeches, presentations, briefs and new programming approaches. Each chapter can be used as an individual document.

This is not original research, but instead draws together compelling evidence of the impact of poverty and marginalisation on women and girls, as well as evidence from a global practice, on how working with women can dramatically change the lives of women and girls. The figures presented in this document help to present the issues that women face, but these are not just statistics – they reflect the realities of the lives of individual women.

Now, with the 2015 target for the Millennium Development Goals drawing close, there is an increased urgency to make gender equality a reality for each and every woman. We need to shift from rhetoric to action – to advocacy, to changed behaviours, to reconfiguring value systems and cultural norms so that the dignity and worth of women is reflected. This requires change in how we live our lives – not just at a programmatic level, but in the interactions between men and women. We need to empower women. Men need to be included in the process in order to achieve this and power relationships need to be considered

and reconceptualised instead of being glossed over. It is no longer enough just to 'bring men in' – they must themselves be part of the process of achieving gender equality.

We need to translate this rhetoric on women into action by investing resources into funding interventions that will address gender inequality and the fundamental issues of power that shape the way women are valued and portrayed. We need to measure and evaluate ourselves on our impact and commitment to transforming gender relationships. Gender equality must be a priority not just in theory, but in practice.

The structure of the document is broadly based on key areas identified by UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, which include:

- Education
- Health
- Access to Resources, Property and Inheritance Rights
- Economic Empowerment
- Political Participation
- Gender-Based Violence,
- Female Genital Mutilation

A separate chapter has been written on each focus area and this summary provides a selection of key statistics highlighting the importance of empowering women.

The Realities

Education

- Worldwide, 600 million women are illiterate compared to 320 million men (UNFPA 2005).
- Around 55% of the 75 million children out of school are girls (World Bank 2009).
- Nearly 1 of every 5 girls who enrols in primary school in developing countries does not complete a primary education (UNICEF 2008).
- Every additional 3 years of education equates to 1 child fewer per woman (World Bank 2001).
- An additional year of schooling for 1,000 women helps prevent 2 maternal deaths (World Bank 2009).

Health

- Worldwide, more girls than boys die before age 5. This is attributed to the inequalities and discrimination experienced by girl children from birth (UNICEF 2008).
- More than 80% of maternal deaths worldwide are due to five direct causes: haemorrhage, sepsis, unsafe abortion, obstructed labour and hypertensive disease of pregnancy (UNFPA 2005).
- 536,000 women die each year from pregnancy complications – 1 every minute. For every woman that dies, 20 or more are injured or disabled (UNFPA 2009).
- The risk of dying from pregnancy or childbirth in sub-Saharan Africa is 1 in 16. By comparison, the risk in developed countries is only about 1 in 2800 (UNFPA 2005).
- Preventing unintended pregnancies through access to family planning could avert 20-35% of maternal deaths, saving the lives of more than 100,000 mothers each year (UN Millennium Project 2005).
- The children of adolescent mothers have a 50% higher risk of dying before the age of 1 (Save the Children 2004).
- There are approximately 38.6 million people in the world living with HIV and AIDS, and 17.3 million of these are women (UNICEF 2008).

Access to Resources, Property and Inheritance Rights

- Women work two-thirds of the world's working hours.
- Women spend more than 800 hours per year collecting firewood; men on the other hand spend less than 50 hours per year (International Centre for Research on Women 2008).
- Women own only 1-2% of all titled land worldwide (Steinzor 2003).

Economic Empowerment

- Over the last decade, the number of unemployed women grew from 70.2 to 81.6 million (ILO 2008).
- Globally, less than 70 women are economically active for every 100 men (ILO 2008).
- Globally, the female employment-to-population ratio in 2007 was 49.1% compared to the male employment-to-population ratio which was 74.3% (ILO 2008).
- Women in Africa represent 52% of the total population, contribute approximately 75% of the agricultural work, and produce 60-80% of the food, yet earn only 10% of African incomes and own just 1% of the continent's assets (FAO n.d.).

Political Participation

- Ten countries have no women in parliament, and in more than 40 other countries women account for under 10% of parliamentarians (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2006).
- Based on the current annual growth rate of the proportion of women parliamentarians (approximately 0.5% worldwide), gender parity in national legislatures will only be reached in 2068 (UNICEF 2007).
- At the end of 2007, women held 17.7% of all parliamentary seats - over 50% more than a decade ago when women held 11.8% (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2008).

Gender-Based Violence¹ (GBV)

- Approximately 1.5 to 3 million girls and women are killed annually through gender-related violence. In comparison, each year around 2.8 million people die of HIV and AIDS and 1.27 million die of malaria (WHO 2004).
- 1 in 3 women will experience GBV in their lifetime (UNFPA 2000).
- As many as 40 million children under age 15 are victims of violence every year (WHO).
- More than 60 million women are demographically 'missing' as a result of sex selective abortions and female infanticide in China, South Asia and North Africa (Sen 1999).
- Domestic violence is the most common form of violence against women worldwide, without regional exception (UNICEF 2000).
- Already, 51 million girls have been married before the legal age of 18 in the developing world. This is expected to reach 100 million by 2015 (ICRW 2005).
- The number of women forced or sold into prostitution is estimated at anywhere between 700,000 and 4 million per year (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- Around 700,000 to 2 million women are trafficked across international borders annually (UNFPA 2006).
- It is estimated that there will be as many as 100 million child labourers by 2015 if numbers continue to grow (ILO 2008).

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

¹ Note: For the purposes of this document, the focus will be on violence experienced by women and girls. We recognise that men, women, boys and girls may all be subject to violence as a result of their gender, however as women and girls are by far the most affected group, they will form the focus of this document.

- Over 30 countries around world (including 28 in Africa) practice the ritual of FGM/C (UNICEF 2005).
- Worldwide, between 100 and 140 million girls and women are living with the consequences of FGM/C (WHO 2008).
- Approximately 6000 girls each day are at risk of undergoing FGM/C (UNICEF 2003).
- The highest infant mortality in the world occurs in areas where FGM/C is practiced (Hosken 1993).
- In Africa, an additional 10 to 20 babies per 1000 deliveries die as a result of FGM/C (WHO 2006).

International Views

“Investing in women is not only the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do. I am deeply convinced that, in women, the world has at its disposal the most significant and yet largely untapped potential for development and peace. Gender equality is not only a goal in itself, but a prerequisite for reaching all the other international development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.” (Ban Ki-Moon, United Nations Secretary-General, n.d.)

“Changes in both men’s and women’s knowledge, attitudes and behaviour are necessary conditions for achieving the harmonious partnership of men and women. Men play a key role in bringing about gender equality since, in most societies, men exercise preponderant power in nearly every sphere of life, ranging from personal decisions regarding the size of families to the policy and programme decisions taken at all levels of Government. It is essential to improve communication between men and women on issues of sexuality and reproductive health, and the understanding of their joint responsibilities, so that men and women are equal partners in public and private life.” (International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, Para 4.24)

Millennium Development Goals

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Indicators:

- Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old
- Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector
- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

MDG 5: Improve maternal health

Target A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

Indicators:

- Maternal mortality ratio
- Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

Target B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health.

Indicators:

- Contraceptive prevalence rate
- Adolescent birth rate
- Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits)
- Unmet need for family planning

WV must prioritise and increase our investment in projects which:

- Have a sound and critical analysis of gender and power relationships, incorporating the perspectives and realities of women and men.
- Intentionally empower women and girls, especially in the areas of Maternal Child Health and education.
- Transform gender relations by focusing on the practical and strategic needs of women and girls.

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Education: Women and Girls

*“If you educate a man, you educate a person, if you educate a woman, you educate a community.”
(Traditional African proverb)*

Introduction

- Around 55% of the 75 million children out of school are girls (World Bank 2009).
- For every 100 boys out of school, in Yemen there are 270 girls out of school, in Iraq 316 girls, in India 426 girls, and in Benin 257 girls (World Bank Education Development Network 2009).
- Nearly 1 of every 5 girls who enrolls in primary school in developing countries does not complete a primary education (UNICEF 2008).
- An average 6-year-old girl in South Asia can expect to spend 6 years in school - 3 years less than a boy the same age (UNESCO 2000).
- When a girl in the developing world receives 7 or more years of education, she marries 4 years later, and has 2.2 fewer children (The Girl Effect n.d.)
- In Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, only 69% and 49% of girls, respectively, complete primary school (United Nations 2005).
- At the secondary level, even fewer girls are in school - with only 30% and 47% of girls enrolled in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, respectively (United Nations Millennium Project 2005).
- Worldwide, 600 million women are illiterate compared to 320 million men (UNFPA 2005).
- 9 countries – Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan – are home to 70% of the world’s illiterates (UNESCO n.d.).
- Beijing Platform for Action – Paragraph 71 –

“Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys, and thus ultimately contributes to more equal relationships between women and men. Equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications is necessary if more women are to become agents of change. Literacy of women is an important key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family and to empowering women to participate in decision-making in society. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic return, has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth that is both sustained and sustainable.”

Factors Affecting Women’s Low Access to Education

- Traditional belief systems about the role of women and lack of emphasis on education for women.
- Increased HIV prevalence:
 - Girls may have to stay home from school to care for sick family members (World Bank 2008).
- HIV-positive girls/women may not attend school due to the stigma associated with HIV.
- Involvement in child labour:
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, 34% of girls aged 5-14 are involved in child labour (UNICEF 2006).
- Conflict and displacement:
 - Approximately 120,000 children in Africa have been forced to become child soldiers (UNICEF 2005).
 - Around 44% of all refugees are children under 18, and 12% are children under 5 (UNHCR 2006).
- Early Child Marriage which results in decreased school attendance or school dropouts:

- Among women aged 15–24, 48% were married before age 18 in South Asia (9.7 million girls), 42% in Africa, and 29% in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNICEF 2005).
- More than 100 million girls are expected to marry by 2015 (UNFPA 2005).

Consequences of Educating Girls and Women

- Improved reproductive health:
 - Every additional 3 years of education equates to 1 child fewer per woman (World Bank 2001).
 - 84% of women who have completed secondary or higher education are attended by skilled personnel during childbirth, more than twice the rate of mothers with no formal education (United Nations 2007).
- Reduced women’s fertility rates:
 - It is estimated that 1 year of female schooling reduces fertility by 10%. The effect is particularly obvious for secondary schooling (World Bank 2009).
- Lowered infant, child and maternal mortality rates:
 - Every year of a mother’s education corresponds to 5-10% lower mortality rates in children under 5 (World Bank 2001).
 - It is estimated that an additional year of schooling for 1,000 women helps prevent 2 maternal deaths (World Bank 2009).
 - Women with formal education are less likely to become pregnant at a very young age (World Bank 2009).
 - The child of a Zambian mother with a primary education has a 25% better chance of survival than a child of a Zambian mother with no education (UNESCO 2000).
- Reduced HIV and AIDS infection rates and increased knowledge about HIV and AIDS:
 - Education can help decrease unprotected sex (World Bank 2009).
 - Educated girls/women are less likely to enter into early marriage and so the chance of being infected with HIV from older men is decreased (UNICEF 2009).
 - 32-country study - women with post-primary education were 5 times more likely than illiterate women to know facts about HIV and AIDS. Illiterate women were 4 times more likely to believe that there is no way to prevent HIV infection (Vandermoortele & Delamonica 2000).
- Increased female participation in economic activity and better economic outcomes for household:
 - 100-country World Bank study - increasing the share of women with secondary education by 1 percentage point boosts annual per capita income growth by 0.3 percentage points on average (Dollar & Gatti 1999).
 - An extra year of education beyond the average boosts girls’ eventual wages by 10–20% (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos 2002).
 - 63-country study - more productive farming due to increased female education accounts for 43% of the decline in malnutrition achieved between 1970 and 1995 (ed. Quisumbing 2003).
 - Study – It is estimated that Kenyan that crop yields could rise up to 24% if women farmers had the same education and decision-making authority as men (ed. Quisumbing 2003).
- Intergenerational education consequences:
 - In many countries each additional year of formal education completed by a mother translates into her children remaining in school for an additional 4-6 months (World Bank Education Development Network 2009).
- Increased involvement in the community and in decision-making:
 - In Bangladesh, women with secondary education are 3 times more likely to attend a political meeting than women with no education (UNESCO 2000).
 - If women had the same influence in decision-making, the incidence of underweight children less than 3 years old in South Asia would fall by up to 13 percentage points, resulting in 13.4 million fewer undernourished children in the region; in sub-Saharan Africa, an additional 1.7 million children would be adequately nourished (UNICEF 2008).

International Legal Mechanisms

- CEDAW – Article 10 –
 - “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: (a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training; (b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality; (c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods; (d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants; (e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women; (f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely; (g) The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education; (h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.”

Programming Approaches

Below are some of the other strategies and approaches used by NGOs all over the world to increase positive education outcomes of women and girls:

- Raising awareness about the importance of educating girls.
- Programs to address adult illiteracy.
- Lobbying government for increased funding for education.
- Increasing awareness about the health and education consequences of early child marriage.
- Lobbying for government and international intervention to address issues of child labour and child soldiers.
- UNESCO, Mali – community-based awareness campaign, literacy and income-generating activities.
- Grameen Bank, Bangladesh – education on accountancy, legal matters, health, family life and income generation in order to equip women with knowledge and skills.

World Vision Case Studies

World Vision has implemented a number of projects to address the education needs of women and girls. Below are two case studies highlighting World Vision's work:

Chile – Centro de Capacitacion y Desarrollo para la Mujer (CECADEM) Women's Development and Training Centre (World Vision Australia 2008; World Bank 2007)

- Context:
 - Female participation in Chile's labour force is only 39%.
 - On average, women earn around 67% of men's wages.
 - At the household level, women continue to experience physical and sexual violence.
 - 'Machismo' (machoism) continues to hinder the ability of women to find employment.
- CECADEM started in 1995 for women in Santiago, and later the Temuco areas of Chile.
- Project goal: To contribute to the integral development of women living in poverty so that they may achieve social and economic autonomy and improve living conditions for themselves and their families.
- Strategy:
 - Courses in personal development (including psychological support, self esteem and occupational health).
 - Vocational training (in varied areas including pre-school child care, aged care, food preparation, household plumbing, maintenance and hotel room servicing).
 - Courses in small business skills.
- Results and changes after 5-year review:
 - Courses like aged care, household plumbing and maintenance discontinued due to less demand for these skills.
 - Additional courses were added to meet market demand, including telemarketing and digital cashier operation.
 - The revised curriculum expanded from providing technical skills for jobs, to 'soft' training in areas like people skills, negotiation, communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution.
 - Business networks were encouraged to provide employment to these women as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies.
 - Workshops on violence prevention and STDs were introduced to further empower and strengthen the women.
- Strengths/Learnings:
 - Market analysis proved instrumental in realigning focus so that women were being trained in skills that were in demand.
- Challenges:
 - The shift in the role of women from mother and housewife to student and breadwinner caused some difficulties and required adjustments by the women and their families.
 - Women required additional support to balance home and work responsibilities, including child care and transportation.

Solomon Islands – Girl Child Reading and Rescue Project (World Vision 2008)

- Context:
 - Around 50% of children in the Solomon Islands aged 5-9 do not attend school.
 - It is common for children in rural areas to begin schooling only at age 8 or 9.
 - Many children may have poor cognitive development as a result of poor nutrition, which impacts on their ability to learn.
 - The Government has a policy which requires children aged 3-5 to have 3 years of Early Childhood Education (kindergarten) before enrolling in primary school, but local communities have no material or financial support to help achieve this.
 - This project is based in the island of Makira, where literacy rates of children are said to be lowest in the Solomon Islands.
- Project goal: For 1,000 children from 20 communities in East Makira to achieve the basic development level for primary school entrance.
- Strategy:
 - The project is not aimed solely at girls, but emphasises the importance of including girls into the education system – to ‘rescue’ them from a life where childbearing and domestic work might be the only option.
 - The project involves training members of the community who will conduct Early Childhood Education for children, focusing on six aspects of child development – physical, social, cognitive, language, emotional and moral.
- Results after 18 months:
 - Increase in primary school enrolment.
 - 88 trainers conducting classes in 28 community kindergartens.
 - Almost 30% of the trainers are men, which is quite significant as men are not usually involved in caring for young children.
 - The requirement that each child attending kindergarten brings a snack has meant that entire families have acknowledged the project’s nutritional message and applied it to other children.
 - Significant improvements in the physical health, hygiene and wellbeing of the children have been observed.
 - Different generations have been able to engage as a result of this project, e.g. men and older boys have built playground equipment for the kindergarten and older people have become involved in imparting stories and history to children as part of the project.
 - The project has received recognition as Makira-Ulawa is currently the only province implementing the Government’s policy to a significant degree.
- Strengths and Learnings:
 - The project had far greater reach than anticipated because non-target communities observed the achievements of the projects and requested participation.
 - High level of ownership by the community, which proved to be a key success factor.
 - The importance of emphasising literacy in projects was clearly highlighted by this project.
 - The project was able to be implemented with little difficulty because a previous project already had an emphasis on literacy of women. Educating children – especially girl children – thus followed quite naturally.

International Views on Education of Girls and Women

“We know from study after study that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls and women. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition, promote health - including the prevention of HIV - and increase the chances of education for the next generation. Let us invest in women and girls.” (Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary-General n.d.)

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Health: Women and Girls

Introduction

- Health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO 2006).
- Worldwide, more girls than boys die before age 5. This is attributed to the inequalities and discrimination experienced by girl children from birth (UNICEF 2008).
- Every day, more than 10,000 newborns die from preventable complications which occur during pregnancy, childbirth and the first week of life. Most deaths occur at home in the absence of a skilled birth attendant (WHO 2006).
- Childhood malnutrition has long term effects on women and is implicated in poor health into the next generation. Women who are stunted as a result of malnutrition have a higher risk of having a baby with low birth weight (World Bank 2004). Women who are stunted are more likely to experience obstructed labour during birth due to the abnormal pelvic shape (Konje & Ladipo 2000).
- Around 1.6 million people - mostly women and children - die annually due to indoor smoke (mostly from cooking stoves) (WHO 2006).
- Beijing Platform for Action – Paragraph 89 –

“Women have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The enjoyment of this right is vital to their life and well-being and their ability to participate in all areas of public and private life. Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Women’s health involves their emotional, social and physical well-being and is determined by the social and political context of their lives, as well as by biology....”

Factors Affecting Vulnerability

- Women are often unaware and lack education or have no decision making power about the importance of skilled birth attendance and seeking medical assistance if complications arise during the antenatal, delivery and early postnatal periods. They also may not have access to information about contraception, harmful traditional practices, HIV and child spacing.
- Gender-based violence is a major contributor to the spread of HIV among women. Due not only to psychosocial, but physiological reasons also, women are inherently more susceptible to HIV infection than men (The Foundation for AIDS Research 2005).
- Unequal power relationships between men and women:
 - Women are unable to negotiate safe sex or refuse unwanted sex, and may not be comfortable to discuss family planning with their partner.
 - Men do not seek health information and services because of traditional notions of masculinity and may not even discuss family planning with their partner.
 - Traditionally, safe motherhood projects have focused on women, leaving men out of reproductive health promotion and education.
 - Studies show that married women would rather risk HIV infection than ask their husbands to use a condom, which is seen as questioning a husband’s fidelity (UNFPA 2005).
 - In two districts of Uganda, only 26% of women said it was acceptable for a married woman to ask a husband to use a condom (UNFPA 2005).
- Cultural values and traditions like early child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) can increase vulnerability:
 - Among women aged 15–24, 48% were married before age 18 in South Asia (9.7 million girls), 42% in Africa, and 29% in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNICEF 2005).

- More than 100 million girls are expected to marry by 2015 (UNFPA 2005).
- Between 100 to 140 million girls and women worldwide are living with the consequences of FGM/C (WHO 2006).
- FGM/C can result in infertility, infection and childbirth complications (WHO 2006).
- Conflict and disaster can make women and girls vulnerable to depression and other mental health issues (WHO 2006).

Maternal Health

Overview

- Around 536,000 women die each year from pregnancy complications – 1 every minute. For every woman that dies, 20 or more are injured or disabled (UNFPA 2009).
- More than 80% of maternal deaths worldwide are due to five direct causes: haemorrhage, sepsis, unsafe abortion, obstructed labour and hypertensive disease of pregnancy (UNFPA 2005).
- 99% of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries (UNICEF 2008).
- The risk of dying from pregnancy or childbirth in sub-Saharan Africa is 1 in 16. By comparison, the risk in developed countries is only about 1 in 2800 (UNFPA 2005).
- Motherless newborns are 3-10 times more likely to die than those with mothers who survive (UNFPA 2005).
- Around 2 million girls and women currently suffer from obstetric fistula, a condition caused by prolonged obstructed labour often due to maternal short stature from childhood malnutrition, or from early marriage and childbearing during the adolescent years (UNFPA 2005).

Unmet Need for Family Planning

- Around 25% of maternal deaths are due to unplanned pregnancies (Centre for Development and Population Activities 2008). This reflects an unmet need for contraceptives and family planning.
- An estimated 201 million women lack access to effective contraceptives (UNFPA 2005).
- In 27 developing countries, 90% of women do not want a child within 2 years, but only 40% are using a method of family planning (WVUS & USAID 2007).
- Less than 5% of women use modern contraception in Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda (Save the Children 2004).
- Preventing unintended pregnancies through access to family planning could avert 20-35% of maternal deaths, saving the lives of more than 100,000 mothers each year (UN Millennium Project 2005).
- Healthy timing and spacing of pregnancy:
 - Spacing pregnancies by at least 2 years increases the chance of child survival and ensures better maternal health (WHO 2006).
 - Study of 520,000 births in 18 countries in Latin America - birth intervals of less than 15 months were associated with maternal mortality rates that were 2½ times as high as longer intervals (USAID n.d.).

Adolescent Mothers

- Every year, around 14 million adolescent girls give birth (UNFPA 2004).
- Every year, 1 million babies born to adolescent mothers die in childbirth related complications (Save the Children 2004).
- The children of adolescent mothers have a 50% higher risk of dying before the age of 1 (Save the Children 2004).
- Mothers aged 10-14 have maternal mortality rates 5 times higher than mothers aged 20-24 (Save the Children 2004).
- In developing countries, pregnancy is the leading cause of death in teenage girls (WVUS & USAID 2007).

Abortion

- Each year, women undergo an estimated 50 million abortions. Of these, 20 million are unsafe costing some women their lives (USAID n.d.).
- Half of the 10,000 Nigerian women who die from unsafe abortions each year are estimated to be adolescents (Raufu 2002).
- In Argentina and Chile, one third of maternal deaths of 15-19 year olds were found to be abortion related (de Bruyn & Packer 2004).
- In 2000, around 90% of abortion-related mortality could have been averted if women had used effective contraception (WVUS & USAID 2007).

HIV AND AIDS

- There are approximately 38.6 million people in the world living with HIV and AIDS, and 17.3 million of these are women (UNICEF 2008).
- Women aged 15-24 are 1.6 times more likely than young men to be HIV-positive (United Nations 2005).
- In sub-Saharan Africa, young women living with HIV outnumber HIV-positive young men 3.6 to 1 (United Nations 2005).
- In Africa, only 5% of pregnant women are offered HIV prevention services (UN Millennium Project 2005).
- Over 90% of HIV infected infants and young children are thought to be infected through mother-to-child transmission (UNICEF 2002).

Mental Health

- Approximately 80% of the 50 million people affected by violent conflicts, civil wars, disasters, and displacement are women and children. This group are especially vulnerable to mental health issues (WHO 2006).
- In emergencies, the number of people with mental disorders is estimated to increase by 6-11% (WHO 2006).
- Around half of mental health disorders begin before age 14 (WHO 2006).
- Study - Nicaragua - abused women were 6 times more likely to report experiencing mental distress than non-abused women (Ellsberg et al. 1999).

International Legal Mechanisms

- CEDAW – Article 12 –
 - “1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning. 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.”

Programming Approaches²

Below are some of the strategies and approaches used by NGOs all over the world to tackle and address the health outcomes of women and girls:

- Education about the health risks of early child marriage.
- Increasing health literacy of women, families and communities.
- Ensuring women and adolescents have access to contraception.
- Education about the importance of healthy timing of first pregnancy and spacing.
- Increasing access to reproductive health services, including obstetric care.
- Lobbying for increased government funding for antenatal and emergency care.
- Encouraging women to use other methods of cooking, including fuel-efficient stoves, to prevent respiratory illness.
- Providing counselling and care for women and children affected by conflict.
- Mothers 2 Mothers 2 Be (Kenya, South Africa) – links HIV-positive new mothers to HIV-positive pregnant women – peer-led reproductive health and HIV education, family planning.

International Views on the Health of Women and Girls

“The Millennium Development Goals, particularly the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, cannot be achieved if questions of population and reproductive health care are not squarely addressed. And that means stronger efforts to promote women’s rights and greater investment in education and health, including reproductive health and family planning.” (Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary-General n.d.)

“Women’s health is inextricably linked to their status in society. It benefits from equality, and suffers from discrimination. Today, the status and wellbeing of countless millions of women worldwide remain tragically low. As a result, human well-being suffers, and the prospects for future generations are dimmer.” (WHO 1998)

“Reproductive Health implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.” (Cairo Conference on Population and Development 1994)

² World Vision work is guided by a WV Internal Management Policy on Reproductive Health, Operational Working Group Version 2, 16 January 2006.

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Access to Resources, Property and Inheritance Rights: Women and Girls

Introduction

Access to Resources

- Access to resources like infrastructural services (transportation, electricity and water and sanitation services) is crucial for women. Without this access, time and opportunity is lost, and the wellbeing of the entire family is affected (International Center for Research on Women 2005).
- Worldwide, around 2 billion people obtain their household energy from biomass sources such as firewood and dung, and the long hours spent gathering and using this fuel are chiefly borne unpaid by women (International Institute of Sustainable Development 2007).
- The average load of firewood and animal dung carried by women is in excess of 20kg (UNDP 2008).
- Study - Zambia - women spend more than 800 hours per year collecting firewood; men on the other hand spend less than 50 hours per year. This means that less time is available to women to participate in other activities (International Centre for Research on Women 2005).
- Study - rural India - average collection time for firewood and animal dung can be over 3 hours a day (UNDP 2008).
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – Paragraph 167(d): *“Ensure that women’s priorities are included in public investment programmes for economic infrastructure, such as water and sanitation, electrification and energy conservation, transport and road construction; promote greater involvement of women beneficiaries at the project planning and implementation stages to ensure access to jobs and contracts.”*
- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – Paragraph 35 - *“We are determined to: Ensure women’s equal access to economic resources, including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further the advancement and empowerment of women and girls, including through the enhancement of their capacities to enjoy the benefits of equal access to these resources, inter alia, by means of international cooperation.”*

Access to Property and Inheritance Rights

- Patriarchal customs and systems in many parts of the world do not give inheritance rights to women. This has meant that land and livestock, as well as household goods, do not pass to women (USAID 2003).
- Women’s lack of access to property has been associated with developmental problems like poverty, HIV and AIDS, violence, urbanization and migration (Grown, Gupta & Kes 2005).
- Importance of inheritance rights for women:
 - No need to be dependent on male relatives for survival (USAID 2003).
 - Decision-making power over how property is used, e.g. for income generation (USAID 2003).
 - Study – Bangladesh - when women own assets they have more control over decision-making in the households. In rural Bangladeshi households, when women’s shares of pre-wedding assets were higher than their husbands’, their influence in household decisions was greater and levels of sickness among their daughters decreased (Quisumbing 2003).
 - Economic security (USAID 2003).
 - Especially important in increasing the coping capacity of families affected by HIV and AIDS (USAID 2003).

- Financial stability particularly for future generations, e.g. girl orphans (USAID 2003).
 - Social standing within the community (USAID 2003).
- Background to land rights specifically:
 - Land tenure is the relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land (FAO 2002).
 - Types of land rights (FAO 2002):
 - ≥ **use rights:** the right to use the land for grazing, growing subsistence crops, gathering minor forestry products, etc.
 - ≥ **control rights:** the right to make decisions on how the land should be used and to benefit financially from the sale of crops, etc.
 - ≥ **transfer rights:** the right to sell or mortgage the land, to convey the land to others through intra-community reallocations or to heirs, and to reallocate use and control rights.
 - In poorer countries, the most common type of right that women have are 'use rights' which are the weakest type of land rights (FAO 2002).
 - ≥ In sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, 80% of basic food is produced by women. In Asia, between 50- 90% of the work in the rice fields is done by women (FAO 2002).
- Land has value as both a resource and for cultural reasons:
 - Control over the means of production is a source of economic and political power (Khadar 2001).
 - Land title acts as collateral to obtain loans and credit (USAID 2003).
 - Women own only 1-2% of all titled land worldwide (USAID 2003).
 - Study - India – the ownership of land, more than any other factor, was found to protect women from violence, enhancing their esteem and worth in the household and the community (Panda & Agarwal 2005).
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) prevents discrimination and urges equality in relation to property ownership however:
 - It is unable to compel State compliance.
 - The CEDAW Committee can only issue recommendations and observations based on its findings.
 - Certain countries require specific domestic legislation or constitutional reform for these obligations to be enforceable within domestic legal systems.
- MDG Goal 3 regarding gender empowerment has been elaborated on to include equal access to resources, including land (Grown, Gupta & Kes 2005).

Factors Affecting Lack of Access for Women and Girls

Lack of access to resources is affected by:

- Tradition and cultural understandings of a woman's role:
 - Little thought is given to the lack of access to infrastructure that women experience because it is seen as part of their role as women to ensure that there is adequate water, firewood etc for the family.
 - Women are expected to cope with their access difficulties and their needs are not seen as important compared to the needs of men.
 - In many countries, women may have little or no voice, and are unable to speak out for cultural reasons.
- Lack of 'power to choose' – including what transport mode to use or where they can go (Institute of Development Studies 2006).
 - Study - Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Tanzania and Zambia - 'low purchasing power' was a factor that restricted access to transport (World Bank 2006).
- Assumption that women and men will benefit equally from new infrastructure (OECD 2004):
 - Often the social and economic impacts on women are overlooked.

- Power dynamics can affect the level of access that women have to new infrastructure.
- Projects and programmes are often implemented “gender blind” – without consideration of the specific needs or vulnerabilities of women - yet it is assumed that women will automatically benefit.
- Poor planning and implementation of projects:
 - E.g. project in Nepal - women were not involved in the design process improved water services were located along the roadside so women could not bathe freely or wash clothes comfortably. Women were then forced to make several trips carrying water back to their homes, or waiting until dark to access these services (Regmi & Fawcett 1999).

Lack of access to property and inheritance rights is affected by:

- Traditional views on land ownership which ascribe that land only belongs to men and only passes from man to man (e.g. father to son). The rationale behind this is to ensure that land is not transferred outside the family or clan through marriage. In many countries these traditional beliefs have evolved to become customary law, leaving women without legal recourse (USAID 2003).
- Customary law, which will often prevail where there is a conflict with legislation, effectively negating the progress made in enacting domestic legislation to give women better land rights (FAO 2005).
- Lack of awareness on the legal rights of women relation to land. Women often lack information on their rights and do not know how to obtain redress.
- Social/family pressures, which may lead to women renouncing their rights despite some progressive legislation:
 - Study - Bangladesh - 25% of women who were eligible to inherit property gave it up (World Bank 2008).
 - Study - Namibia - 44% of widows lost cattle, 28% small livestock, and 41% lost farm equipment in disputes with in-laws after the death of a husband (FAO 2003 a).
 - Study - Uganda - of 29 widows living with HIV, 90% had property wrangles with in-laws (UNAIDS 2004).
- Property-grabbing and lack of ability to claim back what is rightfully theirs. Widows, orphans and women with HIV are particularly vulnerable to this.
- Changes in land tenure systems, which could mean that women risk losing the land they have inherited (FAO 2005).
- Lack of accurate records on land ownership, which means there is confusion on land boundaries and history of ownership. Women are often unable to prove that they have inherited the land (UNAIDS 2004).
- Land transfer and sub-division of land between co-wives in countries where polygamy is practiced (USAID 2003).
- Death/divorce of a spouse, because in some countries women only have land rights as wives or daughters (USAID 2003).
- Inability to sell or exchange property in some countries if a woman is a widow (USAID 2003).
- Women being treated as legal minors in relation to inheritance rights in some countries like Lesotho and Swaziland (UN HABITAT 2006).
- Constitutions that permit discrimination in personal and customary law matters in some countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho and Kenya (UN HABITAT 2006).

Consequences of Focusing on Increasing Access for Women and Girls

- Increase in women’s economic opportunities.
- Provision of appropriate services to women.
- Elimination of discrimination against girls and women.
- Less time spent fetching water, which can then result in increased school attendance and enrolment.
 - Study - Morocco - in the 6 provinces where a water and sanitation project was implemented, girls’ school attendance increased by 20% in four years, attributed in part to the fact that girls spent less time fetching water. Access to safe water reduced the time spent fetching water by women and young girls by 50-90% (World Bank 2006).
 - Study - Pakistan - school enrolment of all children increased by 80% over 7 years because of increased access to water. This project involved both women and men in all aspects of planning, design and implementation (Asian Development Bank 2003).
- Travel to schools is also safer, which can then result in increased school attendance and enrolment.
 - Study - Morocco - new roads made travel to schools safer and increased primary school enrolments from 28% to 68% (Institute of Development Studies 2006).

International Legal Mechanisms

- CEDAW – Article 14(2) – “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right: (h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.”
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Article 17 – “(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.”
- CEDAW - Article 14(2)(g) – “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right: (g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes...”
- CEDAW – Article 15 – “1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law. 2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals. 3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void. 4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.”
- CEDAW Article 16 (1)(h) – “1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: (h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.”

Programming Approaches

Below are some of the strategies and approaches used by NGOs all over the world to:

1) Increase the access that women have to resources:

- World Vision, Ethiopia - community was given access to capped springs which reduced travel time to a water source from 3-4 hours to 5-15 minutes. This had significant impact because previously women had been raped or attacked by hyenas while travelling to collect water (World Vision 2007).
- World Bank - advocacy for gender to be mainstreamed in legislation and policy, particularly transport policy so that planning could take women's travel into account and pay proper attention to the needs of pedestrians (World Bank 2006).
- The Water Project - focus on hearing the voices of women in planning for water projects and ensuring projects reflected an understanding of the roles of men and women (The Water Project 2006).

2) Tackle and address women's access to property and inheritance rights:

- Promoting legislative changes that protect the rights of women.
- Influencing the capacity of the judicial sector to effectively provide for women's rights.
- Increasing public awareness.
- Global Land Tool Network – focus on pro-poor land policies, land reform and raising awareness.
- Women's Legal Aid Centre, Tanzania – awareness-raising on land tenure issues, campaigns promoting women's rights, provision of legal services.
- NGO Small Grants Program (USAID) – legislative changes, provision of legal services, raising awareness, training on redressing property and inheritance concerns.
- Women's Voice, Malawi – increasing awareness on women's inheritance rights, engaging with traditional leaders and emphasising importance of creating wills.

International Views on Women's Access to Resources, Property and Inheritance Rights

"We should use public resources in ways that reduce the gender gap, including through good governance, gender-sensitive budgets and increasing women's involvement in decision-making...We should finance infrastructure projects - roads, sanitation, water supply - that are responsive to the needs of women in developing countries." (Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary-General 2008).

"[L]and rights discrimination is a violation of human rights." (UN Economic and Social Council Commission on the Status of Women 1998)

"Women's rights in, access to, and control over land, housing, and property is a determining factor in women's overall living conditions, particularly in developing countries. It is essential to women's everyday survival, economic security, and physical safety and, some would argue, it is the most critical factor in women's empowerment and their struggle for equality in gender relations." (United Nations Centre for Human Settlement, Nairobi 1999)

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Economic Empowerment: Women and Girls

Introduction

Economic empowerment - access to productive assets, land, water, markets, finances and technology (IFAD) - is fundamental to the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and the eradication of poverty worldwide (IFAD 2006; UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women 2005).

- Study - there is a strong linkage between national production per person and gender equality measured by economic participation, education, health and political empowerment (World Economic Forum 2005).
- Eliminating the gap between women and men's economic participation remains elusive, as evidenced by the following indicators of the current problems of women's economic empowerment:
 - Women in Africa represent 52% of the total population, contribute approximately 75% of the agricultural work, and produce 60-80% of the food, yet earn only 10% of African incomes and own just 1% of the continent's assets (FAO 2008).
 - When girls and women earn income, they reinvest 90% of it into their families, as compared to only 30 to 40% for a man (The Girl Effect n.d.)
 - An extra year of primary school boosts girls' future wages by 10-20%; an extra year of secondary school boosts her wages by 15-25% (The Girl Effect n.d.)
 - An African woman's average workday lasts 50% longer than that of a man and she shoulders the burden of unpaid activities (OECD 2007).
 - Over the last decade, the number of unemployed women grew from 70.2 to 81.6 million (ILO 2008).
 - Less than 70 women are economically active for every 100 men globally (ILO 2008).
 - Globally, the female employment-to-population ratio in 2007 was 49.1% compared to the male employment-to-population ratio which was 74.3% (ILO 2008).

Consequences of Economically Empowering Women

- When women have secure access to resources, and are able to take advantage of economic opportunities, they have the capacity to become powerful agents of change and social transformation (International Fund for Agricultural Development 2005).
- Providing African women with equal education and access to productive outputs could raise economic growth by as much as 1 percentage point. (USAID 2003).
- Study - Bangladesh - giving women specific resources like high-yielding vegetable seeds and polyculture fish technology has more impact on poverty reduction than untargeted technology dissemination, which tends to benefit men and affluent households (International Food Policy Research Institute 2003).
- Study - Burkina Faso - giving women access to fertiliser and other agricultural inputs could increase agricultural output by up to 20% (International Food Policy Research Institute 2005).
- A survey of 1300 clients and non-clients in Bangladesh showed that credit-program participants were significantly more empowered than non-clients on the basis of their physical mobility, ownership and control of productive assets (including homestead land), involvement in decision making, and political and legal awareness (Hashemi, Schuler & Riley 1996).
- Women clients of Opportunity Microfinance Bank in the Philippines have been elected to the local government. CRECER in Bolivia, CSD in Nepal, Grameen and BRAC in Bangladesh, and World Education, all report clients running for local government office and being elected. FORA in Russia

organised a campaign for democracy in the Russian elections. Members of both SEWA and the Working Women's Forum in India have organised to get better wages and better rights for informal women workers, to resolve neighbourhood issues, and to advocate for legal changes (Littlefield, Murdoch & Hashemi 2003).

International Legal Mechanisms

- CEDAW - Article 13 – “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men, the same rights, in particular: (a) The right to family benefits; (b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit; (c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.”
- CEDAW – Article 14 – “1. States parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas. 2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development...”

Programming Approaches

Below are some of the strategies and approaches used by NGOs all over the world to increase the economic empowerment of women:

- Raising awareness about the importance of economic empowerment for women.
- Lobbying for land reform.
- Investing in women's businesses and business skill development.
- Women's Economic Empowerment Alliance – raising awareness, promoting entrepreneurial culture, involvement in microfinance activities.
- Microfinance activities are one approach to economically empowering women. While there are studies which clearly document the positive outcomes for women's involvement with microfinance, programming must take into account the possible negative implications i.e. increased workload of women and increased domestic violence. MFI's interventions need to be cognisant of women's relationship with males in the family.
- There are at least 3,552 microfinance institutions (MFIs) worldwide reaching out to 154.8 million clients, with 88.7 million women among the 106.6 million poorest clients (State of the Microcredit Summit Campaign 2009).
- Study - Bank Rakyat Indonesia borrowers on the island of Lombok in Indonesia reported that the average income of clients had increased by 112% and that 90% of households had moved out of poverty (Panjaitan-Drioadisuryo & Cloud 1999).
- The Women's Empowerment Program in Nepal found that 68 percent of its members were making decisions on buying and selling property, sending their daughters to school, negotiating their children's marriages, and planning their family. These decisions traditionally were made by husbands. World Education, which combines education with financial services, found that women were in a stronger position to ensure female children had equal access to food, schooling, and medical care (Cheston & Kuhn 2002).
- A comprehensive study of microfinance conducted by the World Bank in the early 1990s on three of the largest programs in Bangladesh-Grameen Bank, BRAC, and RD-12- found that female clients increased household consumption by 18 takas for every 100 takas borrowed, and that 5 percent of clients graduated out of poverty each year by borrowing and participating in microfinance programs. Increases in self-employment and subsequent withdrawals from informal labor pools led to a 21 percent increase in wages in the program villages. (Khandker 1998).

World Vision Case Study

World Vision has implemented a number of projects across the world to increase the economic empowerment of women. Below is a project from Brazil which highlights World Vision's work:

Brazil – Vale Do Ribeira ADP Cookie Factory Project (World Vision 2008)

- Context and history of the project:
 - This project sits within World Vision's Area Development Program (ADP). ADPs are long term community development programs which incorporate 4-5 sectoral projects and are funded through child sponsorship.
 - Most women in the area were involved in domestic labour, working in Sao Paulo as domestic workers, however were on minimal incomes.
 - WV Brazil started a supplementary feeding project, initially bringing in the supplementary feeding product from elsewhere. The women in this community started making the feeding product themselves, and sold the excess product that was produced.
 - The supplementary feeding powder was then used to make cookies which were sold to children and other members of the community. These cookies were high in calcium and nutritional value. The project started with just 6 women and was initially funded through the ADP.
- Results:
 - The general nutritional health of people in the community has increased because the cookies contain supplementary feeding powder.
 - The number of women involved in the business has increased from 6 to 20. The women are now earning triple the amount they previously earned and are able to pay for their children's school fees.
 - The cookie factory has continued despite the closure of the ADP in 2007 and has plans to expand to other areas.
 - The women are now hoping to form a cooperative to sell the cookies through their own business label instead of through someone else.
 - The project contributed to greater community understanding about the issues of domestic violence in the community.
- Strengths:
 - The venture was initiated and planned by the women themselves, not through the ADP.
 - WV Brazil played a facilitative role – providing training on business skills to the women, but otherwise giving a lot of freedom to the women to run the project themselves.
- Challenges:
 - At least two women involved in the project divorced their husbands. They had enough financial stability themselves so were not dependent on their husbands. This was a challenge and had some negative impact on the community's response to the project because of the stigma around divorce.
- Learnings:
 - Looking at other successful projects in Brazil, it seems that the communities within Brazil are quite dynamic, engaged and able to take initiative. This contributed greatly to the success of this project and provided a good environment for the women to begin this initiative.

International Views on Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls

“Experience has also shown that successful national development strategies must be aligned with the MDGs through internal effort – not imposed from outside. Strategies should be coupled with a broad-based and balanced macroeconomic policy that fosters growth and employment creation. Decent jobs, especially for women and youth, provide the strongest link between economic growth and poverty reduction. Their generation must become a higher national policy priority, along with related efforts to enhance productive capacity and improve access to markets.” (Ban Ki Moon- UN Secretary-General n.d.)

“The workplace and the world of work are at the centre of global solutions to address gender equality and the advancement of women in society. By promoting decent work for women, we are empowering societies and advancing the cause of economic and social development for all.” (Juan Somavia, ILO Director-General n.d.)

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Political Participation: Women and Girls

Introduction

- Women's civil and political participation refers to women's ability to participate equally with men, at all levels, and in all aspects of public and political life and decision-making. It extends to other arenas, such as family life, cultural and social affairs and the economy (Womankind Wide n.d.).
- UNICEF – *'A growing body of evidence suggests that women in politics have been especially effective advocates for children at the national and local levels. They are equally powerful advocates when represented in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction. Women's participation in politics can significantly transform the governance of a country by making it more receptive to the concerns of all of its citizens...their involvement in politics also fosters direct and tangible changes in policy outcomes that reflect the priorities, experiences and contributions of women, children and families. When women lack a voice in politics, powerful advocates for children remain unheard.'* (UNICEF 2007)
- At the end of 2007, women held 17.7% of all parliamentary seats - over 50 % more than a decade ago when women held 11.8% of parliamentary seats (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2008).
- The introduction of quotas has helped to increase the representation of women in local and national government (UNICEF 2007).
- In some countries, quotas for female participation have led to dramatic changes.
 - Overall, the impact of quotas is particularly evident in countries formerly affected by conflict like Afghanistan, (where women represent 27.3% of legislators), Burundi (30.5%) and Rwanda (48.8%) (UNICEF 2007).
- Rwanda leads the world with 48.8% women in its lower house, followed by Sweden at 47% (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2008).
- Timor-Leste – women now constitute close to 30% of MPs, hold 3 out of 9 cabinet posts including three key ministries — Justice, Finance and Social Solidarity — and an increasing number of seats on village councils (UNIFEM 2008).
- Ten countries have no women in parliament, and in more than 40 other countries women account for under 10% of parliamentarians (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2006).
- Based on the current annual growth rate of the proportion of women parliamentarians – approximately 0.5% worldwide – gender parity in national legislatures will only be reached in 2068 (UNICEF 2007).
- In Bangladesh, women with secondary education are 3 times more likely to attend a political meeting than women with no education (UNESCO 2000).
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – Paragraph 183 –

"The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his/her country. The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of women's social, economic and political status is essential for the achievement of both transparent and accountable government and administration and sustainable development in all areas of life. The power relations that impede women's attainment of fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society, from the most personal to the highly public. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. Equality in political decision-making performs a leverage function without which it is highly unlikely that a real integration of the equality dimension in government policy-making is feasible. In this respect, women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the

general process of the advancement of women. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved."

Factors Affecting Lack of Participation

(Centre for Asia-Pacific Women in Politics; UNIFEM 2008)

- Perception that politics is a man's realm:
 - Cultural views may cause the woman's role to be seen as purely reproductive.
 - Women are unlikely to run for public office because of the double burden of public and private responsibilities, exclusion from social networks exclusively for men, and lack of education compared to their male counterparts (UNICEF 2007).
- Patriarchal cultures and practices:
 - Certain cultures still give deference to men and are founded on male-centric perspectives.
- Religious doctrines and practices that curb female potential and limit a women's ability to negotiate to enter the public political domain.
- Unfair party nomination processes, elections or campaigns:
 - Discriminatory practices and processes.
 - Poor campaign finances.
- Limited mentoring for female candidates.
- Lack of exposure to political strategising and work.

International Legal Mechanisms

- CEDAW – Article 7 – “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.”
- CEDAW – Article 8 – “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.”

Programming Approaches

Below are some of the strategies and approaches used by NGOs all over the world to increase the participation of women in the political arena:

- World Vision, Uganda - Citizen Voice and Action project facilitated the involvement of women in advocating local government for entitlements like more teachers and more medical staff.
- Asia Foundation, Cambodia - women were trained as candidates for the 2002 local elections.
- Asia Foundation, Pakistan - civil education and campaigns to combat cultural and religious constraints.

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Gender-Based Violence³ (GBV): Women and Girls

Introduction

Background

- Violence against women and girls is a major human rights and health issue. (Reproductive Health Resources in Conflict Consortium) It is estimated that 1 out of 3 women in the world will experience physical or sexual abuse during their life (Heise, Ellsberg & Gottemoeller 1999).
- Approximately 1.5 to 3 million girls and women are killed annually through gender-related violence. In comparison, each year around 2.8 million people die of HIV and AIDS and 1.27 million die of malaria (WHO 2004). It is estimated that violence against women is a greater cause of ill-health than the combined impact of malaria and traffic accidents (World Bank 1993).
- Women aged 15-44 are more likely to be injured or die as a result of male violence than through cancer, traffic accidents, malaria and war combined (Diamantopoulou 2000).
- 1 in 3 women will experience GBV in a lifetime (UNFPA 2000).
- 1 in 5 women will be the victim of rape or attempted rape in a lifetime (WHO 2000).
- In South Africa, 1 in 2 women will be raped in a lifetime (Vetten & Bhana 2003).
- As many as 40 million children under age 15 are victims of violence every year (WHO 2000).
- More than 60 million women are demographically 'missing' as a result of sex selective abortions and female infanticide in China, South Asia and North Africa (Sen 1999).
- Domestic violence is the most common form of violence against women worldwide, without regional exception (UNICEF 2006).
- Already, 51 million girls have been married before the legal age of 18 in the developing world. This is expected to reach 100 million by 2015 (ICRW 2005).
- The number of women forced or sold into prostitution is estimated at anywhere between 700,000 and 4 million per year (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- Around 700,000 to 2 million women are trafficked across international borders annually (UNFPA 2006).
- It is estimated that there will be as many as 100 million child labourers by 2015 if numbers continue to grow (ILO 2008).
- 10-country study – over 50% of physically abused women (between 55% and 95%) reported that they had never sought help from formal services or from people in positions of authority (WHO 2005).

What is GBV?

- "Gender-based violence is violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim; and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women. Violence is directed specifically against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately. It includes, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological harm (including intimidation, suffering, coercion, and/or deprivation of liberty within the family, or within

³ Note: For the purposes of this document, the focus will be on violence experienced by women and girls. We recognise that men, women, boys and girls may all be subject to violence as a result of their gender, however as women and girls are by far the most affected group, they will form the focus of this document.

the general community). It includes that violence which is perpetrated or condoned by the state” (UNFPA 1998).

- The Beijing Platform for Action (2000) gives an extensive definition of violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”
- An understanding of GBV must include women, men, boys and girls. Each of these groups can experience violence because of their gender.
- Key documents include Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (including the Optional Protocol) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), but the legal authority of these is weak because:
 - They are unable to compel State compliance.
 - Their respective Committees can only issue recommendations and observations based on their findings.
 - Certain countries require specific domestic legislation or constitutional reform for these obligations to be enforceable within domestic legal systems.

Factors Affecting Vulnerability to GBV

All women and girls are prone to GBV because of their low status in society in general. Specifically, the following socio-cultural factors may explain why certain women may be even more vulnerable to GBV:

- Prevailing gender roles, masculinity and sexuality:
 - Societal attitudes that place women in an inferior position or prescribe the role of a woman as being solely reproductive.
 - Perceptions of men as powerful and women as weak.
- Historical power imbalances between women and men:
 - Beliefs that women are subordinate to men.
- Discriminatory attitudes towards women by men:
 - Exclusion from certain activities - limiting involvement and precluding women from decision-making process.
- Low Education level:
 - Some studies indicate women who are less educated may be more susceptible to GBV:
 - ⊃ Women who had completed high school education or higher were less likely to experience physical abuse (Atkinson et al. 2005).
- Cultural, religious and traditional beliefs:
 - This includes polygamy, FGM/C, early child marriage and bride price.
 - Religious or cultural beliefs systems may contain expressions of violence against women:
 - ⊃ Religion is often misused to make violence against women acceptable (Fortune & Enger 2006).
 - ⊃ References in the Qu’ran to a husband being permitted to beat his wife if he suspects she has been rebellious (Ayah 34 of Surah 4), however there is considerable debate on whether this is the true meaning behind the verse (Fortune & Enger 2006).
 - ⊃ References in the Bible to situations where women experienced violence. Some have interpreted the Bible as encouraging submission when this occurs (Fortune & Enger 2006).
 - Pregnancy before marriage may also increase violence:
 - ⊃ Eritrea - in the Gash-Barka region - pregnancy before marriage is viewed as a crime and pregnant girls may be made to leave home, beaten, stoned, or even killed (World Organisation Against Torture 2003).
- Failure of states to guarantee rights or criminalise certain acts.
- Weak policies and legal protections:

- E.g. Lack of access to legal advice or legal mechanisms, inadequate legal frameworks and culture of impunity.
- High levels of crime and other violence existing within the communities, cultures or countries.
- Conflict situations and other emergency contexts like displacement:
 - E.g. Rape may be used as a weapon of war in conflict situations.
 - E.g. Displacement may result in collapse of family and communal structures which may leave women and girls unprotected.
- Economic factors.
- Low empowerment:
 - E.g. A combination of factors like: low education, limited economic opportunities, lack of negotiating power with partners etc.
- Ethnicity:
 - E.g. Genocide in Rwanda.
- Disability.

Types of GBV

Gender-based violence can emerge in numerous ways and occurs both in the public and private spheres. Below is an overview of some of the types of GBV that may occur from birth, and some of the ways in which women might be subject to violence, including Femicide, Child Labour, Slavery and Forced Labour, Trafficking, FGM/C (see separate chapter), Early Child Marriage, Honour Killings and Dowry-Related Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Rape and Sexual Assault, Forced Sterilisation and GBV in Conflict Situations.

Femicide

- This describes the killing of women simply because they are female.
- The most widespread form of femicide is sex selective infanticide/abortion due to cultural preferences for male children. This practice, which can take place before/after birth occurs in countries like China and India.
- More than 60 million women are demographically 'missing' as a result of sex selective abortions and female infanticide in China, South Asia and North Africa (Sen 1999).
- Guatemala – over 2,200 women were murdered between 2001-2005 because of their gender, often quite brutally and after sexual violence had taken place (Amnesty International 2006).

Child Labour

- Forms of Child Labour – ranges from work on coffee plantations and domestic work, to the 'worst forms of child labour' which are trafficking, prostitution and slavery.
- There are about 246 million children involved in child labour with ILO estimating that 180 million are involved in labour which exposes them to physical injury. About 8.6 million are involved in forced labour which includes debt bondage, slavery, trafficking or prostitution (ILO 2008a).
- Africa - world's highest rate of child labour - 50 million children aged 5-14 working – 35% of all African children (UNICEF 2005).
- South Asia – child labour rate is 13%, Latin America and the Caribbean child labour rate is 11% (UNICEF 2005).
- Around 50,000 children in Africa are engaged in the sex trade and pornography, and 120,000 children have been forced into becoming child soldiers. (Global March against Child Labour 2006).
- Around 90% of domestic workers in sub-Saharan Africa are girls (Plan 2007).

- Study - female domestic workers in Nigeria – 85% of the girls questioned were coerced into sexual intercourse with a male within the household where they worked. Some of them were as young as 10 years old (International AIDS Society 2004).

Slavery and Forced Labour

- The number of women forced or sold into prostitution is estimated at anywhere between 700,000 and 4 million per year (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- West and Central Africa - 200,000 children are sold into slavery every year (UNICEF 2005).
- Ritual slavery – in countries like Ghana, Benin, Nigeria and Togo, girls are offered by the family to the shrines of priests to atone for sins of a family member, to prevent calamity. In Ghana, more than 20,000 women are enslaved (Ameh 1998).
- Forced Labour Convention – Article 2(1) – *“all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.”*
- Forced labour takes many forms including debt bondage, chattel slavery and prison labour. Boys and girls are especially vulnerable to forced labour and may be forced to work to meet the debts of their family.
- At least 12.3 million people are involved in forced labour worldwide, including women and children (ILO 2008).
- Approximately one fifth of people involved in forced labour have been trafficked (ILO 2008).
- Myanmar - from 1992 to 1996, up to 2 million people in Myanmar were forced to work without pay, including children, women and the aged (Human Rights Watch 1996).

Trafficking

- Palermo Protocol – trafficking is “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”
- Trafficking has developed into a highly profitable business that generates as much as \$32 billion (US) annually (ILO 2008).
- Worldwide, the volume of trafficking grew by almost 50% from 1995-2000 (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- Around 700,000 to 2 million women are trafficked across international borders annually (UNFPA 2006).
- Approximately 80% of those trafficked are women and girls, and up to 50% are minors (US Department of State 2008).
- To date, 127 countries have been documented as countries of origin, and 137 as countries of destination (UN GIFT 2008).
- Survey - Nigeria - at 28%, parents constitute the largest individual group of people who arrange for girls to be trafficked (Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices and The African Child Policy Forum 2006).
- Approximately 1,000 girls aged 14-24 are trafficked from Mozambique to work as prostitutes in South Africa each year (International Organization for Migration 2003).

Early Child Marriage

- This practice constitutes GBV where girls are coerced/intimidated into marriage, because such intimidation constitutes psychological harm, or violence.
- In the situation of forced marriage, physical violence may also occur and the girl may be forced to have sex with her new husband.
- The significant age gap between husband and wife affects power dynamics within the household – an aspect which may facilitate psychosocial and physical abuse (World Vision International 2008).

- Every day, around 3,500 girls who are under age 15 are married (Bruce 2007).
- Already, 51 million girls have been married before the legal age of 18 in the developing world – this is expected to reach 100 million by 2015 (ICRW 2005).
- Among women aged 15–24, 48% were married before age 18 in South Asia (9.7 million girls), 42% in Africa, and 29% in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNICEF 2005).
- In Ethiopia, early marriage, abduction and rape are still common phenomena affecting girls. Around 80% of married girls did not consent to their marriage, 82% of married girls reported they would have preferred not to have sex when they did and 81% were forced (Population Council et al. 2004).

Honour Killings and Dowry-Related Violence

- Around 5,000 women are burnt to death each year in ‘kitchen accidents’ because their dowry was seen as insufficient (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- Approximately 5,000 women are killed every year in ‘honour’ crimes (UNFPA 2006).
- At least 3 Pakistani women are murdered in ‘honour killings’ every day. Sometimes attacks with fire or acid leave women alive, but disfigured or blinded (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- Study - Egypt - on female deaths - 47% of the killed women were killed by a relative after the woman had been raped (WHO 2002).

Intimate Partner Violence

- Domestic violence (or “intimate partner violence”) constitutes the most common form of violence against women worldwide, without regional exception (UNICEF 2006). It includes physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence and marital rape.
- 10-country study (WHO 2005) –
 - Over 75% of women physically or sexually abused by any perpetrator since the age of 15 years reported abuse by a partner.
 - The proportion of women who ever suffered physical violence by a male intimate partner ranged from 13% to 61%, with most sites falling between 23% and 49%.
 - The range of lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner was between 6% and 59%, with most sites falling between 10% and 50%.
- Around 40 - 70% of female murder victims are killed by their husbands or boyfriends, frequently in the context of an ongoing abusive relationship (WHO 2002).

Rape and Sexual Assault

- A review of 25 studies worldwide indicates that 11- 32% of women report that they have experienced childhood sexual abuse (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- In a treatment centre in Nigeria, 15% of female patients requiring treatment for sexually transmitted diseases were under age five, with a further 6% between age 6-15 years (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2005).
- 1 in 4 South African men reported having non-consensual sex with a woman before age 18 (Human Rights Watch 2007).
- South Africa – 40% of girls aged 17 or under are reported to have been the victim of rape or attempted rape (UN HABITAT).
- In South Africa, 1 woman is raped every 26 seconds (BBC News 2001).
- National survey - South Africa – 32% of reported child rapes were carried out by teachers (Africa Child Policy Forum 2006).
- Study - Botswana - 67% of schoolgirls surveyed had been sexually harassed by their teachers (Africa Child Policy Forum 2006).

- Small surveys in Asia Pacific countries show that 30 - 40% of women workers report some form of harassment - verbal, physical or sexual (ILO 2001).

Forced Sterilisation

- Recognised as a crime against humanity where committed with knowledge as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population. Also recognised as part of genocide when done with genocidal intent (Rome Statute 2002).
- The Peruvian government imposed sterilization quotas between 1996-1998 which led to around 250,000 women being sterilized without their informed consent (Amnesty International 2004).
- Slovakia – forced sterilisation carried out as part of discrimination against the Roma people. Inaccurate statements about future births were given to women to pressure them into sterilisation (Centre for Reproductive Rights 2003).

GBV in Conflict Situations

Rape and Sexual Abuse

- Rape is a crime against humanity where committed with knowledge as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population. It also may constitute a war crime when done in the context of an internal or international armed conflict (Rome Statute).
- *“As a weapon of war, rape is used strategically and tactically to advance specific objectives in many forms of conflict. It is used to conquer, expel or control women and their communities in times of war or internal conflict. As a form of gender-based torture it is used to extract information, punish, intimidate and humiliate. It is the universal weapon employed to strip women of their dignity and destroy their sense of self. It is also used to terrorize and destroy entire communities”* (Amnesty International 2004).
- It is estimated that 90% of rapes in war are gang rape (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Force 2005).
- The use of rape as a form of ethnic cleansing has been witnessed in conflicts such as Bosnia-Serbia and the Rwandan genocide (Peace Women).
- It has been reported that DRC has the highest incidence of rape in the world. Although there has not been any accurate statistics on this, reports of rape cases in Congo indicate tens of thousands of women and girls are being raped by militia men, and rebels. Rape is being used as a weapon of war to terrorize communities and control territories in the Eastern part of Congo.
- Almost every woman who survived the genocide in Rwanda was raped (African Union 2000).
- Bosnia- Herzegovina - 20,000-50,000 women were raped during the 1992 conflict (United Nations Working Group on Women, Peace & Security 2002).
- Sierra Leone – 50% of all women were subjected to sexual violence, including rape, torture and sexual slavery during the countries’ conflict (Physicians for Human Rights 2002).
- Angola Civil War - up to 30,000 girls were abducted by armed forces (Christian Children’s Fund 2002).
- Northern Uganda - as many as 16,000 children have been abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army for use in armed conflict (Human Rights Watch 2003).

GBV in order to carry out Genocide:

- Rome Statute – Article 6 – genocide is: “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life, calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

- Rape and Genocide: Case Study of Conflict in Darfur:
 - 28% of Darfurian women interviewed reported they had been gang-raped (Medecins Sans Frontieres).
 - Groups targeted by the Janjaweed militia were the Fur, Massalit and Zaghawa tribes, who were perceived as ethnically distinct from the militia (UN Commission on Human Rights 2005).
 - Rape in order to impregnate – so that children born would take on ethnicity of the father (Amnesty International 2004).
 - Raped women deemed unmarriageable according to culture so these women were unable to marry and have children (Human Rights Watch 2007).
 - Rape may also cause injuries which stop women from being able to have children in the future (Amnesty International 2004).
 - Mass executions of Fur men in Darfur could be said to be similar to what happened to Bosnian Muslim men who were killed in mass numbers. In (*Krstic*), this was held by the court to be genocide because selective destruction of one gender would impact the entire group and would prevent births (Human Rights Watch 2007; International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia n.d.).
 - Following the Rwandan case of (*Akayesu*), the Commission said that measures to prevent births can also be psychological i.e. trauma and threats preventing procreation (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda n.d.).
 - Ultimately, the Commission said no genocide had occurred because of a lack of genocidal intent – but this was a controversial decision (UN Commission on Human Rights 2005).

Consequences of GBV

The consequences of GBV are numerous and can occur at the individual and community level. Potential consequences that may arise as a result of GBV include:

- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- HIV infection:
 - Unequal power relationships so women are unable to negotiate safe sex or refuse unwanted sex.
 - Due to physiological reasons, women are more susceptible to HIV infection than men. Additionally, when sexual intercourse is forced or violent, abrasions and cuts facilitate the transmission of HIV (The Foundation for AIDS Research 2005).
 - Worldwide, over 60% of HIV positive youth aged 15-24 are women (UNIFEM 2009).
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, among people aged 15-24, women are 3 times as likely to be HIV and AIDS infected as men (World Bank 2007).
 - Of the women who survived rape during Rwandan genocide, an estimated 70% were infected with HIV (Human Rights Watch 2007).
 - GBV, including sexual violence, has been found to be the key reason for the spread of HIV and AIDS in PNG. This in turn, fuels more violence since AIDS-related deaths are seen as a result of sorcery and witchcraft, thus justifying the continuing violence committed against women (Amnesty International 2008).
- Maternal mortality:
 - Study – India - in over 400 villages and seven hospitals in three districts of Maharashtra - 16% of all deaths during pregnancy were due to domestic violence (Ganatra et al. 1996).
- Chronic health problems including central nervous system disorders.
- Sexual dysfunction:
 - This may include injuries that prevent a woman from bearing children.
- Unintended pregnancy:
 - This can result in ostracization of both the woman and her child, may mean that the woman is unmarriageable, or may result in infanticide.

- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Suicide attempts, post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, self-loathing, nightmares, loss of self-confidence, apathy:
 - Study - Nicaragua - abused women were 6 times more likely to report experiencing mental distress than non-abused women (Ellsberg et al. 1999).
- Social stigmatisation and exclusion:
 - Kenya - stigma attached to sexual abuse in many Kenyan cultures - women blame themselves and fear that they will be ostracized from society if they admit to being sexually abused, thus continue to suffer in silence (IRIN 2007).
- Lost employment and productivity:
 - Worldwide, the costs of family violence and rape in terms of lost years of productivity are greater than all forms of cancer combined and more than twice that lost by women in motor vehicle accidents (World Bank 1993).
 - Study - Nicaragua - abused women earn over 40% less than women who have no experience of violence (GTZ 2005).
 - Survey - Chile - domestic violence cost women \$1.56 billion in lost earnings in 1996, more than 2% of the country's GDP (UNFPA 2006).
 - Survey - India - women lost an average of 7 working days after an incident of violence (International Centre for Research on Women 2000).
- Lifelong pattern of violence:
 - Particularly involving domestic violence, the victim-survivor is affected and their children exposed to violence. The cycle of violence thus continues, with boys growing up thinking that violence is normal and with girls believing and accepting that violence is part of marriage/relationships.

International Legal Mechanisms

GBV violates many of the fundamental human rights outlined in international instruments including the right to life, the right to security of the person and freedom from degrading treatment. Some extracts of relevant international conventions are noted below, as well as a short section on the scope of the International Criminal Court.

International Human Rights Law

- CEDAW - Article 2 (e) - States Parties will undertake “all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise.”
- United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993:

Article 1

- *Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:*
 - (a) *Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;*
 - (b) *Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;*
 - (c) *Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.*

Article 2:

- *physical: punching, kicking, choking, stabbing, mutilation, disabling, murder;*
 - *sexual: rape, unwanted touching or other acts of a sexual nature, forced prostitution;*
 - *verbal or psychological: threats to harm a woman's children, destruction of favourite clothes or photographs, repeated insults meant to demean and erode self-esteem, forced isolation from friends and relatives, threats of further violence;*
 - *financial: taking away a woman's wages or other income, limiting or forbidding access to family income, other forms of control and abuse of power.*
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child – Article 5(2) - “States Parties to the present Charter shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, the survival, protection and development of the child.”
 - CRC – Article 39 - “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.”
 - CEDAW – Article 16(2) - “The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage.”
 - CRC – Article 32(1) – “States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.”
 - CRC – Article 11(1) - “States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.”
 - CRC – Article 38 - “States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities... In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.”

International Criminal Court (ICC) and International Criminal Law

- Under the Rome Statute, the ICC has jurisdiction over natural persons only (i.e. not corporations) and can address crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide, including attempts of these crimes.
- The Court will only have jurisdiction over those offences committed on the territory of a state that is party to the Rome Statute, and over the nationals of state parties that commit ICC offences.
- There is no enforcement or sanction power over non-parties to the Statute, but there is the option of investigation if the UN Security Council has referred the situation to the Prosecutor for investigation – regardless of the nationality of the accused or the location of the alleged crime. E.g. Sudan.
- Currently 108 states are parties, including 30 African states. States who are not parties include the United States of America, Sudan and China.

Note: There are also legal mechanisms in conflict situations under international humanitarian law, for example under Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention.

Programming Approaches

Below are some of the strategies and approaches used by NGOs all over the world to tackle and address GBV:

- Increasing awareness about the seriousness of GBV, particularly so that women will be more willing to speak out when it occurs.
- Work in schools on gender roles and challenging gender stereotypes.
- Support to women who have experienced violence – providing counselling, material support, establishment of women’s shelters and self-help groups.
- Involving men in the fight against GBV – travelling around speaking at seminars/conferences, speaking out against GBV through drama and music.
- Media campaigns to educate the public using radio and television.
- Lobbying governments to take action against early child marriage and to provide legal redress for victim-survivors of GBV.
- Christian Children’s Fund - work on trafficking - young people educating their peers about child trafficking and child rights.
- PLAN, Togo - Support groups in schools – girls sharing experiences and stories with the aim of reducing sexual harassment at school.
- UNICEF, Benin - village committees set up to raise awareness on child trafficking and monitor to see if cases of child abuse occur. Also assist in reintegration.
- People’s Voice for Peace - work with men, women, boys and girls who were impacted by violence in Northern Uganda conflict – counselling, health care, income generation.
- UNFPA, Mauritania - working on national strategy to fight obstetric fistula, strengthening civil society organisations to be able to support victims of violence, training of public officials, sensitization and raising awareness and advocacy.
- Programme for Development and Peace (offshoot of UNFPA). Columbia - rights-based approach - rights awareness, community dialogue and youth participation on GBV.
- White Ribbon Campaign - awareness raising, men collectively speak out against violence.
- Engender Health - implements Men Engage and Men as Partners which involves mobilizing men and boys in gender equality and gender-based violence prevention and reproductive health projects.
- International Rescue Committee, Congo - in partnership with local NGOs and CBOs essential holistic services provided to survivors of GBV, their families and communities by increasing educational, socio-economic and leadership opportunities, and encouraging community mechanisms for psychosocial support for survivors and their families.

World Vision Case Study

World Vision has implemented a large number of projects addressing GBV across the world. Below is a case study highlighting World Vision's work among migrant trafficked women and children in Thailand:

Thailand – 'Assistance, Support and Protection for Migrant Trafficked Women and Children' Project (World Vision 2007)

- Context:
 - Large numbers of migrants from Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos reside within Thailand or live in transit areas along the border.
 - These migrants often experience lack of freedom of movement, harassment and exploitation by employers. Young women and girls who are illegal migrants, with low incomes, poor education, without social support, living in difficult and crowded environments, that have low knowledge of trafficking are especially vulnerable and therefore at risk of being trafficked.
- This project, which began in 2005, has been implemented in four key Thailand locations: Ranong, Mae Sot, Mae Sai and Mukdahan.
- Goal: *Increased community resilience to reduce vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking of migrants in border areas of Thailand.*
- Strategy – based on the 4Ps:
 - *Prevention* involves information dissemination regarding trafficking, broker activity, human rights, labour rights and access to health services and education, and community development.
 - *Protection* involves assistance to trafficking victims. Whilst it may involve rescuing, it is more generally concerned with providing safe shelter, counselling and assistance with repatriation when victims (or those at high risk – unaccompanied children, marginalised women) are identified.
 - *Prosecution* includes working with Thai authorities and trafficked victims in legal cases brought against traffickers, brokers, exploitative employers and corrupt government officials.
 - *Policy* involves participating at the national, regional and global level in advocating against trafficking.
- Outcomes:
 - Increased migrant social well-being.
 - Increased protection services and support.
 - Improved collaboration and shared learning to assist migrants in border areas of Thailand.
- Results:
 - Support of Savings Groups, which has helped to strengthen economic security.
 - Establishment of Thai-Burmese Youth Group, which has facilitated support, social networks and also training on human rights and community building. This group received a national prize in 2006 for raising awareness on human rights issues among children.
 - Support of Burmese Learning Centres (alternative to government schooling), which has enabled attendance of children who do not speak Thai.
 - Strong relationship with government, which has facilitated WV being able to connect migrants to government services.
- Challenges and recommendations:
 - Increased focus is needed to:
 - ⊃ Strengthen community resilience as the main means for reducing vulnerability to trafficking. Without government support at the highest level, human trafficking will

- undoubtedly continue, thus the main focus of interventions should be on strengthening the resiliency of the community.
- ≥ Ensure wellbeing of migrant women and children rather than just trying to reduce incidence of trafficking.
 - ≥ Ensure that Stateless and displaced Thais are also considered within project activities.
 - Current training needs to be replaced with training in local languages.
 - In relation to protection interventions, WV staff have observed that a great deal of care is necessary. In the past, removal of trafficking victims from a bar resulted in WV being unable to access that community for 6 months, which thus risked other ongoing activities.

International Views on GBV

"[A] woman who lives in the shadow of daily violenceis not truly free."(Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary-General n.d.)

"Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women..." (United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, General Assembly Resolution 1993).

"Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development, and peace." (Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary-General 2000)

"Violence against women and girls makes its hideous imprint on every continent, country and culture...It is time to focus on the concrete actions that all of us can and must take to prevent and eliminate this scourge - Member States, the United Nations family, civil society and individuals, women and men. It is time to break through the walls of silence, and make legal norms a reality in women's lives." (Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary-General 2008)

"In today's world, to be born female is to be born high risk. Every girl grows up under the threat of violence...This chronic condition of violence amounts to the most pervasive human rights violation in the world today." (Carol Bellamy, Former Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund 1997)

"Violence against women and girls continues unabated in every continent, country and culture. It takes a devastating toll on women's lives, on their families, and on society as a whole. Most societies prohibit such violence — yet the reality is that too often, it is covered up or tacitly condoned." (Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary-General 2007)

"Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms...In all societies, to a greater or lesser degree, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cuts across lines of income, class and culture." (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995)

"Violence against women is always a violation of human rights; it is always a crime; and it is always unacceptable...Let us take this issue with the deadly seriousness that it deserves - not only on this International Day, but every day." (Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary-General n.d.)

Violence against women is "one of the most heinous, systematic and prevalent human rights abuses in the world." (Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary-General n.d.)

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Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Women and Girls

Background

- “Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) is a harmful traditional practice and refers to all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons” (WHO 2009).
 - This practice was previously referred to as “female circumcision” however the term has been abandoned as it implies this is a similar practice to male circumcision which is less-damaging and does not harm the organ itself (Population Reference Bureau 2001).
- “The practice of FGM/C reflects deeply-entrenched inequality between the sexes, and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women” (WHO 2009).
- According to WHO, there are 4 types of FGM/C (WHO 2009):
 - Clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the clitoris (a small, sensitive and erectile part of the female genitals) and, rarely, the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris) as well.
 - Excision: partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (the labia are "the lips" that surround the vagina).
 - Infibulation: narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, and sometimes outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris.
 - Other: all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area.
- Procedures are mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15, and infrequently on adult women (WHO 2009).
- Over 30 countries around world (including 28 in Africa) practice ritual of FGM/C (UNICEF 2005).
- Between 100 and 140 million girls and women worldwide have undergone FGM/C, with Africa having the largest number of women having undergone FGM/C - approximately 92 million (WHO 2009).
- In Djibouti and Somalia, 98% girls are subjected to FGM/C (UNICEF 2005).
- 3 million women, children and infants endure FGM/C annually (UNICEF 2005). Other estimates, e.g. from the American Academy of Paediatrics, estimate 4-5 million women, children and infants annually.
- Approximately 6000 girls each day are at risk of undergoing FGM/C (UNICEF 2003).
- UNICEF and UNFPA have launched a joint initiative to reduce FGM/C by 40% by 2015.

Risks

- Long-term consequences can include (WHO 2009):
 - recurrent bladder and urinary tract infections;
 - infertility;
 - cysts;
 - the need for later surgeries. For example, the FGM/C procedure that seals or narrows a vaginal opening (type 3 above) is surgically changed to allow for sexual intercourse and childbirth, and sometimes stitched close again afterwards;
 - an increased risk of childbirth complications and newborn deaths;
 - Possibility of diminished pleasure satisfaction for the women.
- Highest infant mortality in the world occurs in areas where FGM/C practiced (WHO 2006).

- Babies born to mothers with FGM/C had a greater risk of needing resuscitation immediately after birth and of dying during birth (WHO 2006).
- Death rates among babies during and immediately after birth were higher for those born to mothers who had undergone FGM/C: 15% higher for those whose mothers had Type I, 32% higher for those with Type II and 55% higher for those with Type III genital mutilation (WHO 2006).
- As a result of infibulation, babies are frequently born dead or brain damaged (Lax 2000).
- Infibulation is associated with a 20% maternal mortality rate (Lax 2000).
- Higher incidences of caesarean section (30%) and post-partum haemorrhage (70%) were found in the women who had undergone FGM/C, and the risk increased with the severity of the procedure (WHO 2006).
- In Africa, an additional 10 to 20 babies per 1000 deliveries die as a result of FGM/C (WHO 2006).
- The consequences of FGM/C for most women who deliver outside a hospital are expected to be even more severe (WHO 2006).
- Around 15% of women and girls who have undergone FGM/C have suffered the most severe form – infibulations - whereby the clitoris and labia are removed and the vaginal opening is stitched shut, leaving only a small space (UN Population Fund 2003).
- Trauma and post-traumatic stress can occur – worsened by the fact that girls are usually physically held down during the procedure (Chalmers & Hashi 2000; Talle 2007).
- Few clinical studies have been done, however some forms of FGM/C have been shown to increase HIV transmission risk - unsterile instruments may be used in the cutting and because of chronic genital injury (tearing, ulceration, and delayed healing of injuries) HIV risk may increase (Brady 1999).
- FGM/C may be carried out under coercion:
 - Per the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a child’s capacity to make decisions evolves over time.
 - Social pressure and community expectations regarding FGM/C may negate girl’s ability to make decision that is free, informed or free from coercion.
- Some attempts to curb the practice of FGM/C have only resulted in the “medicalisation” of the practice, which does not solve all the concerns with FGM/C (USAID(b) 2008).

Reasons for FGM/C

- Part of coming-of-age rituals, often determine a woman’s marriageability (Population Reference Bureau 2001; UNICEF 2006):
 - Seen as a ‘graduation’ to womanly status.
 - Often combined with other practices, for example, a woman may be kept inside her house and fed excessively for a month following FGM/C because of the idea that a fatter and excised woman is more marriageable.
- Part of preserving virginity and ensuring female sexual purity (Population Reference Bureau 2001).
- Considered unclean, might not allowed to handle food/water if FGM/C has not taken place (UNICEF 2006):
 - In some communities in Niger, Mali and Senegal, female sexual organs are seen as a shameful deformity.
- Associated with religious practices and interpretation:
 - Some Muslims believe Allah will not hear the prayers of an unexcised woman because such a woman must be an atheist (Mugawe 2006).
 - Note: the Koran does not actually specifically sanction FGM/C although there is a reference to God testing Abraham by commanding him to be circumcised in verse 16:23 of the Qu’ran.
 - Some other Islamic law does refer to it, and these sources have been used as a justification for FGM/C (Broussard 2008).
 - FGM/C in fact pre-dates both Islam and Christianity (UNICEF 2006).

- Over time, by association with female sexual purity, FGM/C is seen by some as part of religious custom (WHO 2009).
- Recognition/status in community (Population Reference Bureau 2001):
 - Social acceptance of a woman can be determined by whether FGM/C has taken place.
 - If FGM/C has not occurred, a woman could be stigmatised and ostracised.
- Sexual Control - So that the woman will not stray from her husband since FGM/C curbs sexual desire (USAID(a) 2008):
 - This comes out of the belief that women are “promiscuous” and will engage in illicit sexual activity unless FGM/C takes place.
- Increased fertility (USAID(a) 2008):
 - Some women are told (incorrectly) that FGM/C can increase fertility, or that FGM/C facilitates child birth and sexual intercourse.
- Belief that if FGM/C does not occur, woman can get HIV easily (UNFPA 2007).
- Gender identity (UNICEF 2006; Population Reference Bureau 2001).

Action Against FGM/C

- Under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), FGM/C constitutes discrimination against women, but FGM/C is not specifically banned.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art 5 – *“No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”*
- Convention Against Torture, Art 1 – *“torture means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind...”* (note: remaining part of section – *“when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.”* – may be hard to apply to FGM/C).
- CRC, Art 24 – states to take measures to abolish *“traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.”*
- CRC, Art 14 – state can curtail religious freedom if it interferes with child’s fundamental human rights.
- African Charter, Art 5 – prohibits *“[a]ll forms of exploitation and degradation of man[,] particularly...torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment...”*
- African Charter, Article 16(1) - *“[e]very individual shall have the right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical and mental health.”*
- African Charter, Art 18 – state must *“ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the woman and the child as stipulated in international declarations and conventions.”*
- African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) 2003 – signed by 15 African countries. This means that countries are obliged to pass legislation prohibiting excision.
- Most African countries have laws prohibiting FGM/C, but prosecutions under these laws are very rare.

Programming Approaches

Below are some of the strategies and approaches used by other NGOs all over the world to tackle and address FGM/C:

- Educating FGM/C practitioners and providing alternate forms of income to them has been a strategy to combat FGM/C for over 10 years. This has not decreased the demand for practitioners

because of how entrenched the practice is, and has only resulted in the community searching elsewhere for people to carry out FGM/C. Additionally, practitioners of FGM/C often have recognition and status in society which they may not want to give up (Population Reference Bureau 2001).

- Alternative Initiation Ceremonies like ‘Cutting Through Words’ in Kenya have been introduced by many organisations including World Vision. These ceremonies include other cultural activities instead of FGM/C and focus on affirming the value and role of women through celebration and giving gifts. This has had some success in Kenya, where, for example, the initiation has extended to include a course covering decision-making, dating/courtship, HIV and AIDS prevention, self-esteem and FGM/C. (Population Reference Bureau 2001)
- Empowering women in income generation and literacy training, and incorporating FGM/C education as part of this has also been an approach to end FGM/C. Women are then invited to sign a declaration saying they will abandon FGM/C (Population Reference Bureau 2001).
- Tostan has been involved in some activity around FGM/C which has been quite effective. Their programme began in Senegal, and now has spread to Burkina Faso and Guinea. As part of the programme, women participate in modules about human rights and health, then can take part in a collective and public denouncing of FGM/C. In Tostan villages, rates of FGM/C have dropped by more than 60% compared with only 15% drops in control villages (USAID(b) 2001).
- PLAN International has been involved in addressing FGM/C through a participatory approach in West African countries to enable discussion and focussing on education and awareness-raising. This has helped to stop FGM/C from being a taboo issue and has created dialogue around the issue (PLAN 2006).
- The Foundation for Research on Women’s Health, Productivity and Development (BAFROW) has involved men and boys in their efforts to end FGM/C, through radio programmes in which husbands speak out against FGM/C. These types of sensitization activities have been targeted specifically to men in order to change attitudes and mindsets (UNFPA 2007).
- “Social marketing” approaches have also been implemented by some organisations. This approach involves telling village chiefs/leaders about the negative effects of FGM/C and encouraging them to publicly denounce the practice. This has included introducing alternative ceremonies to replace the FGM/C ritual (Population Reference Bureau 2001).
- NGO partnerships with local organisations and village leaders have also been an effective strategy to create dialogue and discussion (Population Reference Bureau 2001).
- Advocacy efforts and lobbying the government have also been attempted, but because FGM/C is seen as an important cultural tradition and because it is carried out at village-level, national legal mechanisms have proven ineffective (Population Reference Bureau 2001).

CARE Case Study

CARE: Ethiopia and Kenya – Community-Based Approaches for Encouraging Abandonment of FGM/C (FRONTIERS in Reproductive Health & CARE International 2004)

- Context:
 - Both communities in Ethiopia and Kenya are predominantly of Islamic faith and practice infibulation – the most severe form of FGM/C.
 - FGC prevalence rates are 74% in Ethiopia and 32% in Kenya (UNICEF 2008), but this does not demonstrate the extremely high prevalence rates of certain ethnic groups, eg: within the Afar community of Ethiopia and the Somali community of Kenya.
 - In Ethiopia, the interventions were introduced into six villages in Awash-Fentale Woreda – approximately 250 km from the capital Addis Ababa. No interventions were carried out in the control area of six villages in nearby Amibara Woreda.
 - In Kenya, the intervention site was Ifo Camp. Another refugee camp - Hagadera Camp - served as the comparison camp and received the education intervention. Both camps were located approximately 230 km from Nairobi and had a 98% Somali population.
- Project goal: “The goal of this multi-country FGC abandonment project was to increase the interest and ability of communities, NGOs, and the Ministry of Health (MOH) and other local Ministries to address FGC issues appropriately and effectively. The concurrent study objective was to increase understanding of the effectiveness of different community-based interventions to reduce the practice of FGC.”
- During an 18-21 month period starting in 2001, FGC abandonment activities were incorporated into on-going, community-based health projects.
- Project Strategies:
 - Pre-intervention: Understanding the context of the practice in order to design relevant interventions:
 - ⊃ Research was carried out by CARE, partner agency staff and community members.
 - Informing and educating communities using educational outreach strategies:
 - ⊃ The aim was to expand the educational messages to include social, psychosexual, and gender and human rights issues related to FGC.
 - ⊃ Events and messages were delivered through: a) meetings held by community volunteers and extension agents with community groups, women’s groups, health education groups, or in schools; b) popular theatre groups’ performances that incorporated social and psychosexual issues in their scenes; c) evening video sessions that showed recorded discussions by religious leaders speaking out on FGC issues (Ethiopia only); and d) mass media activities, whereby FGC issues were linked to international events, such as international refugee day and international women’s day, and as part of a violence-against-women campaign (Kenya only).
 - ⊃ In Ethiopia, 12,948 people from the intervention site attended educational events and in Kenya, 34,508 people attended from both sites.
 - Supporting advocacy activities of community level advocates.
 - Influential people like religious leaders, teachers, elders and other community leaders were targeted to advocate on issues of FGC. Each group was given specific training and messages, e.g. religious leaders would speak to the erroneous association of Islam and FGC.
 - Supporting collective action/social change:
 - ⊃ This included providing temporary “protection” to those seeking refuge and working with traditional structures and community leaders to allow greater protection for women and girls who chose to publicly declared that they were against FGC.

- **Project Activities:**
 - Ethiopia's intervention activities were: 1) community-level educational outreach activities using Behavior Communication Change (BCC) approaches; and 2) community level advocacy.
 - Kenya's intervention activities were centred around education and advocacy.
- **Results after the evaluation:**
 - In both countries, intervention strategies were effective in increasing knowledge about the negative effects of FGC.
 - In both countries, social changes were reported from Focus Group Discussions, e.g. active public debate took place; some uncut girls, men, women and families publicly declared that they did not want the practice to continue.
 - In both countries, traditional leaders had to start addressing the issue of protection for those who did not want to be cut.
 - In both countries, higher proportions of men expressed support for ending FGC compared to women.
 - In Ethiopia, there was more than a hundredfold increase at the intervention site in the proportion of respondents expressing support for ending FGC. Seventy elders and control villages declared that their villages would no longer practice cutting.
 - In Kenya, results were somewhat mixed, with men expressing increased support for ending FGC, but with women expressing decreased support. Interestingly, the increase in support for ending FGC was significant in the comparison site, but not the intervention site. In Kenya, support groups formed for those who did not want to be cut.
- **Strengths and Learnings:**
 - The project was shaped according to the context in each country:
 - ⊃ In Kenya, because the refugee population were aware of international conventions on human and refugee rights, the project took a more pro-active approach to working with communities to discuss whether FGC was a violation of human rights.
 - ⊃ In Ethiopia, where human rights and gender issues/inequalities were understood from a traditional/religious context, the project approach was to address these issues through actions (e.g. encouraging women to play new roles in the community), more than through the use of human rights-based messages and education activities.
 - ⊃ For both countries, changes occurred to the project as time evolved. For example, once the community became sensitised to the dangers of FGM/C and once people started speaking out against FGM/C, the issue of "protection" arose and an additional component of providing support to individuals who faced pressure to conform to FGC was created.
 - Project staff took a "back seat" role in the process, guided by a belief that it was the decision of the community – not the staff - whether or not to change the practice.
 - The issue of FGC was positioned within the larger project context of health and social well-being as opposed to being a stand-alone issue. This meant that there was less resistance and FGC was not seen as an external imposition.
 - Religious leaders were identified as key change agents. It would be wise in future FGM/C projects to prioritise engaging in dialogue with religious leaders, then empowering these leaders as implementers and change agents, particularly in communities where religious significance is attached to FGM/C.
- **Challenges:**
 - Changes in behaviour, attitudes and beliefs were self-reported, therefore it is not possible to confirm if the reported changes resulted in an actual reduction in FGM/C.
 - Population movement in both countries may have contaminated results. In Kenya, refugees moved freely between camps so information was relayed to the comparison group; in the case

- In Kenya, the poorer performance of the intervention site was partly attributed to the failure to effectively implement the advocacy strategy.
- In Kenya, staff were threatened by community members for bringing up the topic of FGC.

International Views on FGM/C

"If we can come together for a sustained push, female genital mutilation can vanish within a generation." (UN Deputy Secretary General - Ms Asha-Rose Migiro 2008)

"It is unacceptable that the international community remains passive in the name of a distorted vision of multiculturalism. Human behaviour and cultural values, however senseless or destructive they may appear from the personal and cultural standpoints of others, have meaning and fulfil a function for those who practice them. However, culture is not static but is in constant flux, adapting and reforming. People will change their behaviour when they understand the hazards and indignity of harmful practices and when they realize that it is possible to give up harmful practices without giving up meaningful aspects of their culture." (Joint statement by the World Health Organization, UN Children's Fund, and UN Population Fund 1996)

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Acronym List

ADP	Area Development Program
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BAFROW	The Foundation for Research on Women's Health, Productivity and Development
BBC	Behaviour Communication Change
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBO's	Community Based Organisations
CECADEM	Women's Development and Training Centre (Chilian: Centro de Capacitacion y Desarrollo para la Mujer)
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSD	Centre for Self-Help Development
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRECER	Crédito con Educación Rural
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FOR A	Fund Opportunity Russia
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GBV	Gender - Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICC	International Criminal Court
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFI's	Microfinance Institutions
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGO's	Non – Government Organisations
RD-12	Rural Development Project - 12
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association (India)
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund Shortened from United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women (French: Fonds de développement des Nations unies pour la Femme)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organisation