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MODULE 3

ADOLESCENT EMPOWERMENT: WHY? WHAT? HOW?

Resource Book for Civil Society Organisations

“The Adolescent Empowerment Toolkit”

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Module 3

ADOLESCENT EMPOWERMENT: WHY? WHAT? HOW?

Resource book for CSOs to analyse approaches to working with adolescents, and how adolescent intervention programmes can enlist the support of key gatekeepers to improve the decision making and agency of adolescents, leading to their empowerment.



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works in more than 190 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

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seeking to make violence and discrimination against women and girls unacceptable. We use the power of arts, media, pop culture, and community mobilization to inspire people to take bold action to build a world in which all people live with dignity, equality, and justice.

We create groundbreaking multimedia campaigns that bring human rights issues into the mainstream and make them relevant and urgent to individuals and communities worldwide. These, along with our in-depth training sessions with young people, government officials, and community members, have inspired a new Breakthrough Generation of leaders to initiate change in the world around them.


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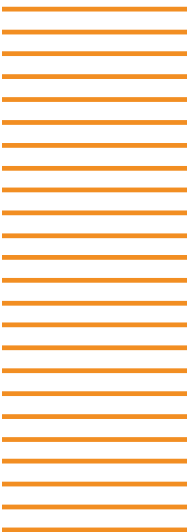
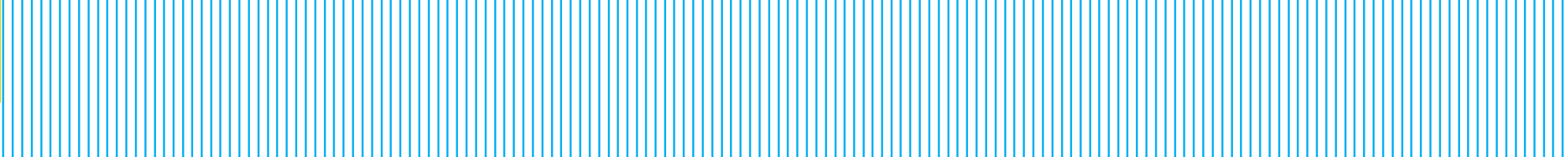
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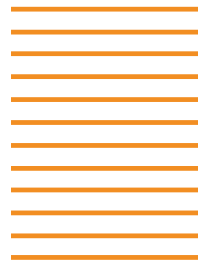


Why do you need a Resource Book on Adolescent Empowerment?

The growing proportion of young people in many countries represents an immense possibility for early investment in their learning and overall development. Such investment is not only to ensure they receive opportunities that are rightfully theirs but also to reap the potential dividend they offer. This is especially true in India where a large proportion of the population is young and will remain so for years to come. Although India has one of the fastest growing youth populations in the world, its gender disparities pose significant barriers for the future of adolescent girls and boys. Gender-related challenges such as restrictions on mobility, lack of schooling or dropping out of school, early marriage and violence persist in creating unfair disadvantages for girls within this large

group of adolescents in India. Son preference and the marginalisation of girls are widespread and reflected in wide gender disparities in education and workforce participation. At the same time rigid gender norms, and harmful perceptions of what it means to be a man, encourage adolescent boys to engage in high-risk behaviours and condone violence against women. Besides policy measures and actions, many civil society organisations have been at the forefront of efforts to work with adolescents. There have been several approaches to work with adolescents – ranging from an economic/livelihood perspective to a life cycle approach. Empowerment of adolescents has been both a stated as well as unstated goal of these programmes. The purpose of the resource book is to provide

civil society actors with key information on various approaches used to work with adolescents; which besides providing conceptual clarity also gives useful insight into how and why certain programmes work well and why an empowerment approach to adolescents is critical. The resource book also provides useful information on how the support of the community, service providers and key gatekeepers can be enlisted for successful programming. The utility of the resource book lies in its synthesis of various approaches used for working with adolescents, its key highlights and how programmes can work towards meeting the multiple needs of adolescents.



Who can use the Resource Book?

The resource book can be used by NGO, CSO and CBO representatives in planning strategies, key entry points and activities to address the multiple needs of adolescents. The resource book is divided into four sections:

Section I provides a comprehensive listing of various approaches used to work with adolescents and its key highlights;

Section II provides critical inputs on working with adolescents using an intersectional approach which combines needs and vulnerabilities of adolescents with a focus on gender based violence;

Section III provides useful and practical information on how communities and service providers can be mobilised to work to meet the needs of adolescents; and

Section IV as the concluding section provides useful tips and recommendations on how adolescent programming can be made more effective.

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SECTIONS



1

Working with Adolescents - Approaches and Strategies

1. Adolescents in India, A Profile, UNFPA for UN systems in India, 2003
2. M. Bandyopadhyay & R Subramanian, Gender Equity in Education: A Review of Trends and Factors, Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity, Pathways to Access, Research Monograph No. 18, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, April 2008
3. Data provided to 12th Joint Review Mission for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan, July 2010

Why Do You Need to Empower Adolescents, Especially Girls?

Adolescents (10-19 years) constitute about 22.8% (232 million) of India's population. Adolescent girls between 10-19 years constitute close to half (111 million) of this population group¹. Adolescence represents a critical stage of transition from childhood to maturity. The physical and emotional experiences, knowledge, and skills acquired during this phase have important implications during adulthood.

Gender-related challenges such as restrictions on mobility,

lack of schooling or dropping out of school, early marriage, and violence persist in creating unfair disadvantages for girls within this large group of adolescents in India. Son preference and the marginalization of girls are widespread and reflected in wide gender disparities in education and workforce participation. Even though girls' school enrolment and gross school enrolment have increased in the last three decades, girls' enrolment in higher levels of education is still very low². This is because increased female enrolment is compromised by persistently high rates of drop out and poor attendance of girls relative to boys. According to EdCil's National household sample survey, the percentage of out-of-school boys and girls in the age group 6-10 years was 5.51% and 6.87%, respectively. For the age group 11-13 years, the percentage of out-of-school children was much higher among girls (10.03%) than boys (6.46%).³

Social constructs around gender roles inevitably place a high burden of care work on women. When women are unable to cope with the triple burden of domestic and reproductive responsibilities and paid employment, more often than not the onus of care work falls on the older girl children⁴. This is further supported by studies in India, including in Uttaranchal⁵, Tamil Nadu⁶, Karnataka^{7,8}, Andhra Pradesh⁹, and Bihar¹⁰. Girls are also more often likely to be married at an early age; almost 50% of young women aged 20-24 are married as children, i.e., before age 18 (vs. 10% of young men). They also experience early childbearing and parenting. One in five young women aged 20-24 had her first birth in childhood, i.e., before age 18. Available economic data suggests that India loses USD56 billion a year in potential earnings because of adolescent pregnancy, high secondary school dropout rates, and joblessness among young women¹¹.

| Influencers | | Challenges |
|-------------|---|---|
| Home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Parents » In-laws » Spouses » Community » Institutional support and » Cultural systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Son preference » Household chores » Caring for elderly, sick, and young » Lack of mobility » Early marriage » Domestic violence » Gender stereotyping including low decision making and » curbing of ambitions » Compromised sexual and reproductive health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early pregnancy |

| Influencers | | Challenges |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Parents » Teachers » Community » Peers » Institutional support and cultural systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Lack of non-formal education systems » Poor infrastructure: » Lack of female toilets » Predominantly male teachers » Compromised sexual and reproductive health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Menstruation - Poor sexual education |
| Work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Parents » Peers » Employers » Institutional support and cultural systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Informal sector » Low-skill, labour-intensive jobs » Risk of exploitation and trafficking » Double burden of labour |
| Public/ community space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » People including strangers and acquaintances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Physical and sexual harassment » Restricted use of space » Differential gendered norms related to participation in cultural, community and religious events |

Adapted from: *Owning her Future: Empowering Adolescent Girls*, Dasra, Mumbai

4. Report of the UNICEF-ISST Conference, Who Cares for the Child: Gender and the Care Regime in India, UNICEFISST, Surajkund, 8-9 December 2009
5. A. Agarwal, Educating the Girl Child: Who Will Help Her Learn, Down To Earth, 15 November 1992
6. M. Duraisamy, Demand for Access to Schooling in Tamil Nadu, in A. Vaidyanathan & P Nair (Eds.), Elementary Education in India: A Grassroots View, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001
7. R. Kaul, Accessing Primary Education: Going Beyond the Classroom, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 36, No. 13-19 January 2001
8. K. Jandhyala, So Close and Yet So Far: Primary Schooling in Warangal District, Andhra Pradesh, in V. Ramachandran (Ed), Gender and Social Equity in Primary Education: Hierarchies of Access, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2004
9. M.K. Jabbi & C. Rajyalakshmi, Education of Marginalised Social Groups in Bihar in A. Vaidyanathan & P Nair
10. (Eds), Elementary Education in India: A Grassroots View, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2001
11. India's next generation of growth, India Economic Summit, New Delhi, November 2009, World Economic Forum, Pg. 19. www.weforum.org/pdf/India/India09_report.pdf

What Does Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys Mean?

The ability of adolescents, both girls and boys, to make decisions about matters that affect their lives is a critical aspect of empowerment, but socialisation that starts early in life and during the adolescent period with the influence of gender, religion and caste often poses a barrier for adolescents to make their decisions. For both boys and girls, adolescence is a crucial stage - creating identity crisis,

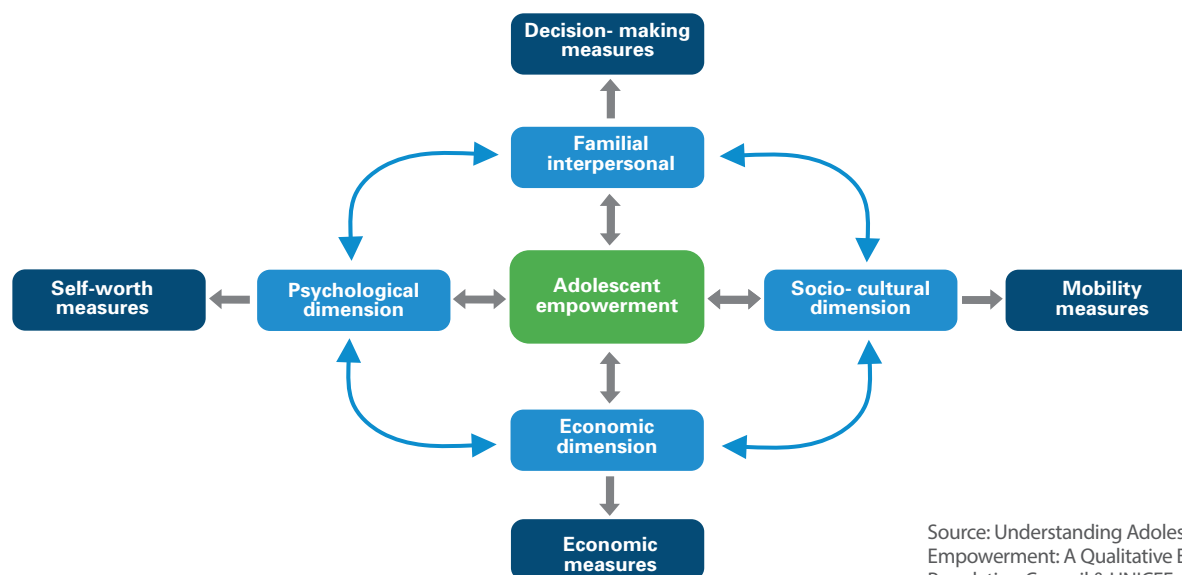
gender pressure, discrimination and violence, affecting the safe and healthy transition from childhood to adulthood.

To promote a smoother transition from adolescence to adulthood, it is necessary to promote the creation of safe platforms and facilitative environment where adolescents can participate in decision making issues affecting their lives. It is widely believed that by building their knowledge, adolescents can adopt positive practices, access preventive, curative, protective services and enhance their skills and participation in local governance.

Naila Kabeer refers to empowerment as expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context

where this ability was previously denied to them. Thus empowerment encompasses the context in which the person lives, the agency or ability to take decisions (process) and the achievement which is the outcome of choices. Most published literature relates to the role of agency in defining empowerment. Agency at the individual level comprises of four broad dimensions: (i) socio-cultural, for example freedom of movement, (ii) familial/ interpersonal, for example, participation in domestic decision making, (iii) psychological, for example, self-esteem and self-efficacy, and (iv) economic, for example, access to and control over own and family resources. The Empowerment Framework provides a good conceptual tool to ground programme work with adolescents.

Figure 1: Schematic Representation of Drivers and Measures of Empowerment



12. N. Kabeer, 'Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment' in *Discussing Women's Empowerment Theory and Practice*, Sida Studies No. 3, Stockholm, 2001

Source: *Understanding Adolescent Empowerment: A Qualitative Exploration*, Population Council & UNICEF, July 2014

A review of existing interventions with adolescent¹³ reveals that interventions can be divided into the following broad categories:

- **Safe Space Model for Empowerment:** The principle idea is to provide a space perceived as safe by adolescents (primarily girls) where they can collectivise, meet regularly, develop knowledge and understanding about key aspects of interventions and build social networks. Adopted by several organisations across the world, the key focus of such interventions is space spaces and mobilisation of girls.
- **Economic Empowerment Model:** various aspects of adolescents' lives are considered as building their economic viability, including financial, human, social and physical capital as well as social norms and institutions. The success of the approach lies in leveraging these to build financial service, employment and life skills as well as social support strategies.
- **Livelihood Approach to Empowerment:** this subsumes within it three sub-categories of interventions including
 - » Sexual and reproductive health rights with livelihood components: typically provide vocational training and information but, rarely, job support, placement and financial services. Livelihood is incorporated to enhance their implicit value or in response to adolescent and community demands.
 - » Livelihood and livelihoods plus: aims to connect vocational skills training to a sustainable source of livelihood; emphasis is on skills to obtain employment. These are often effective strategies to overcome social obstacles to girls' engagement in livelihoods and tend to focus on older age

cohorts and out-of-school girls.

- » Integrated programmes that are ideally a combination of the above with concrete modules on both aspects.
- **Violence Prevention and Rights Access as an Entry Point for Empowerment:** focuses on addressing a variety of issues that put young people at risk. It includes programmes that prevent early marriage, sexual harassment and other practices that can be attributable to forms of psychological, physical, and sexual violence and empowers them to access their rights.

A Note About Intervening Organisations!

Organisations play different roles and can be broadly categorised as the following:

- **Facilitators:** Provide facilitated access to services - make services accessible to girls and help them understand their importance. Such programmes work closely with service providers to increase access to services
- **Levellers:** Attempt to externally remove restrictions and provide equal access to certain services, with the potential to equally empower both boys and girls (e.g. equal access to education). Interventions focused on education, skill building or vocational linkages fall under this category
- **Enablers:** Aim to create an enabling environment of mutual respect between adolescent girls and the rest of the stakeholders, wherein issues of girls get their deserved prominence leading to certain changes in

13. Review of Organizational Approaches for Adolescent Empowerment, Breakthrough, December 2014

behaviour of either or both of these groups. Projects with an emphasis on survival, health, wellbeing and protection of adolescent girls fall under this category

- **Empowering:** Organisations generally promote activism by the subjects. The aim is to engage with the “rules of the game”- where change is led by the adolescent groups. Such interventions work to change gendered norms and build awareness on rights and increase capability to claim them through individual or collective action. Such projects focus on building confidence, decision making and building linkages to rights and entitlements of adolescents.

Refer annexure for details of intervening organisation following different approaches to adolescent empowerment.

Getting basics right about adolescent programming!

No matter what ‘approach’ one uses for working with adolescents, there are some ‘basics’ about working with the group:

- Begin with what young people want and what they are already doing to obtain information, services, and opportunities.
- Build their protective, positive assets and skills.
- Engage adults and institutions to create a safe and supportive environment.
- Use a variety of settings and providers, and make the most of existing infrastructure.
- Upholding the rights of adolescents is central to this piece!
- Treat adolescents as partners. Ensure that all members of the group, regardless of age, share the decision making power—equal voice and equal vote.
- Welcome, encourage, and affirm contributions and insights from both adolescents and adults.
- Encourage everyone to recognise the mutual benefits of adolescents and adults working together in partnership. Ensure that all the adult members “buy into” adolescents participating in the process.
- Be selective about the adolescents and the adults who participate.
- Establish high expectations for everyone involved. Don’t patronize adolescents by lowering expectations regarding them. On the other hand, don’t expect more from young people than from adults.
- Provide training and build the capacities of both adolescents and adults.
- Schedule meetings when adolescents can attend and in locations accessible to them. Keep young people informed about plans and meeting times.
- Include room for growth and advancement for experienced adolescents and adults.
- Don’t make assumptions about what individuals—of any age—are like.
- Take the time and make the effort to develop a good relationship with youth before expecting much. This work is often new to adolescents; take the time to explain. Adolescents may interpret adults’ being abrupt and hurried as a sign of disinterest in adolescent’s participation; so, go slow and explain what’s going on.
- Remember that you need to maintain a balance between the adolescent program and their education, relationships, communities, and extracurricular activities which are important, too.

Adapted from, HIV/STD Prevention Programs, Advocates for Youth ; Kayla Jackson, MPA, Director.2002 Adapted from: Empowerment of Youth, UNDESA’s Expert Group Meeting on Policies and Strategies to promote Empowerment of People, Technical Division, UNFPAHQ, September 11, 2013

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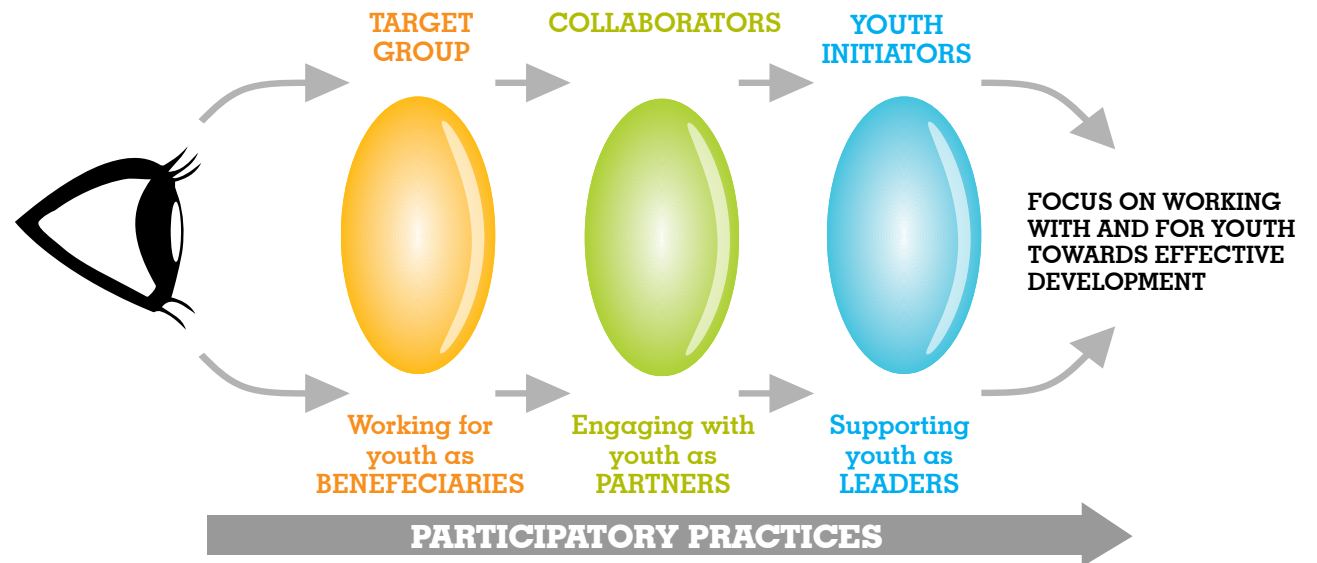
Working with Adolescents as Partners and Leaders

The imperative to work with the young adolescents is well established now. From the 'demographic imperative' with nearly 50% of the developing world population being youth or children to adolescents as a 'collective asset'; the rationale and need to engage with adolescents is well established.

In the field of social development, it is widely acknowledged, that development assistance should work for the benefit of youth (as target beneficiaries), with youth as partners, and be shaped by youth as leaders. This is an assets approach to youth participation in development .

14. World Bank 2010

15. Youth Participation for Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers, SPW/DFID – CSO Youth Working Group, 2010



Decoding the 'Three Lens Approach'- What does adolescents as 'Beneficiary', 'Partner', and 'Leader' mean?

Working with Adolescents as Beneficiaries

Defined as the basics of a good intervention :

- Adolescents as beneficiaries implies they are a target group and are adequately informed;
- Explicitly focuses on adolescents issues through documentation;
- Can prepare the ground for working with youth as partners

Working with Adolescents as Partners

Defined as:

- Collaborative interventions, where young people are fully consulted and informed;
- Implies mutual cooperation and responsibility;
- Recognises that young people generally need experience working at this level before progressing to becoming leaders and initiators of development (if appropriate)—a progression which not all will want or be able to make.

Working with Youth/ Adolescents as Leaders

Defined as:

- Enabling youth-initiated and directed interventions;
- Opening up a space for youth-led decision making (delegation) within existing structures, systems and processes

Source: Youth Participation for Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers, SPW/DFID – CSO Youth Working Group, 2010

The 'Human Right' imperative!

Adolescents are frequently in the position of needing to claim their rights the most, but enjoy them the least! Hence putting the focus back on rights is critical!

For under-18s, the right to express one's views freely and have them taken into account in decision -making, in accordance with one's age and maturity, is set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 12.

The greater autonomy and participation rights of older youth (18-to-24-year-olds) are perhaps less visible, being dispersed across a number of civil, political, economic and social rights frameworks. However, participation in development "of the entire population and all individuals" is a theme of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986).

Connecting the Dots

Linking Adolescent Empowerment on Gender Based Violence with Rights, Health, Education and Life Skills.

Seeing the link between gender based violence – the violation of rights that it entails and its adverse impact on the life choices of adolescent girls is critical.

With greater autonomy, such as choosing educational and employment opportunities; greater decision making in the family including when to marry and have children, and greater ability to make choices about their own health and wellbeing, adolescents are more likely to lead healthier,

productive lives as adults. This implies better health, education, and choices for their future families, creating a powerful multiplier effect that can enhance social and economic development. More importantly, it upholds the right of adolescents to self-determined life choices.

The Seven Cornerstones of Empowering Adolescent Girls from Marginalised Communities

As adolescent girls are heterogeneous groups in terms of their needs, approaches to empowering them must take into account the specific age-related issues. They must also ensure a strategic focus on areas that will have the highest impact on developing their future potential: health, education, agency, and income and productivity. This requires a multi-sectoral approach, involving all stakeholders in the four contexts of adolescent girls' lives – home, school work and the public space – and implemented through a focus on the seven key areas below:

1. Promoting Girls Agency and Mobility

Agency refers to a girl's sense of self-worth or self-efficacy, her ability to make decisions and exercise choices. Agency is typically built through

life skills education, also referred to as self-development or personality development. In the context of empowering adolescent girls, this means questioning and understanding of the self and others, rights, sexuality, and gender. Discussion of gender roles and expectations breaks stereotypes and encourages mutual understanding between males and females as well as between generations. Studies highlight that programs focusing on building young people's agency helps build negotiation and communication skills, broaden girls' horizons, raise awareness of sexual and reproductive matters, counter gender disparities, and inculcate a savings orientation.

While discussing agency, it is important to include a specific note on mobility and its importance in the lives of adolescent girls. Young women face particular challenges during adolescence, as their educational and livelihood choices are more constrained by fertility considerations, domestic work burdens, and limited knowledge of opportunities. Social norms around women's work and mobility as well as discrimination and gender based violence can further prevent young women from taking up available opportunities.

In the discussion on adolescent empowerment, the gender specific challenges of mobility are often neglected. The extent of how women and girls may be disproportionately affected by poor urban mobility is not sufficiently well known or quantified. In the context of adolescent girls, it is important to think of mobility not only as access to desired goods, services and activities; but also, in terms of safety and access to education, training, employment, health care and social networks- factors central to

agency and empowerment.

2. Addressing Gender Based Violence

Gender based violence (GBV) is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. It knows no social, economic, or national boundaries. It undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of people living with it, yet remains shrouded in a culture of silence. Young adolescent girls are at a higher risk of experiencing physical or sexual violence owing to several socio-cultural factors.

Justifications for violence frequently are on based gender norms – that is, social norms about the 'appropriate' roles and responsibilities of men and women. These cultural and social norms socialise males to be aggressive, powerful, unemotional, and controlling, and contribute to a social acceptance of men as dominant. Similarly, expectations of females as passive, nurturing, submissive, and emotional also reinforce women's roles as weak, powerless, and dependent upon men. The socialisation of both men and women results in an unequal power relationship. This is particularly true for adolescent girls who generally have low decision making power within homes and might not share experiences of violence with families for fear of being 'shamed and blamed' or might not even be believed. However, at the programme implementation level, it is important to advocate for policies and practices that promote gender equity and equal treatment of women and girls in their relationships, their families, and in society.

3. Delaying Marriage and Pregnancy

Child/Early marriage denies girls the opportunity to experience their formative years, and discover themselves, their voices and future aspirations. Early marriage means that adolescent girls take on the roles and responsibilities of adult married women in their husband's home far before they are mentally, emotionally and physically ready to do so. This takes a toll on their education, wellbeing and autonomy.

Studies suggest that girls who married before the age of 18 were less likely than those married after 18 to have been involved in planning their marriage, reject wife-beating, use contraceptives to delay their first pregnancy, or have their first birth at a health facility¹⁶.

Delaying the age of marriage and first pregnancy gives girls greater opportunities to develop their potential before taking on responsibilities associated with adulthood and ensure better outcomes for future generations. Research estimates that nearly \$100 billion of lost potential income is due to adolescent pregnancy in India. This is almost the equivalent of two decades worth of global humanitarian assistance¹⁷.

4. Staying in School

Education is often associated with long-term results over generations; however, educating girls has the potential to increase empowerment in a short timeframe. Besides being an inherent right, education has the potential to improve life choices in numerous ways: from enhancing income earning potential and thus more negotiation power within the home; to delaying marriage and in turn childbearing as well as encouraging better spacing

of pregnancies and family planning. A number of studies have shown that women who are educated and employed report a much larger role in decision making at home and in their community¹⁸.

Education offers girls the opportunity to discover a world outside of their homes and communities and enables them to be more aware of their own abilities. It is estimated that each cohort of adolescent girls that drops out of secondary education could potentially have added US\$ 10.6 billion to the Indian economy though their lifetimes if they were allowed to continue their education¹⁹.

5. Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health

Adolescent girls' health needs encompass reproductive and general health, involving the intricately related aspects of mental, emotional, and social wellbeing. The patterns of sexual behaviour and health seeking behaviour established during adolescence set the stage for adult health. Healthy sexual behaviours, delaying the start of sexual activity, negotiating within sexual relationships, and protecting against unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STI) are fundamental to good sexual and reproductive health over many decades²⁰.

The fact that health of adolescent girls does not receive the attention that they deserve is indicative from the data that half of all girls between 15 and 19 years of age are malnourished²¹. On the other hand, studies have shown that working with adolescents on issues related to sexual and reproductive health helps decrease maternal mortality, and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and STI. It also increases the

16. A. Hervish & C Jacobs Feldman, Who Speaks for Me? Ending Child Marriage, Population Reference Bureau, 2011
17. R Levine & M Temin, Start with a Girl, Center for Global Development, 2009
18. Owing her Future: Empowering Adolescent Girls, Dasra, Mumbai
19. The Girl Effect, Fact Sheet: India, accessed on: www.thegirleffect.org
20. R Levine & M Temin, Start with a Girl, Center for Global
21. NFHS 3 (2005-2006)

age of marriage and first pregnancy, and improves new born and child health and nutrition status²². Sex education, nutritional education, awareness on menstrual hygiene, as well as awareness on violence and sexual coercion are important aspects of sexual and reproductive health.

6. Increasing Income Generating Potential

Programs that enable girls to acquire practical skills such as vocational training and financial literacy are the most direct ways to expand adolescent girls' economic options, especially when costs related to education are a burden on families. Furthermore, enhancing economic opportunities for girls helps them gain income and postpone marriage, and reduces their risk of being engaged in exploitative labour. Providing financial literacy skills creates up to a 70% increase in savings, giving girls the ability to

exercise greater autonomy within the household²³.

7. Working with Men and Boys and Inter-gender Dialogue

Adolescent-focused programming that aims to transform gendered norms and behaviours has typically worked with either boys or girls, rarely working with both sexes simultaneously to bring about change²⁴. There is a movement towards encouraging programming that intentionally works with both sexes in mutually reinforcing ways based on growing consensus of the benefits that result from engaging boys and men as partners to empower girls and women²⁵.

Evidence shows that encouraging men and boys to challenge gender norms has significant benefits to them in terms of health and wellbeing, partly through reducing engagement in risky behaviours perceived

as being "masculine" in nature, and that this in turn has beneficial effects for the women and girls in their lives²⁶.

Some advocates argue for adopting an "instrumental" approach, in which involving men and boys is mostly a means towards the goal of redressing gender inequalities and women's and girls' disadvantages. With this approach, men and boys may act as partners and/or participants in programs designed to empower girls, but the focus is primarily on improving outcomes for girls. Another approach engages men and boys as full participants, with an explicit acknowledgement of the benefits of greater gender equality for women and men. This approach, sometimes described as "gender relational" or "gender synchronisation," considers both girls and boys (and women and men) when designing programs that intentionally and mutually reinforce ways that "challenges gender norms, catalyses the achievement of gender equality and improves health"²⁷.

Contextualising Gendered Relationships

The gender synchronisation or relational approach emphasises the social relationships between individuals and how these shape the construction of gender and gendered roles. Individuals both are influenced by and influence others in their social network in ways that define gender in broadly understood terms and generate normative pressure to conform to these definitions. Changes in gendered behaviour by necessity take place within the context of these relationships, most notably in those that are intimate but also in those that are more distant. Within the context of programming with

adolescents, this implies identifying key relationships within the lives of adolescents and working strategically to address the gendered nature of the relationship.

The ecological approach to programming emphasises the need to target and understand the full range of influences in the lives of boys and girls. This approach is explicitly structural in its focus, viewing individuals as part of a larger system of interlocking social interrelationships. In the context of programming with adolescents, this suggests working with both the key 'players' in their lives, such as parents and peers and those with more distant, yet still influential, relationships, such as religious leaders or teachers.

Source: The Girl Effect: What Do Boys have to do with it? ICRW Meeting Report 2012

22. Touching Lives Empowering Communities: Evidences from Pilot Interventions, MAMTA, 2009
23. Owning her Future: Empowering Adolescent Girls, Dasra, Mumbai
24. M Greene & A Leveck, Synchronizing Gender Strategies: A Cooperative Model for Improving Reproductive Health and Transforming Gender Relations, Interagency Gender Working Group, Washington DC, 2010
25. Ibid
26. M Greene & G Barker, Masculinity and Its Public Health Implications for Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV Prevention, in Routledge Handbook of Global Public Health, Routledge, New York, 2010
27. M Greene & A Leveck, Synchronizing Gender Strategies: A Cooperative Model for Improving Reproductive Health and Transforming Gender Relations, Interagency Gender Working Group, Washington DC, 2010

Boy-only, Girl-only, or Mixed Programming: The Critical Question of Inter-Gender Dialogue

There is relatively little documentation of when and how program implementers decide to work with only boys, only girls and when they bring them together, reflecting considerable uncertainty as to how and when this approach is most applicable. However, there is some experiential evidence that mixed-sex approaches can be effective in changing gender norms and behaviours, particularly when this is done deliberately from the initial stages of interventions²⁸.

The availability of integrated spaces that provide the opportunity for boys and girls to challenge and discuss gender norms through face-to-face conversations, role playing or other sharing activities are important, such as those used in the Stepping Stones and Choices programs. Adopting this approach does not mean, however, that all program activities should take place in a space shared by boys and girls. Program evidence also suggests that the more effective approach is to bring boys and girls together at key points. Many programs have found that initiating conversations about gender norms was easier in single-sex groups, which provide a “safe space” within which to comfortably share and openly address various key topics and to be able to question rigid norms about gender and masculinity without being ridiculed by their male (and female) peers.^{29,30}

Also, in order for mixed-sex programming to be successful, care must be taken to ensure that the environment is non

-confrontational, protective and supportive of gender-transformative behaviour. This may be especially important for girls and women, for whom challenging existing norms carries potentially greater costs, especially when doing so in the presence of boys or men. In some contexts, or for some especially difficult topics, allowing the discussion to begin in single-sex groups is likely to be the more effective option, particularly if this is followed up at a later stage with a mixed-sex discussion of the issues. Programmers should be strategic about when to work with boys and girls separately and when to work with them jointly, acknowledging that there is a need for both kinds of approaches, depending on the content of the intervention and the context.

Case Studies of Organisations Working with Adolescent Boys and Girls:

Stepping Stones: Inter-Gender Communication and HIV Training

Stepping Stones, a training package on gender communication and HIV, consists of both, sex-specific and mixed-sex programming. First, the program creates safe spaces by grouping people into same-sex and similar aged groups. Participants learn to explore HIV, gender and relationship issues with their peers, to help avoid the threat of domination or ridicule from others. At intervals throughout the programs, all the groups are brought together to share lessons they have learned. By taking this phased approach, learned concepts are reinforced and integrated to the larger community, which increases

28. The Girl Effect: What Do Boys have to do with it? ICRW Meeting Report 2012
29. A. Guedes, Addressing Gender-Based Violence from the Reproductive Health/HIV Sector: A Literature Review and Analysis, The Population Technical Assistance Project; LTG Associates, Inc., Social & Scientific Systems, Inc, 2004
30. J. Pulerwitz, G Barker G, M Segundo & M Nascimento, Promoting more Gender Equitable Norms and Behaviors among Young Men as an HIV/AIDS Prevention Strategy, Horizons Final Report, 2006

the effectiveness and sustainability of the program. An evaluation of the program had an overall effect on participants' ability to communicate; this included discussions about sex with older populations, improved ability and confidence with discussing their newly formed attitudes and beliefs, as well as improved communication among partners. Stepping Stones was found to have had a profound effect on communication by teaching those involved to express their opinions and feelings clearly, listen to each other and to discuss issues.

Source: Jewkes, Nduna, and Levin, Salamander Trust 2010

Challenging Gender Norms with Boys and Girls in Nepal: The Example of Choices

Save the Children's Choices is a pilot project in Nepal with 10 to 14 year old boys and girls, implemented through local NGOs in children's clubs with youth facilitators. The approach is based on the assumption that changing the gender-related attitudes and behaviour of pre-adolescent boys will lead to a change in the treatment of girls and women in Nepali society and ultimately to improved health.

Topics of gender norms such as power are not approached directly, but through creative, participatory activities involving both boys and girls that encourage young adolescents to discover and challenge their beliefs and attitudes. The curriculum uses situations that young adolescents can relate to (family dynamics, homework, household chores and sibling relationships) to explore gender constructs around topics such as empathy, what is right and wrong, respect, and dreams.

Boys and girls are encouraged to discuss issues while in a mixed-sex setting, thus exposing each group to the others' concerns. In this way the program incorporates the young adolescent's cognitive abilities, current situational awareness, and emotional capacities into its programming. The emphasis on real-life situational experiences with gender inequality and power and how relatively small changes in behaviour can alleviate these provides a firm foundation for the discovery of the restriction placed on both boys and girls by inequitable gender norms.

Source: CHOICES: A Curriculum for 10 to 14 Year Olds in Nepal: Empowering Boys and Girls to Change Gender Norms, Save the Children, 2009

3

Engaging Gatekeepers:

Working With the Community and Service Providers to Provide Safe and Supportive Environment to Adolescents

Adolescence marks an important time in the process of human development, the passage between childhood and adulthood. It is a time of tremendous opportunity and promise, when young people begin to explore their burgeoning individuality and independence and begin to think critically about themselves and the world around them. They begin to adjust and adapt to the profound biological, psychological, and social changes and challenges that are by-products of adolescence. The manner in which adolescents navigate these changes and challenges is largely a function of interactions—both positive and negative—with families, communities, and the larger social environment. The health and wellbeing of young people (and the adults they will become) are critically affected by their experiences during this developmental

milestone. Healthy adolescent development depends on safe and supportive environments that are free from violence and from the risks of physical, mental, and emotional harm. Environments that provide opportunities for youths to build strong and meaningful connections with their families, their schools, and their communities³⁰.

Any programme that intends to work with adolescents need to secure program approval and support from the adolescents' parents, guardians, relatives or other adults. The adults are often the ones who give adolescents –particularly girls the permission to attend programmes, or can be the barrier that keeps them away. Their level of support is an important factor in the success or failure of any adolescent programme.

The first question to ask even before the programme starts is:

“For the adolescents that I am trying to reach, who are the critical adults in their lives?”

Depending on background of adolescents, and the cultural context in which the programme operates, the kind of adults to be engaged will be different. It will be useful to look at some examples. The list is not exhaustive but rather illustrative.

| | |
|---|---|
| Adolescent boys and girls living with their parents/guardians | Parents/guardians, Community Leaders |
| In-school adolescents – boys and girls | Teachers, Head Teachers |
| Unorganised sector workers – boys and girls | Employers |
| Married adolescent girls | Husbands, Mothers-in-law, Community Leaders |
| Adolescent girls | Brothers, father, mother |

There should be a conscious strategy to involve men and boys in the programme – both as a strategy to reach out to girls effectively as well as through the process of involvement to transform men and boys. It is equally important to know the community and identify critical leaders through a stake holder analysis at the start- whether they are religious leaders, political leaders, head teachers, community organizations, etc.

A Note about Married Adolescent Girls

Adolescent girls who are married are vulnerable and at risk of physical and sexual violence and have limited ability to negotiate for safe sex. Once they are married, they go and live with their husband and in most cases with his family. Therefore, they often have even less in control of their lives

than before with most decisions being taken by their husband and their parents-in-law.

When considering program strategies, it is useful to keep the following in mind:

- Married adolescents still need the same social support as other girls – so having girls groups, mentors, safe places for them to meet is important. However, they might feel their issues are different from unmarried girls, so they might need their own groups to meet.
- Key adults to engage will be their husbands and their mothers/fathers-in-law
- Consider engaging community gatekeepers – teachers, ASHA/ANM, village elders to raise awareness on gender based violence and its long term impact on families and communities

Different organisations have used different methods/strategies to work with communities and adults to reach out to adolescents effectively.

Through Parents

The core element of this strategy is to engage and involve parents' right at the start of the programme and ensure their continued engagement till the end. Calling meetings in the community of parents of adolescents, explaining the purpose and progress of the programmes keeps parents involved and dissuades fear of what is happening or what is the information being provided to their wards. Using fliers, door to door meetings targeted at parents are effective means to keep them involved.

| Pros | Cons |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental buy-in from the start of the program • A way to get parents input at the very start and on a continued basis till the end of the project • High support and ownership of program by parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only get adolescents whose parents approve of the programme from the start |

Through Community Leaders

Involving and engaging community leaders involves approaching the recognized leaders in the community—whether they be elders, pradhans, local level government administrators, religious leaders, head masters of schools and making them the advocates of the programme. Meeting with them one-on-one regularly, calling community meetings led by them on the issue are effective strategies to involve them. Making their endorsement and participation visible will help dissuade anxiety amongst the community and encourage them to participate and allow their girls to be involved in the programme. Asking community leaders to ‘open’ training programmes; nukkad nataks or other outreach activities can be other ways of involving them and making their endorsement visible. Continued engagement is important.

| Pros | Cons |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leaders buy-in from the start to the end of the program Visible support and ownership of program by community leaders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes community leaders might have their own interest in supporting a program and might ask for something in exchange for allowing the program to run. It is good to be aware of it and negotiate effectively so that the goal of the programme is not compromised. |

Through Schools

Engaging schools in the community, to reach girls as well as involving them in the programme is a good strategy. Starting with a meeting with the head teacher (sometimes after sending a formal letter of introduction) and working with teachers as role models to expand and intensify the programme. Schools are neutral entry points and teachers enjoy social respect and acceptability in the community. Having them as role models to promote and engage them as stakeholders will help increase the reach and acceptability of the programme.

| Pros | Cons |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach large numbers of adolescents concentrated in one area Teachers enjoy social acceptability and respect – having them as allies works to ease resistance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools often tend to be a very formal environment Competing interests at schools – exams, syllabus to complete etc |

A Note about Attendance

Sometimes, while programs are successful in their recruitment efforts, they can later struggle with attendance and retention. Drop out can be high or attendance irregular. Some common reasons leading to attendance problems are:

- problem with the day/time in which meetings are held (clash with school or other responsibilities)
- group meetings or program duration are too long or they occur too frequently (or not often enough)
- parents or other critical adults are not supportive of the program
- boys and girls may be working in unorganized sector
- girls need child care for their babies or younger siblings whom they nurture
- the program is not meeting the needs of the adolescents

When programs are designed with adolescents needs in mind, these problems tend to be minimized. However, if attendance continues to drop, that is a sign that it is time for a needs assessment. Organise some sessions with the adolescents, use interactive tools to find out what are the barriers to attendance.

Adapted from K. Austrian, and D Ghati, Girl Centered Program Design: A Toolkit to Develop, Strengthen and Expand Adolescent Girls Programs, Population Council, 2010

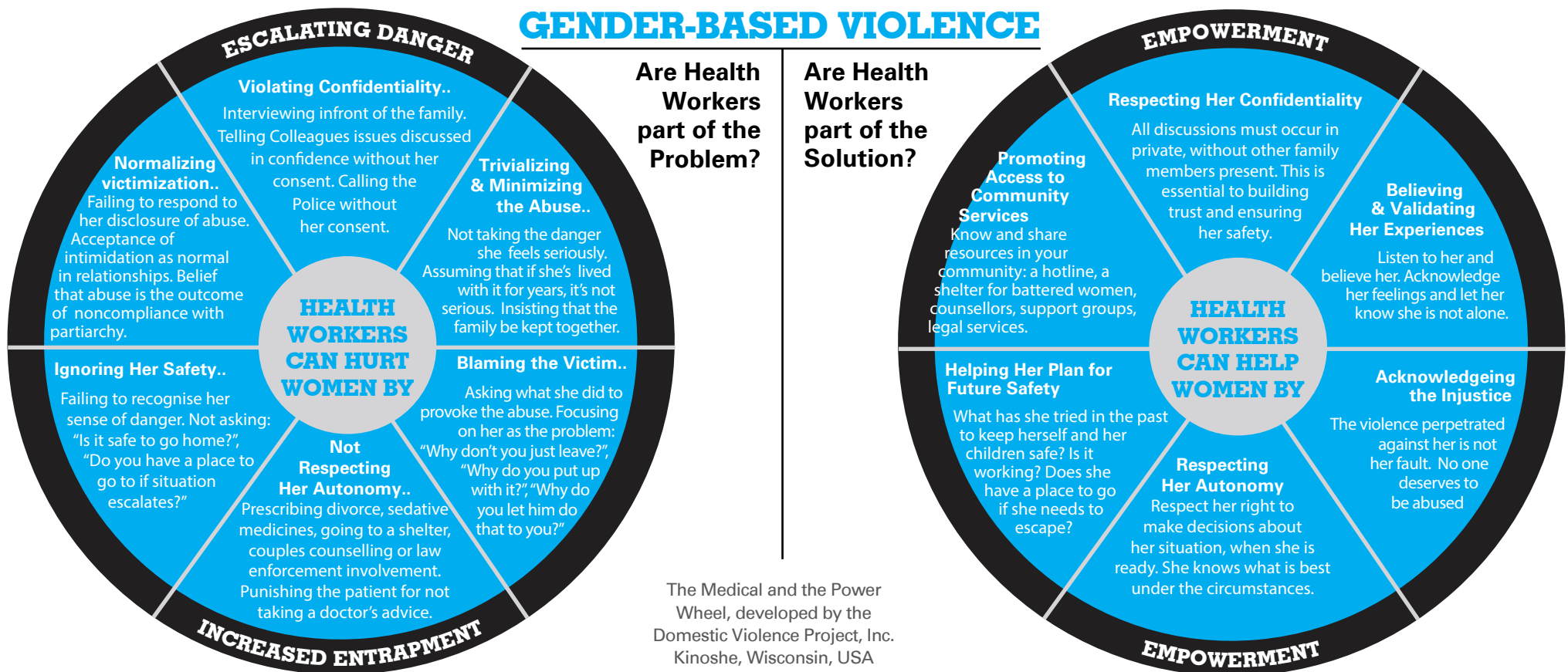
Service Providers: A key stakeholder in the community

The physical, emotional, social, and economic costs of GBV are being increasingly recognised. Most adolescent girls/women come into contact of service providers at some time in their life span. It may be to avail nutrition at Anganwadi Centres, information on contraceptives, pregnancy, child care, reproductive tract infections (RTI) for married adolescent girls. Moreover, women/adolescent girls seeking health care directly as a result of their experiences of violence, the health care system is often the first place where a woman experiencing violence in an intimate relationship has the opportunity,

away from her abuser, to disclose her situation or seek support. For women who have been sexually assaulted, emergency health care may be their first point of contact for assistance. Therefore, health care providers can play an important role to screen abused women and take appropriate action. Health care providers as the 'first point of contact' is particularly true in a community context, where frontline workers like the ASHA, ANM and Anganwadi Worker reach out to large number of women. In addition, they are strategically placed to identify adolescent girls/married adolescents at risk. However, many girls may not disclose experiences of violence to health care providers unless they are asked.

Adolescent Empowerment programmes can contribute to this effort by equipping service providers to discuss violence with their adolescent groups and to respond appropriately to a disclosure. More importantly, by virtue of their social standing and acceptability in the community, they are in a unique position to change societal attitudes about GBV. Perhaps more importantly, service providers in the community may inadvertently put women at risk if they are uninformed or unprepared to deal with disclosures of GBV by adolescent girls.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



How Can Service Providers Address GBV?

Key steps to prevent GBV

- **Build solidarity:** Build partnerships with other community-based groups like Village Health. Gram Panchayats; Mahila Mandals; Kishori Mandals etc. Use these forums to initiate dialogue on GBV and its impact.
- **Use Existing Forums:** Existing forums like the monthly PHC review meetings to discuss GBV as an issue; Use existing forums to organise mobilisation campaigns around dowry related abuse, infanticide, gender biased sex selection etc.
- **Use IEC materials:** Display and use IEC materials (developed by NGOs, government) and display them prominently in community centres like the Anganwadi/ PHC on GBV so that adolescents coming to the centre know that there is space within the centre to discuss these issues.
- **Educate the community and increase awareness:** Organise meetings with adolescents and women to discuss GBV and its impact. Use such meetings to dispel gendered myths like, 'girls are paraya dhan'; child marriage is a way to ensure the security of adolescent girls'; Only boys can provide old age support. Address the issue of violence against women and myths around it like 'beating is a form of expressing love'; 'being abused is alright with me and it is my destiny'; 'it is a woman's fault if she is raped'; 'girls should be married off early as it prevents them from being sexually abused' etc.
- **Involve Men and Boys:** Make men and boys as equal partners and allies.

- **Be a visible Role Model:** Be a visible and proactive role model in the community; use one's social standing and acceptability in the community to mobilise other important stakeholders like panchayat members, school teachers, religious leaders and elders.

Key steps to address GBV particularly violence against women

- **Be alert to the issue:** Recognise a woman/girl at risk by being alert. A husband/partner/family member who exhibits controlling behaviour; presence of injuries on women/girls that do not match with explanation of how they occurred could be possible clues to spot violence.
- **Ask Questions:** Questions should be asked in private and in a non-judgemental manner. Direct questions do not help. Questioning in front of family/husband/partner may put abused girls/women at greater risk.
- **Enable access to health services:** Provide first-aid for minor injuries. For major/serious effects, refer aggrieved women/girls to appropriate health care facility and escort if necessary.
- **Provide Emotional support:** Reassure that 'abuse is not her fault'. Help her overcome feelings of guilt, anger, shame, fear and depression. Ask her to identify places or safe havens for herself and her children (as it may be).
- **Inform on legal recourse:** Share information on legal options like filing a First Information Report or Domestic Incident Report; Protection officers under the PWDVA; Child Marriage Prohibition Officers under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act and contact details of Legal Aid Centres at the district level. Keep a list of support/referral institutions that provide support services to women/girls survivors of violence.

Key questions: Building referrals and alliances with government agencies and NGOs

It is not possible for service providers to provide the range of services survivors of violence or adolescent girls experiencing GBV might need. Hence it is important for them to build a referral system and build alliances with government service providers and other NGOs which provide such services. In order to do that the key questions to consider are:

- Have you met with representatives from government agencies and other organisations working in the area of GBV to identify how you can collaborate?
- Does the centre have a directory of referral services in the community that can help women who experience GBV?
- Do these directories include specific information about what kinds of services are available, and how to access them (e.g. updated phone numbers, procedures etc) and a contact name?
- Adapted from Improving the Health Sector Response to GBV: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals in Developing Countries, IPPF/WHR Tools, 2010.

4

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is a pressing need to establish clear best practice guidelines for more effectively reaching young people across the adolescent life cycle with gender-transformative programming. Due to the efforts of donors, governments, programmers, researchers, activists there is a concerted effort to involve men and boys in this process for social change. There is consensus among different development actors that adopting a holistic approach to programming with girls should involve all members of society, but crucially men and boys, as they play a key role in shaping and enforcing gender norms. Some key programming principles that should underlie adolescent empowerment work include³¹:

- Decisions about how to work with adolescents should be based on an understanding of both gender dynamics and developmental differences.
- These decisions must also include the active participation and leadership of young people themselves with a focus on understanding their needs and desires at specific developmental stage
- Too often, programs are designed from the top down, imposing structures on participants and failing to fully achieve their objectives as a result. A programmer's best source of information on adolescents in any given setting is the adolescents themselves. Decisions on when to incorporate mixed-sex programming and how to more effectively reach program participants should be based in part on a clear assessment of what program participants want
- Program implementers should be strategic about when to work with boys and girls separately and when to work with them jointly. Programme experience clearly suggests that this carries some

31. The Girl Effect: What Do Boys have to do with it? ICRW Meeting Report 2012



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risk, and requires careful planning in order to be successful. Programmers need to identify appropriate times and topics within which to conduct mixed-sex programming, and be clear of the goals and objectives in doing so.

- Interventions should strive to reach adolescents throughout their development, rather than targeting one particular age. Supporting adolescents throughout the life stage allows lessons learned at earlier stages to be reinforced and for the introduction of content that is more appropriate to specific development points.
- Interventions should seek to involve as many of the “players” in the lives of adolescents as possible (parents, peers, teachers, broader community) and be aware that the relative importance of each depends on developmental stage.
- Any intervention that aims to reach and empower adolescents directly should also strategically address the environment in which they live – e.g. the normative, legal and policy environment.
- All programmes that engage youth in efforts to change gender norms especially norms around violence need to be clearer about goals and expected outcomes, and implement appropriate methods to test the effect of these interventions. Not all programs have the same goals – some may seek to specifically empower girls; others may focus on working with boys and men in order to improve their outcomes while incidentally empowering women and girls; still others prioritise a more gender-equitable world for both women and men, boys and girls. While all these approaches share some broad goals, their specific objectives are different, and this should be reflected both in the stated goals of the programs and in the indicators selected for evaluation purposes. Programmers should clearly identify these goals from the outset, identify robust measures of the outcome(s) of interest, and seek to evaluate programs against those criteria.

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ANNEXURES



Annexure 1

Case Studies of Organisations Following Different Approaches to Adolescent Empowerment

1. Safe Space Model for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

The Population Council has developed a safe spaces model that helps adolescent girls' transition to adulthood. In the safe spaces model, girls are organised into groups that meet each week and discuss financial literacy and health topics. Interventions vary by country and project, but all of them provide girls a safe space to develop skills, build friendships, receive peer support, increase their social networks, and develop a mentoring relationship with a trusted adult. Creating safe spaces for girls to meet and build relationships is a key element to fostering environments that promote economic empowerment.

Variations of the safe spaces model are also found in other initiatives. For instance, BRAC's youth work began by creating literacy centres for girls who had dropped out of school. BRAC has found these safe spaces to be an important part of promoting girls' economic empowerment and the physical centres for girls are a core component of their newly expanded SoFEA program (Kashfi, 2008). Some youth savings initiatives have also developed programs that create savings clubs for adolescent girls, including Women's World Banking's project in Mongolia. The Bixby Center for Population, Health, and Sustainability at the University of California, Berkeley also utilises safe spaces in their Girl-Child Education Initiative in Northern Nigeria. By providing social support for girls through clubs that meet weekly and engaging community stakeholders, this initiative aims to promote girls' education, delay marriage, and thereby reduce maternal mortality (Bixby, 2013). Findings from these initiatives suggest that providing a safe space for girls to gather, learn, and build relationships can provide an important foundation for economic empowerment.

2. Economic Empowerment Model for Adolescent Girls

Adolescent Girls' Advocacy and Leadership Initiative (AGALI):

There are six key factors that contribute to adolescent girls' economic empowerment.

- Financial capital (e.g., cash, savings, access to credit, and other financial assets)
 - Human capital (e.g., education, health, self-esteem, and communication skills)
 - Social capital (e.g., social networks, friends, mentors, and supportive family members)
 - Physical capital (e.g., ID card, household goods, land, housing, and transport)
 - Social norms (e.g., early marriage, childbearing, influence of age, gender, and ethnicity) • Institutions (e.g., political and legal rights, market structure, and the education system)
- AGALI uses three primary strategies to promote adolescent girls' economic empowerment:
- i. Financial Services Strategies, which include micro-credit, youth savings initiatives, and financial literacy education.
 - ii. Employment Strategies, which include vocational training and initiatives focusing on the school-to-work transition.
 - iii. Life Skills and Social Support Strategies, which include creating social networks and providing reproductive health and gender equity training.

Population Council and UNFPA's Action for Adolescent Girls looks at empowerment by building assets.

(Empowerment= Health Assets+ Social Assets+ Economic Assets)

- **Health Assets-** Provide girls health information; facilitate visits to health centres or from health workers; Ensure a quality essential healthcare package; including preventive care and SRH services
- **Social Assets-** Enable girls' access to a designated safe space; Give them a mentor, a network of friends, group membership; Provide a life skills education; Secure official personal documentation
- **Economic Assets-** Enable girls to become financially literate; Help them to open a personal savings account; Provide support for (re)enrolment in school; Help them access skills training and work placement

3. Livelihood Approach to Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

16 programs have been categorised into three broad groups: (1) SRHR/Life skills programs that took on additional livelihood components, (2) livelihood & livelihood plus programs and (3) integrated programs.

SRHR Programs with Livelihood Components

- Livelihoods are incorporated in SRHR programs to enhance their implicit value or in response to adolescent and community demands.
- SRHR programs with livelihood components typically

provide vocational training and information but, rarely, job support, placement and financial services.

- Capacity in livelihoods development is necessary for SRHR programs to undertake livelihood components

Livelihood and Livelihood Plus Programmes

- Adolescent livelihood programs are few; they are either initiated by the government or by organisations as an extension of existing livelihood work with adult women.
- Livelihood and livelihood plus programs aim to connect vocational skills training to a sustainable source of livelihood.
- In livelihood programs inclusion of SRHR components is rare. Emphasis is on skills to obtain employment.
- There are effective strategies to overcome social obstacles to girls' engagement in livelihood programs.
- "Youth" focused programs tend to overlook gendered realities that affect girls' engagement in livelihood programs.
- Livelihood programs tend to focus on older age cohorts and out-of-school girls.

Integrated Programmes for Adolescents

- Integrated programs have both concrete modules on SRHR and focused programming on livelihoods.
- Some programs that have been responsive to comprehensive needs have organically evolved into integrated approaches.
- Existing experience in livelihood programming and longstanding community relations enables organisations to deliver livelihood outcomes.
- Some integrated programs recognise and respond to

adolescent girls' heterogeneity multiple needs.

Source: Nanda P, Das P, Singh A & Negi R (2013), "Addressing Comprehensive Needs of Adolescent Girls in India: A Potential for Creating Livelihoods", New Delhi, International Centre for Research on Women.

4. Social Empathy Framework for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

Adolescent empowerment has been used to develop programs addressing a variety of issues that put young people at risk. Empowerment has been associated with positive outcomes in youth, including increases in resilience, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and civic engagement. This article reviews a selection of applications of empowerment with adolescents to identify how the concept is defined, applied, and measured. Key challenges to implementing adolescent empowerment programs are identified. Based on the review, social empathy is proposed as a framework for adolescent empowerment program developers. Using social empathy as a framework allows for consistency in definition and flexibility in application to apply to diverse groups of youth in various settings. A social empathy framework also establishes key outcomes that can be measured to ensure program effectiveness. By employing social empathy as a framework, service providers can draw on the value that empowerment, both as a process and an outcome, brings to their work with adolescents.

Source: Journal of Social Service Research, Volume 37, Issue 3, 2011; <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01488376.2011.564045#.VCZjZLtxnlU>

5. Stopping Violence- An Entry Point to Empowerment of Adolescents

The theme for International Day of the Girl 2014 is “Empowering Adolescent Girls: Ending the Cycle of Violence”. 700 million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday. That’s roughly 10% of the world’s population. The Day of the Girl offers an opportunity to call for action against child marriage and to end violence against women and girls worldwide.

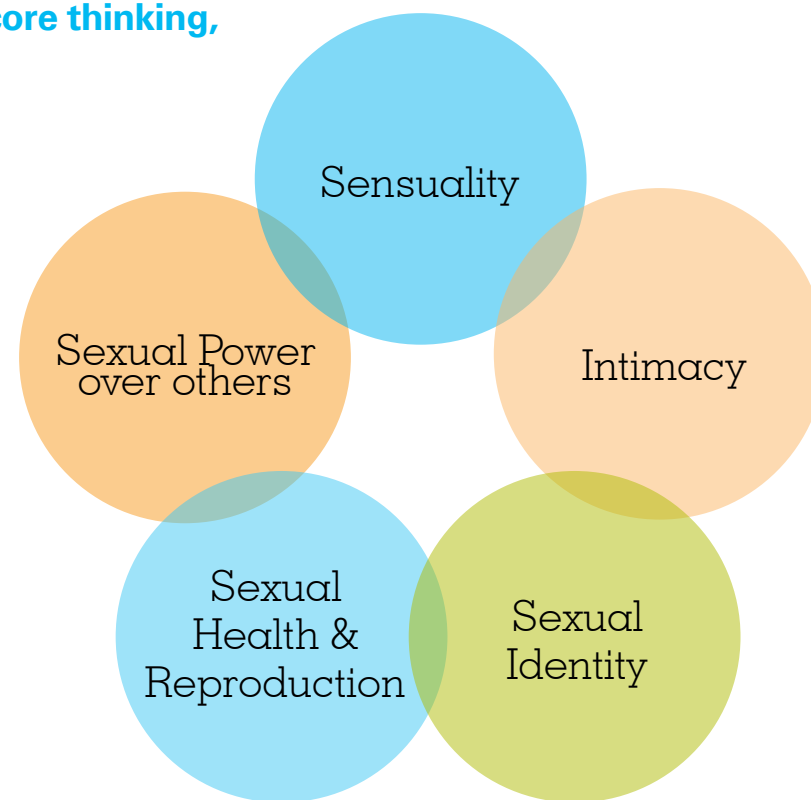
Child marriage often marks the beginning of a cycle of abuse and discrimination throughout girls’ lives. Girls who are married off before 18 are much more vulnerable to all forms of violence – psychological, physical and sexual – at the hands of their husbands or their in-laws. They are also more likely to contract HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases. On International Day of the Girl, we continue our call for an end to child marriage, one of the most pervasive forms of violence against women and girls.

Source: <http://www.who.int/pmnch/media/events/2014/girlchildday/en/index1.html>

6. Empowerment Through Sexuality

The Inner Spaces Outer Faces Initiative (ISOFI) approach to explain gender and sexuality developed by CARE (and other literature by Lamb and Petersons about the role of sexual empowerment in adolescent girls) –

Image of core thinking, alongside



Other literature reviewed for this section includes:

1. Understanding adolescent empowerment: A qualitative exploration; 2014, New Delhi, Population Council and UNICEF;
2. Value and Respect: Make India a safer place for Adolescent Girls and Boys, Baseline Survey Report, 2014, UNICEF and New Concept

Role of the Organisations in Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

The Four Categories: Facilitators, Levellers, Enablers, Empowerers

The projects in the four categories below have been fit into one category or other based on what evolves as the basic thrust of their projects. They have several elements of their projects that fit into other categories. This is just for an academic understanding and is not an evaluation of these projects.

Facilitators:

Providing facilitated access to services—make girls get used to services and understand their importance. (they may not be empowered); Incentivising SRH service providers & bringing them closer to AGs

- Affirmative Action
- Incentives
- Access to Services

WHO's programme on expanding contraceptive services to adolescents³²: Between 27 June and 29 June 2012, the World Health Organization (WHO) convened a meeting of experts to review strategies to increase access to modern methods of family planning for women globally. The technical consultation brought together 37 participants from 17 countries, with 16 agencies represented. The multidisciplinary group comprised experts in international family planning, including clinicians, researchers, epidemiologists, programme managers, policy makers, and civil society constituents. Research and programme data were evaluated to identify optimal strategies for improving

32. Expanding access to contraceptive services for adolescents, Policy Brief, WHO, http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/75160/1/WHO_RHR_HRP_12.21_eng.pdf?ua=1

family planning care. Four areas of focus were determined: increasing access to long-term and permanent methods of contraception, reaching target populations, optimising human resources, and addressing unmet needs of women who come into contact with the health system.

Biruh Tresfa (meaning “Bright Future” in Amharic) is a program for adolescent girls in urban slum areas of Ethiopia. The program is designed to assist out-of-school girls by creating safe spaces through which they can build support networks with other girls, as well as relationships with supportive adults. It creates safe spaces and activities for girls between the ages of 7 and 24 years. Trained female mentors lead girls’ clubs to provide literacy, life and livelihood skills, and HIV/reproductive health education. Trained female mentors recruit girls by going house-to-house, identifying eligible out-of-school girls aged 7–24. The house-to-house visit allows mentors to contact girls who may otherwise be missed, such as child domestic workers who are largely confined to the home. In addition, contact at the household level allows mentors to negotiate for girls’ participation with gatekeepers such as employers of domestic servants, and to serve as advocates for girls in the event they encounter future problems. Once the girls are in groups, the program provides basic literacy, life skills, financial literacy and savings, and HIV/reproductive health education through girls’ clubs led by adult female mentors. The programme has built a bridge to basic healthcare facilities since most participants live in dire poverty and even basic health care is out of their reach. Girls in need of basic medical and HIV services are provided with vouchers that entitle them to subsidised or free services at a network of participating clinics in the public and private sectors.³³

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for empowerment of Adolescent Girls- An integrated package of:

1. Nutrition provision

2. Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation
3. Health check-up and referral services.
4. Nutrition & Health Education (NHE)
5. Counseling/Guidance on family welfare, ARSH, child care practices and home management
6. Life Skill Education and accessing public services
7. Vocational training

The Adolescent Girls Empowerment Programme (AGEP)³⁴ of the Population Council is comprised of three major components: 1) safe spaces groups in which girls meet once a week over the course of two years for training on sexual and reproductive health, life skills and financial education. Groups are facilitated by a mentor, a young female from the same community as the girls; 2) a health voucher that girls can use at contracted private and public facilities for general wellness and sexual and reproductive health services; and 3) a saving account that has been designed to be girl-friendly.

Levellers:

Attempts to ‘externally’ remove restrictions & provide equal access to certain services which would make beneficiaries individually able to access services which are of empowering nature, in an equal way. Once they achieve the benefits of these services, they would be individually empowered. Provide same opportunity to girls as boys (eg: education)

- **Education**
- **Skill**
- **Vocation**

Enablers:

Aims to create an enabling environment of mutual respect between adolescent girls and the rest, wherein issues of

33. http://www.popcouncil.org/projects/41_BiruhTesdaSafeSpaces.asp

34. Austrian, K., Jackson Hachonda, N., and Hewett, P. 2013. “The Adolescent Girls Empowerment Program: Lessons learned from the pilot test program.” Lusaka: Population Council

girls get their deserved prominence leading to certain changes in behaviour of either or both of these groups. Includes sensitising community to change behaviour towards AG and introducing adolescents to needs to behaviour change

- **Survival**
- **Health**
- **Protection**

The 'Kishori Abhijan' Project developed by UNICEF and its partners aims to empower adolescents, especially girls, while at the same time it also involves boys. The project works to create and sustain a supportive environment for adolescent girls' development at a household and community level. The underlying principle of the project is to build self-esteem, confidence, knowledge and skills in the adolescent community. Such qualities encourage adolescents to intervene in socio-economic and political structures, take control of decision making processes within and outside the family and community, enter domains conventionally seen as exclusively male, and, finally, access available natural, financial and intellectual resources.³⁵

The Social Empathy Framework³⁶

Empowerers:

The aim is to engage with the "rules of the game". By changing or trying to change the rules, the adolescent girls as a community or as a role get the benefit and feel "empowered". Includes engaging with certain norms to change them or build awareness on rights and increase capability to claim them through individual or collective action. Also engage with community to accept changing reality & respect rights of adolescent girls

- **Decision Making**
- **Confidence**
- **Rights and Entitlements**

Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign has called for:

- **Goal 1:** Girls' education to be prioritised by world leaders.
- **Goal 2:** Girls' completion of a quality secondary education to be a major focus of international action.
- **Goal 3:** Funding for girls' education to be increased.
- **Goal 4:** An end to child marriage.
- **Goal 5:** An end to GBV in and around schools.
- **Goal 6:** Girls and boys to participate in decision making and inspire those with power to take action.

Plan is working with girls, communities, traditional leaders, governments, global institutions and the private sector to address the barriers that prevent girls from completing their education. Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign aims to reach 4 million girls directly – improving their lives with access to school, skills, livelihoods and protection. It aims to achieve these through better family and community support and access to services for girls. In addition, it aims to reach 40 million girls and boys indirectly in terms of positive improvements through its gender programmes. It also aims to reach 400 million girls through policy change. This means helping to bring about quantifiable improvements in policy makers, service providers and government support for gender equality and girls' rights.³⁸

Some Projects on Adolescent Empowerment

The "Inter-Agency Program for the Empowerment of Adolescent Girls in El Salvador" (PIEMA) is an initiative of the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender (IANWGE), a network of gender focal points within the

35. Adolescent Empowerment Project in Bangladesh, UNICEF 36 Journal of Social Service Research, Volume 37, Issue 3, 2011;

(<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01488376.2011.564045#.VCZjZLtxnlU>)

36. Because I am a Girl, the State of the World's Girls 2014, Pathways to Power: Creating Sustainable, Change for Adolescent Girls, Plan

37. <http://plan-international.org/girls/plans-goals.php?lang=en>

following agencies: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, PAHO/WHO, FAO, WFP, and the UN volunteer programme UNV. Its aim is to contribute to providing integrated responses to the needs, interests and demands of adolescent girls in general, and of those in rural and marginalised urban areas in particular, taking into account cultural, social, political and economic aspects and involving a variety of actors from a gender and human rights perspective.

PIEMA as an Experiment in Intersectorality in the Ministry of Health - The proposal for integrated health reform presented in 2000 highlighted “social participation” as an important means of extending health service coverage and encouraging behavioural changes that would help to achieve better health and quality of life for Salvadorans. Social participation was therefore one of the nine lines of action put forward in the reform proposal. This created new challenges for improving the quality, quantity, efficiency, and equity of health services. Social participation is one of the policies of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (MSPAS) of El Salvador, and intersectorality is one of its lines of work. The intersectoral approach is intended to encourage interaction and cooperation among different societal actors with the aim of preserving and improving the health of the inhabitants of the various communities. One of the strategies implemented at the local level as part of the intersectoral focus is the formation of management committees made up of representatives of the population and several nongovernmental organisations to support the management of Health Units at the local level.

The National Program for Integrated Health Care (Programa Nacional de Atención Integral de Salud) promotes intersectorality in the field of adolescent care as a way of working in an integrated manner with this population. The program can point to concrete experiences, such as the project carried out in the northern part of San Salvador where, with the facilitation of health

personnel, juvenile networks were formed that initially received technical and financial support through a project of the PAHO.

These networks received technical assistance from local health services, and advice and counseling from health educators working in the SIBASIs (Sistemas Básicos de Salud Integral—Basic Integrated Health Systems). In the course of implementing and building these networks, agreements were signed with municipal governments that created opportunities for citizen participation.

In departments in the Eastern Health District, juvenile networks of adolescents received support from sponsor networks made up of a number of different actors from civil society and institutions that provided and channelled resources to meet the needs of the adolescent population. A similar initiative was carried out in the Southern SIBASI, where programs in support of youth were developed through the local health establishments in conjunction with the University of El Salvador, municipalities, and representatives of NGOs and GOs, with assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the University of Montreal in Canada.

Objectives of the PIEMA Program

General objective: To promote the empowerment of adolescent girls by strengthening their role as subjects of rights and duties in the area of human development.

Specific objectives: • To encourage the active participation of adolescent girls, from the perspective of gender equity, in the project initiatives.

- To involve adolescent girls, from the perspective of human development, as allies in the transformation of structures and identities towards equity and equality of opportunity.
- To support the establishment and consolidation of

specialised care and integrated health promotion services, with an emphasis on sexual and reproductive health.

- To create opportunities for organisation and capacity building by adolescent girls, with the goal of creating alternative revenue-generating enterprises.
- To participate in overseeing the process of generating proposals on reforms to the legal and institutional framework favouring the rights of adolescents.
- To raise awareness in the national and local media and gain their support for actions aimed at empowerment of adolescents.
- To encourage inter-agency coordination in providing resources for the benefit of adolescents.

Source: Ministry Of Public Health and Social Assistance (Mspas) Republic Of El Salvador, Central America Case Study Intersectoral Experience in the Empowerment Of Adolescent Girls

Empowerment and Livelihoods for Adolescents (ELA), Uganda: BRAC

Target population:

4800 girls aged 14-20, in school and out of school

Goals

Increase girls’ empowerment through 1) life skills training to increase knowledge and reduce high-risk behaviour, and 2) vocational training to promote income generating activity among adolescent girls

Highlights

Provision of locally based adolescent clubs that allow girls to safely gather and participate in recreational and training activities outside of school hours.

Life skills trainings are led by peer mentors who are

slightly older than participants; mentors receive one week of training and monthly training “refreshers,” and paid a stipend.

Classroom instruction and group learning methods in life skills address leadership, sexual and reproductive health, family planning, HIV/AIDS awareness, negotiation and conflict management and information on some forms of GBV such as rape, child marriage and violence against women. Training for income generating activities (IGA: agriculture, tailoring, etc.) is offered along with financial literacy training. Participants self-select courses based on interest or “comparative advantage” and some receive inputs, such as seeds for agriculture, to jump-start their IGA. Vocational training provided by entrepreneurs, and by BRAC program staff

Girls matched with IGA based in part on market demand, girls’ education levels, and the local business environment

Outcomes and Lessons Learned

- Dramatic decline in girls reporting having had sex unwillingly (83% reduction in incidence); finding attributed to the life skills sessions on rape and legal issues.
- Increased participation in IGA, and increases on overall empowerment index
- Combined interventions “might be more effective among adolescent girls than single-pronged interventions aiming to change risky behaviours solely through related education programs, or to improve labour market outcomes solely through vocational training.”
- Despite concerns, an evaluation did not indicate any negative impact on school enrolment. Strengthening the livelihood component (more skill-intensive activities, credit services) may increase overall program impact and participation.

Financial Empowerment for Vulnerable Young Women in Nairobi, Population Council, K-Rep Development Agency, 2005

Target population

322 out-of-school girls, ages 16-22, in low-income areas

Goals

Reduce girls’ vulnerabilities to negative social and reproductive outcomes by improving girls’ livelihoods options through micro-credit, youth savings groups, and mentoring support.

Highlights

- Older Girls offered financial training, micro-credit (group lending model); younger girls offered youth savings clubs
- Social support services provided by adult mentors from various social service and community development backgrounds.
- Non-economic indicators were less clear, but girl participants indicated a “greater ability to refuse sex and to insist on condom use,” and demonstrated “changes towards more liberal gender attitudes.”

Outcomes and Lessons Learned

- Despite some challenges with program implementation and evaluation, girl participants had significantly higher income and more assets, and were “more likely to keep their savings in a safer place,” compared with controls.
- Micro-finance models may be better suited to a subset of girls who are older and less vulnerable. A high program dropout rate, by younger adolescent girls especially, “suggests that the model requires further examination and adaptation, in particular, to respond to the realities of vulnerable girls living in high HIV settings.”

The Ishraq (“Sunrise”) Program in Rural Upper Egypt: Population Council

Target Population

Pilot served 277 out-of-school girls, ages 12-15 years, across four villages over 30 months

Goals

- Help girls build social and economic assets
- Improve literacy and encourage attendance in formal school
- Improve health outcomes
- Change gender norms and community perceptions about girls’ roles in society while bringing them safely and confidently into the public sphere
- Develop skills and leadership abilities, increase self-confidence, and raise expectations for girls’ futures

Program Highlights

- Established girl-friendly spaces for life skills training, literacy classes and sports.
- Led by local trained female secondary school graduates who served as teachers, role models and girls’ advocates with families and the community.
- Comprehensive program curricula featured evidence-based literacy education, life skills and reproductive health information, sports programming, and home skills and vocational programming
- Life skills and reproductive health curriculum was first developed in Egypt to address reproductive health information (including topics of GBV) and introduced the concept of girls rights
- Vocational programming featured skills of interest to girls and their families, and some girls participated in local apprenticeship opportunities

- Significant engagement with gatekeepers—parents, adult and youth community leaders, and boys—through education and village committees

Outcomes and Lessons Learned

- Increased literacy (e.g., over 90% of participants passed government literacy exam, and nearly 70% of those who completed program enrolled or re-enrolled in school)
- Shifted gender attitudes and norms, and influenced attitudes about early marriage and GBV; because of the program, for example, participants overwhelmingly objected to female genital cutting (FGC) for their future daughters. Higher levels of self-confidence were reported
- Safe spaces and group formation allowed girls to cultivate social connections that lead to increased self-confidence, and enhanced communication and negotiation skills
- Livelihoods interventions should be age/developmentally appropriate. In particular, micro-finance is better suited to older girls and young women
- Involves significant up-front engagement work with community stakeholders
- Need to engage men and boys through positive behavioural change models

Sources: Brady, M., et al. (2007). Providing new opportunity to adolescent girls in socially conservative settings: The Ishraq program in rural Upper Egypt. New York, NY: Population Council.

Interventions within Child Friendly Spaces, Democratic Republic of Congo: UNICEF, 2008

Target population

22 groups of adolescent boys and 22 groups of adolescent girls (average of 15 per group) in IDP camps and areas of return. Since 2008, about 2,300 adolescents have participated.

Goals

- Promote greater participation of adolescent girls within child friendly spaces (CFS)
- Address particular needs and risks of girls (GBV, unequal access to services, etc.)
- Engage adolescents to design their own activities to fit their interests

Programme Highlights

- Adolescent girls' discussions are facilitated within child friendly spaces
- Based on the initial success, discussion groups with adolescent boys were introduced. Dedicated time and space is created for adolescent girls to be together, where they do not have to compete with boys
- Trained female facilitators offer girls confidentiality, warmth and advice
- Discussion topics include sexual and reproductive health, protection concerns, GBV and life skills, and prevailing attitudes around gender roles
- Training/IGA (e.g. marketable skills such as carpentry, sewing and embroidery)
- In the case of boys, a trained same-sex facilitator should also be available.

Lessons Learned

- Capacity building is required for mentors to guide

discussions, especially around traditional gender attitudes and beliefs.

- Before start up, time must be allocated to engage girls in program design.
- Economic strengthening activities were added by request of the girls.
- Girls reported a trusting relationship with their mentor as something that led to their increased self-confidence and ability to express their needs.
- Due to the discussion groups, both girls and boys felt more equipped to challenge harmful practices such as early marriage.
- Discussion groups have evolved into larger movements in communities and camps, which work to reduce risks of sexual violence. Girls now have a platform to work with boys' groups to conduct joint activities such as improving the referral pathway for survivors, or creating a community vigilance group against sexual violence.

Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (EPAG), Liberia

Government of Liberia, Government of Denmark, Nike Foundation and the World Bank

Target population

2,500 Urban and peri-urban adolescent girls and young women aged 16-27 years with functional literacy and numeracy skills

Goals

Promote entry into wage and self-employment through

provision of business development skills, job skills, and life skills training. The program also links girls with mentors and peers to increase their social capital.

Program Highlights

- Training integrated job, knowledge, and behavioural skills to address common barriers to program entry and completion, such as early pregnancy, social restrictions, transactional sex and sexual violence. Evidence suggests that the project is “contributing to strengthen [sic] girls’ sense of autonomy, self-confidence, and empowerment.”
- Provides access to a savings account and financial education, supplemented with a \$5US initial deposit, and a \$20 US “completion bonus” for girls who can maintain a program attendance rate of at least 75%
- Women and girls paired up or arranged in small groups to promote safe travel and mutual support, and increase social assets
- To date, nearly 95% of participants completed training in nine locations in Liberia, exceeding the desired completion rate by almost 15%; 85% of graduates assisted by service providers in self-employment ventures or obtaining employment, and all participants opened savings accounts and received training in life skills

Lessons Learned

- Daily stipends and childcare proved essential to participation and attendance, as most participants were mothers; some set aside money from food and transport stipends to fund start-up enterprises
- Withholding a percentage of incentive payments was crucial to ensuring girls completed post training follow-up.

- Intervention locations and target populations should be “need-based and results-oriented.” To achieve this, thorough evaluations and assessments are required during the project design phase. Security, lack of infrastructure and limited capacity in post-conflict settings causes delays and cost over-runs. Local service provision may be inadequate, while travel and remuneration costs for international contractors can be high.

Source: Economic strengthening to reduce risk of GBV for adolescent girls in humanitarian settings: UNICEF, Child Protection in Crisis, Women’s Refugee Commission, August 2013



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