Power, Inclusion and Rights-based Approaches

The ActionAid Gender Equality and RBA Resource Kit

2006

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Acknowledgements

A resource of this nature is always very hard to put together. It is difficult to decide what to put it, what to leave out, how much detail is needed in some areas and not in others. Many people contributed to this final product and we would like to acknowledge their leadership, technical support, and contributions in so many ways;

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Table of Contents

This Toolkit is meant to complement and be used with the
many other resources familiar to ActionAid staff and partners,
such as *REFLECT, Stepping Stones, STAR, Critical Webs of
Power and Change* and *Notes to Accompany ALPS.*

Introduction

Why this Toolkit?

India. Chris Stowers/Panos Pictures/ActionAid

Gender and rights are both important 'lenses' for understanding and addressing the exclusion, inequality and injustice that shape and perpetuate poverty. These lenses give us a way to see how values, behaviours, assumptions, policies and programme decisions play a role in discriminating against some people and favouring others. They help us to look at how power relationships and cultural constructions shape subordination based on gender as well as class, race, ethnicity, caste, age, sexual orientation and other factors. By helping to clarify the root causes of poverty, an understanding of gender equality and rights can assist to develop strategies in response. This will help to improve ActionAid's practice and impact.

This toolkit seeks to contribute to building capacity within ActionAid to understand, analyze and address the power dynamics shaping inequality and poverty as the foundation for effective rights-based work.

▥ Background

ActionAid's 2003 Gender Review took stock of the organisation's work on this issue. It highlighted important achievements, including the commitment to gender equality within the *Fighting Poverty Together* strategy, and the adoption of a forward-looking global *Gender Policy*. The Gender Review also noted the following recurrent challenges:

Need for conceptual clarity

Making gender equality central demands new thinking about power relations affecting all human activity.

ActionAid staff requires a common understanding and approach to gender-related programming, as well as to working with women.

Change the entire recipe, don't just 'add gender (or rights) and stir'

ActionAid's previous five-year strategy, *Fighting Poverty Together*, put the struggle for women's rights and empowerment at the heart of its approach to fighting poverty. The current strategy, *Rights To End Poverty*, has an even stronger focus on women's rights. At the programme level, however, it is often not clear what this commitment means in practice. Gender is sometimes treated as an add-on – a separate and extra element or ingredient. Making gender equality central demands new thinking about power relations affecting all human activity. This changes the entire process of how priorities and actions are chosen and operationalised. Making gender equality central also requires increased allocations of human and financial resources for this purpose by both ActionAid and our partners.

Becoming more strategic

Many ActionAid programmes already seek to include and benefit women. Some of these programmes are, however, effective in addressing women's immediate needs through income-generation or other means, but do not challenge the underlying causes of women's poverty and inequality. Similarly, many programmes target equal opportunity, focusing on numbers of women involved, but do not ask whether and how women's situation and sense of rights have improved through that involvement. These projects can provide a good entry point for rights-based development and advocacy. The challenge is how to also address the deeply-rooted structural and social factors that perpetuate inequality.

▥ Objectives of this Resource Kit

This toolkit seeks to contribute to building capacity within ActionAid to understand, analyse and address the power dynamics shaping inequality and poverty as the foundation for effective rights-based work.

Concretely, this resource aims to:

- ❖ Help ActionAid staff understand and address gender inequality as one of the most challenging dynamics of power and a critical factor in all situations of poverty and injustice;
- ❖ Strengthen ActionAid staff's knowledge of rights and skills for designing, planning, implementing and evaluating rights-based work and in particular, women's rights initiatives; and
- ❖ Deepen ActionAid staff capacity to address the universal problems of gender inequality in advancing *Rights To End Poverty.*

■ About this Resource

Why this? Why now?

Rather than repeat what can be found in other gender and development toolkits, this resource seeks to build on ActionAid's thinking and practice on poverty with an increased focus on inequality, power and rights. The need for such a resource is particularly urgent given that *Rights To End Poverty* has women's rights as the first of six identified priorities which have become the six key themes for the organisation. The toolkit seeks to show how a gender perspective strengthens programming and improves the impact of rights-based approaches. Many human rights initiatives have been led by lawyers and are quite legalistic. This resource is about bridging the gap between legal expertise, law, rights and development "from the ground up" by starting with different situations of inequality. It seeks to place people, particularly women, as the motor for change, and laws and the international human rights framework as tools. To be really useful, the resource will need to be adapted by country programmes and partners to reflect specific regional and cultural challenges.

The toolkit aims to have something for those who have recently started learning about gender, rights and power as well as for those more familiar with these concepts and strategies.

Who this resource is for

This resource is designed for ActionAid staff working at all levels within the organisation, including those involved in planning, budgeting and implementing programmes, working on campaigns, assessing impact, etc. It is intended for use among staff, as well as with partners. The toolkit aims to have something for those who have recently started learning about gender, rights and power as well as for those more familiar with these concepts and strategies. However, this is not really a "beginner's" manual. In the bibliography, we recommend resources that provide a more in-depth introduction to gender and human rights.

What this resource is

This resource does *not* aim to be a definitive guide to gender and rights, nor is it a training manual or step-by-step recipe. It *does* offer a variety of tools, theories and practical applications from gender and women's rights experience. It is not only for "women's rights programming". Instead, the tools for analysis discussed here will help to sharpen all kinds of work that aims to address poverty and inequality.

How to use it

How this toolkit is used will vary widely among ActionAid staff involved in different kinds of planning, programming, monitoring, evaluation and other decision-making processes. The toolkit is not intended to be read from cover to cover. Instead, staff can go to a particular section for ideas or tools, depending on their situation. Along the way, staff will see short activities that are intended to help stimulate their reflection as well as help them structure a dialogue on these issues with colleagues or partners. There are also longer exercises that they may want to work through at different stages of planning and implementation.

The toolkit is divided into six sections:

Part I: Why Gender Equality & Rights Matter for Development

This section takes a specific example to show the difference that a gender equality and rights lens can make in practice. At the end, it presents an overarching framework for understanding what we mean by gender equality and rights-based approaches.

Part II: Building Blocks for Gender Equality and Rights-based Approaches

The toolkit is not intended to be read from cover to cover. Instead, you can go to a particular section for ideas or tools, depending on your situation.

Here we explore some of the key concepts and theories behind a gender equality analysis, as well as important conceptual and practical "building blocks" for effective change strategies.

Part III: Design and Planning for Inclusive Rights

This section recaps some tools that staff will be familiar with and introduces new ones. It provides reminders as to special considerations for incorporating a gender equality and rights lens throughout the design and planning process.

Part IV: Claiming and Promoting Rights

Building on the planning concepts and frameworks in the previous chapter, this section focuses on linking planning to strategies. We explore a range of possible strategies for promoting and claiming rights, with tips for ensuring that strategies are inclusive of women's interests and rights.

Appendices

Here staff will find a list of human rights conventions, as well as the full text from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Optional Protocol to CEDAW.

At a glance ... Rights, Gender, RBA, Women's Rights

Rights are a basic ethical foundation for development and advocacy work. They represent universal standards of human dignity, and are part of the ongoing human struggle to improve people's lives. Although human rights have been codified within the United Nations system, rights are not bestowed from on high. They have been articulated, defined and put into law by collective efforts and struggles of many people over the years, and will continue to evolve (or be lost) as time goes on. All people are entitled to enjoy rights, regardless of class, sex, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation or beliefs. The terrain of rights remains an ever-changing, political arena where some groups' rights compete and conflict with those of others. Claiming rights often involves processes of resistance and change that work to engage and transform relations of power.[1]

Gender refers to the system of power relationships that shape inequality between men and women, boys and girls. These power relationships are reflected in and perpetuated in all economic, political and social structures from the factory and the legislature to the family. While sex is considered a biological trait usually defined by a person's reproductive organs, gender is a culturally determined phenomenon. As such, gender relations are influenced by values, norms and beliefs that define the set of roles, responsibilities, and behaviours that are deemed acceptable by a given society for males and females. Gender relations can and do change over time and across cultures.

The terrain of rights remains an ever-changing, political arena where some groups' rights compete and conflict with those of others.

Rights-based approaches (RBA) to development build on the legitimacy of economic, social, cultural and political rights gained through UN conventions and procedures. On one level, a rights-based approach works to implement existing rights that reflect needs such as food, jobs, health and respect that people have worked over time to incorporate into laws and policies. At another level, rights-based approaches are about expanding definitions of rights to respond to unsolved forms of discrimination and indignity. Rights-based approaches are anchored in the following principles: i) that people have a right to have a voice in the decisions shaping the quality of their lives; and ii) that basic economic and social resources and protections are basic rights, not special privileges.[2]

Women's Rights include rights that apply to women and men, as well as rights that are specific to women or that need to be amplified for women's equality and dignity to be realized. For centuries, many rights that are enjoyed by men have often been denied to women because they are women. These include rights to own land, to vote, to pursue an education, etc. The statement that women's rights are human rights aims to bring attention to rights violations where being a woman is the primary risk factor. It also aims to expand the existing rights system to fully address women's needs and situations.

[1] Adapted from Miller, Valerie, Lisa VeneKlasen and Cindy Clark. "Rights-based Development: Linking Rights and Participation – Challenges in Thinking and Action" in *Developing Rights*, IDS Bulletin 36:1, January 2005.

[2] From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

Part I

Why Gender Equality and Rights Matter for Development
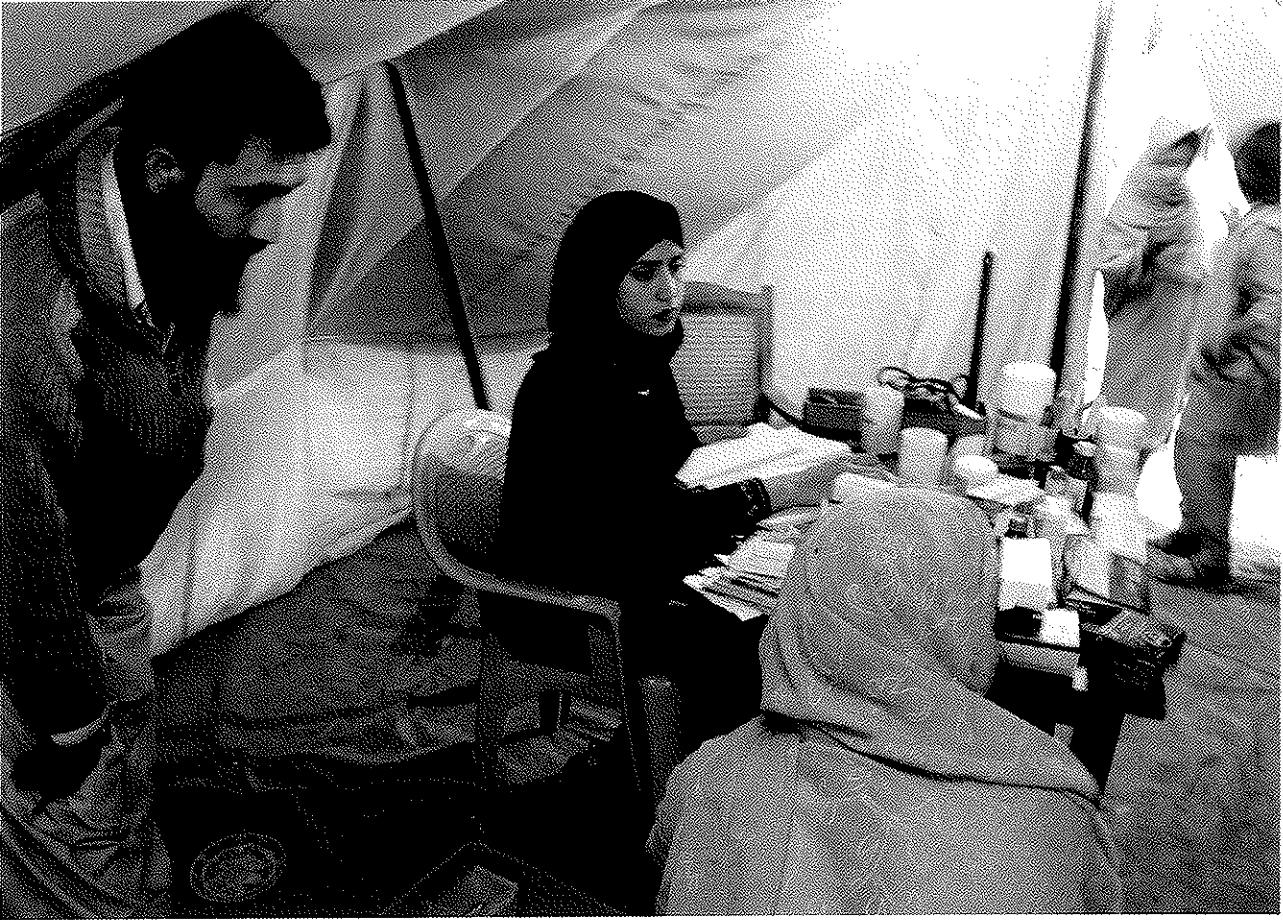
Pakistan,2005. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum/ActionAid

There is no country in the world that can claim to have achieved equality between men and women.

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[3] Statistics from Beijing Betrayed: Women worldwide report that governments have failed to turn the platform into action by WEDO, 2005.

Many scholars and practitioners have recognized that the status of women and girls in any society is one of the best indicators of economic, social and political development. Nevertheless, there is no country in the world that can claim to have achieved equality between men and women. Even wealthy countries have not reached it. For example, in the United States, women earn on average 77 cents to every dollar men earn, they make up only 14% of the national congress and they are 40% more likely to be poor than men.[3]

It's not only that gender inequality hurts women. Research and reality remind us how failure to take into account the gender dimensions of poverty and inequality leads to programmes and policies that are ineffective, at best, and harmful, at worst, for men and entire communities as well.

▓ Why Gender-Blind Programmes Fail: An HIV and AIDS Example

As someone working in development, is it necessary for you to see the world through a gender lens? Why does it matter whether you ask about women's roles and rights? What's the difference if you ignore gender analysis?

In this section, we consider the impact of gender blindness on responses to HIV and AIDS at every level, from community care to global economics. We begin with a snapshot of the pervasiveness of HIV and AIDS, and what we know about how it impacts women and men differently. Then we look at some of the common responses in respect of prevention and treatment, and the harmful impact they can have when gender equality and the power dynamics among women and men are not considered. Finally, we look at some of the women's rights issues related to HIV and AIDS, and what is known about effective responses to fight the disease and promote women's rights.

In this section, we consider the impact of gender blindness on responses to HIV and AIDS at every level, from community care to global economics.

A Look at Some Statistics

There is increasing recognition of the ways in which the HIV and AIDS pandemic affects women and girls differently from men and boys. For example[4], in Southern Africa, young women between 15 and 24 are 2.5 times more likely to be infected than young men.

- Girls and women account for 75% of 15-24-year-olds infected with HIV in Africa.
- In a study of 10 US cities, HIV-infected women were 12% less likely than infected men to receive prescriptions for the most effective treatments for HIV infection.[5]
- In Kenya, 45 girls are HIV+ for every 10 boys who are HIV+.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean women represent the fastest growing segment of the population living with HIV. In the Caribbean, 49% of infected adults are women and the main means of transmission of HIV is heterosexual relationships.
- In South Asia, young women account for 62% of infections in the 15-24 year old age group.
- The vast majority of women who have acquired the virus, have done so within established partnerships, when they have had sex only with their husbands. Infected men are much more likely to have multiple sexual partners.

The Responses: What's Wrong with This Picture?

Below are examples of common interventions to address HIV and AIDS:

Abstinence, Being faithful and Condoms (ABC)

"We raise awareness on the three main preventive tools: Abstinence (A), Being faithful (B) and Condoms (C). We have to fight hard to put

[4] From UNAIDS/WHO AIDS Epidemic Update: December 2005. Available on-line http://www.unaids.org/epi/2005/doc/report_pdf.asp.

[5] http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/facts/women.html#4

this message out. Some funders and some churches pressure us to leave out the 'C' but we are committed to giving people an informed choice. We make condoms available at all our workshops and we distribute them at workplaces and clinics."

Home-based Care (HBC)

"Our hospital's limited resources were overwhelmed by people with AIDS (PWA). We fund-raised to start a home-based care (HBC) programme. The coordinator works with village-based committees to identify and support families who are taking care of PWAs at home. She delivers latex gloves, painkillers and other supplies to the committees. She trains committee members in counseling techniques, safer sex education and condom use, to equip them to educate their communities."

Anti-Retrovirals (ARV)

"Our organisation has been involved in ongoing advocacy in the region to make anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs available to poor people. We are now funding pilot ARV treatment projects at selected rural and peri-urban sites. This is far from our goal of universal and free access to these drugs, but it is still a step forward. Our funding as a research project sets some criteria for selecting participants, but we try to encourage community and family involvement in the selection process."

Child-headed Households (CHH)

"Most children in child-headed households (CHH) would opt to continue living in their family units, versus the alternatives, according to research. In several countries, the goal is independent living for CHH, with community support. With this information in mind, we set up a uniform factory where we train and employ child heads of households. Hours and pay are flexible, to allow for family demands but, in practice, we find that many of the girls go (back) to prostitution, where they can earn double."

Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT)

"Our organisation focuses on prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV. We provide anti-virus medicines to pregnant mothers who are HIV/AIDS patients, as well as offering medicines and proper medical treatment to the newly born babies."

Voluntary Counseling Testing (VCT)

"We promote the model of voluntary counseling testing (VCT). Unfortunately, we are unable to provide the resources that are offered in richer countries, where counselors develop close relationships with their clients. Few of our patients can spare the time involved. However, we still see VCT as a respectful, client-centered model."
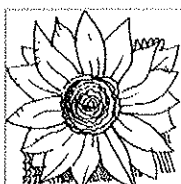
Activity 1: Identify how each programme might affect women and girls differently from men and boys.

A Gender Equality Perspective

Each of the sample programmes demonstrates different layers of the intersection between HIV and AIDS and gender inequality.

ABC

None of the three preventive tools – abstinence, being faithful, using condoms – are fully under women's control. Many women are not in a position to negotiate abstinence or condom use. Faithful monogamy will not protect a woman who cannot expect or demand fidelity from her partner. Condom distribution has had some success, particularly in combination with peer education by sex workers. The latter tend to have more power in sexual exchange than married women do.

HBC

Home-based care (HBC) adds yet another (unpaid or under-paid) burden for women and girls, leaving even less time for producing food, earning a wage or going to school. Like so much 'women's work', the real costs of HBC are invisible in the cash economy and in official calculations. Many women not only care for their own sick family members, but also volunteer to provide care for numerous other households and to offer community education.

ARV

When a family or community decides who should receive anti-retroviral treatment (ARV), men, not women, tend to be selected. Infected women are still expected to provide care for a sick husband but families do not see this as justification for the women to receive ARVs. Some women have been forced to give their own medication to their husbands. In many programmes, only women who are pregnant receive discounted medicines. Their access to treatment is determined by their status as mothers. In this way, they are being treated as a safe passage for their children – not as citizens in their own right.

CHH

To take on adult responsibilities is just as unfair for boys as it is for girls. But the situation girls and boys face is usually very different. Girls are less likely to have schooling or skills and are more vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse. Child prostitutes face enormous health risks, including infection with HIV.

PMTCT

While prevention of mother-to-child transmission programmes ensure a healthy baby, many fail to ensure that the mother is healthy enough to raise the child. Again, support is given to women as mothers, rather than in their own right as individuals.

VCT

Women pay a high price for being the first to know and disclose their HIV status. Many suffer violent reactions when they disclose their status to their male partner. Most programmes provide inadequate support for dealing with the stigma and violence.

The virus has highlighted rights that women should have but generally don't enjoy in practice.

Inequality fuels HIV infection. Many women and girls cannot refuse unwanted sex or negotiate safer sex.

HIV and AIDS deepens and exacerbates women's poverty and inequality. Even more unpaid domestic labor is demanded to care for the sick, dying and orphaned.
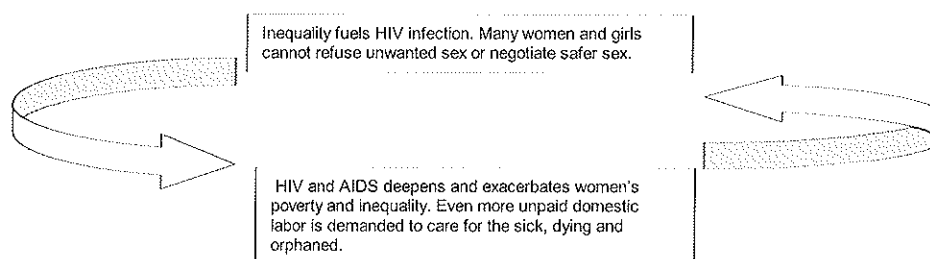
HIV and AIDS and Women's Rights

While HIV and AIDS affect whole families and communities, women and girls are disproportionately affected. The virus has highlighted rights that women should have but generally don't enjoy in practice. These include the problems below that reflect the reality of many women around the world:[6]

⬦ Lack of (or less) control over own sexuality and sexual relationships.

⬦ Poor reproductive and sexual health, leading to serious morbidity and mortality.

⬦ Neglect of health needs, nutrition, medical care etc.

⬦ Clinical management based on research on men.

⬦ All forms of coerced sex – from violent rape to cultural/economic obligations to have sex when it is not really wanted. This results in increased risk of micro-lesions and therefore of sexually transmitted infections (STI)/HIV infection.

⬦ Harmful cultural practices: from genital mutilation to practices such as 'dry' sex.

⬦ Stronger stigma and discrimination in relation to AIDS (and all STIs) against women than men, resulting in violence, abandonment, neglect (of health and material needs), destitution, ostracism from family and community.

⬦ Lack of adolescents' access to education for prevention, media campaigns, condoms, and reproductive health services before and after they are sexually active; blocked by obstacles including laws and policies, health service provision, cultural attitudes and expectations of girls' and boys' sexual behavior, cultural practices, and educational and employment opportunities.

⬦ Sexual abuse – an important mode of transmission of HIV infection in girls.

⬦ Disclosure of status, partner notification, confidentiality, more difficult for women than for men, particularly as most women have been infected by their only partner/husband.

[6] From the World Health Organization

From the **PRIVATE** to the **PUBLIC**... and the **LOCAL** to the **GLOBAL**

Originally, human rights focused on what governments can or cannot do in the public arena. Women's rights activists challenged that limitation. They demanded that governments take responsibility for protecting citizens' rights, even in the home. They noted that violation of rights within the family and/or home also shapes a woman's ability to enjoy rights outside of the home and vice versa. At the same time, rights activists have explored how actions by individuals and institutions at international level shape the enjoyment of rights at national and even community levels. Below are some examples.
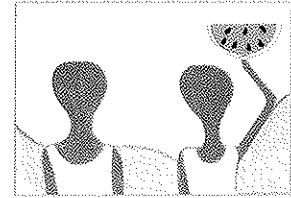
Power Relations in Intimate Relationships[7]

Persuading girls and young women to abstain from sex until marriage will not completely protect them.

- In rural Uganda, 88% of HIV-infected women aged 15-19 years were married.
- In 1990, 90% of HIV transmission in Thailand occurred between sex workers and their clients. By 2002, an estimated 50% of new infections were between spouses.
- In India, 90% of HIV-positive women are married and monogamous. Women and girls often lack the power to abstain from sex or to insist on condom use – even when they suspect that the man has had other sexual partners and might be infected with HIV. Many women believe that their husband will beat them or divorce them if they ask for a condom.
- Only 11% of women in a study in Zambia believed that they had the right to ask their husbands to use a condom – even if he had proven himself to be unfaithful and was HIV-positive.
- In Mumbai, India, many women felt that the economic consequences of leaving a long-term relationship far outweighed the health hazards of staying in the relationship.
- Legislation on marital rape and equality in the family could save the lives of many women and girls. In Uganda, however, a Domestic Relations Bill that would give women and girls greater equality in matters relating to marriage, divorce and family property, as well as make marital rape illegal, has languished in parliament for more than a decade.

International Loan Conditions and HIV and AIDS[8]

The eight wealthiest governments (G8) dominate the decisions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and influence most other foreign aid donors. Over the last twenty years, a core condition imposed by these institutions on borrowing countries has been strict limits on public spending. This prevents countries from increasing public spending on HIV and AIDS or health in general.

Major donors and health professionals agree that, to utilize large new amounts of foreign aid for fighting HIV and AIDS effectively, countries will need to hire more doctors, nurses, medical assistants, administrators and accountants; build and staff more clinics; and transport drugs to outlying areas. Governments cannot do this without increasing public health spending. But it is often the international institutions that explicitly or implicitly make these decisions in place of the government or local people.

In one glaring example, at one point in the 1990s, the Ugandan government had to get permission from the IMF to accept US$10 million from the Gates Foundation for HIV and AIDS treatment and prevention.

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[7] Adapted from UNAIDS/WHO: AIDS Epidemic Update, Dec. 2004

[8] Adapted from *"How the Fight against HIV/AIDS is being Undermined by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund,"* a policy briefing by Action Aid International USA, Global AIDS Alliance, Student Global AIDS Campaign, and RESULTS Educational Fund, September 2004.

International Financial Institutions: IFIs
International Monetary Fund: IMF
World Bank: WB

IMF and WB
Constraints
on individual
countries'
budgets

Governments' capacity to deliver healthcare
shrinking over 15 years of Structural Adjustment
(reduced budgets, fees for service, privatization.)

Potential funding blocked

Loan conditions: low inflation means reduced
public spending on health.

Funding only effective if health system can
absorb and use it (increase + train staff,
build + staff clinics, transport medicines, etc)

World Trade
Organization
protects
patents and
profits of big
pharmaceutical
companies

Result: the burden of care is
transferred onto women's backs.

Developing countries access to
affordable, generic drugs is blocked

Result: women's potential access
to treatment is further reduced.

Global Policy – Local Reality

Girls and women represent the bulk
of new infections, but budgets,
programs, policies and human
resource commitments do not
reflect this. Many interventions
continue to be aimed at an
imaginary boy or man or a fictitious
gender-neutral public.

To address the root causes of
gender inequality takes time.
Because changes in women's
power occur slowly, not enough
funding or attention is given to
programs that try to address the
deeper connections between
gender and HIV/AIDS.

Women's Rights Strategies Against HIV and AIDS

There are a range of approaches that can yield success in both fighting HIV and AIDS and promoting women's rights:

Empower Women and Girls

❖ Increase girls' self-confidence and self-esteem through life skills and other school-based programmes;

❖ Support education, and particularly education about sex and reproductive rights, for both boys and girls, for example by training health workers and teachers on gender, and re-orienting health and education systems so that they are participatory and community-centered rather than bureaucratic and hierarchical;

❖ Empower women and girls economically, for example by providing access to credit, business and marketing skills and support (but remember that this type of solution is often too micro and simply consumes women's time without producing sufficient income) and, pushing for decent wages and benefits.

❖ Promote girls' and women's access to technology and products such as microbicides that they can control to prevent the transmission of HIV and AIDS and other STIs.

Change Norms and Values

Approaches that can yield success in both fighting HIV and AIDS and promoting women's rights.

❖ Challenge the social norms and values that contribute to the lower status of women and girls and that condone violence against them, for example through dramas and community-based educational initiatives, and in the media;

❖ Ensure that laws exist and are enforced against perpetrators so that violence and abuse are recognised as crimes and are punished.

Reform Laws and Policies

❖ Link with structural issues: violence, land rights, inheritance, marriage, divorce;

❖ Focus on structural and systemic changes: laws, policies, implementation;

❖ Strengthen the legal, policy and implementation frameworks that support women's rights to economic independence (including the right to own and inherit land and property), for example by restructuring justice systems, enacting laws, training police and judges and supporting NGOs to popularise these laws.

❖ Draw upon the UN human rights framework where countries have signed and ratified relevant conventions. Also use regional conventions and protocols where these exist, e.g. the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women.

Demand Decent Healthcare and Treatment

◈ Ensure access to basic health services by advocating against unnecessary privatisation that makes healthcare inaccessible and unaffordable.

◈ Critique trade agreements (for example, the General Agreement on Trade and Services – GATS) with intellectual property rights protection that limits the availability and affordability of generic drugs.

◈ Critique health reforms and legislative mechanisms that are not always in line with progressive reforms.

◈ Ensure that women recruited to care for the sick receive a living wage and adequate support.

◈ Demand that governments and donors invest in prevention and treatment.

◈ Ensure that women are given treatment in their own right as citizens.

◈ Ensure that decisions about treatment are not made by 'families' but rather, by women and men as individuals.

The Mutapola framework is based on an analysis of the different kinds and levels of power at work, and thus povides a useful contrast to gender-blind programming.

Expand the Women's Rights Capacities of Communities and HIV and AIDS Programmes

◈ Expand the pool of knowledgeable women's rights supporters and practitioners.

◈ Check that gender 'mainstreaming' efforts are not simply technical interventions that fail to address the disadvantaged situation of women.

◈ Reallocate budgets to ensure gender-sensitive spending of scarce resources.

◈ Support and strengthen local women's movements and organisations.

◈ Build partnerships between governments, women's organisations and community-based organisations.

◈ Increase public awareness and debate about the relationship between gender inequality, women's rights, and HIV and AIDS.

▨ The Mutapola Framework: Linking Women's Rights and HIV/AIDS

In 2005, ActionAid's Southern African Partnerships Programme (SAPP) and the Open Society Initiatives for Southern Africa (OSISA) jointly launched the Mutapola Framework. The Mutapola framework is based on an analysis of the different kinds and levels of power at work, and thus povides a useful contrast to gender-blind programming.

The framework notes that a woman living with AIDS in Southern Africa has many faces:

- Young or old
- Affected or infected
- Urban or rural
- Married or single

These many Mutapolas have different experiences and realities, but one thing unites them – they are all women. Their femaleness is used to describe, define, and circumscribe their lives and to deny or violate their rights.

Mutapola often carries a triple burden if she is poor, black and female. In some cases, she has the fourth burden of a disability. These characteristics shape and affect how she lives, her power to make decisions about her life, her ability to reach her potential as a human being, and how the world responds to or treats her.

But Mutapola is not a victim. She is strong, proud, loving, caring. She knows her own joy and spirit. Although often silenced or ignored, she knows what she wants and needs. An organiser, teacher and thinker, Mutapola holds families and communities together. Generations have been raised by grandmother Mutapolas.

Most importantly, Mutapola has carried the heavy burden of HIV and AIDS in Southern Africa. She may have the virus herself, and/or she is dealing with the illness of her partner, children, and other family members. All over the region, it is Mutapola who provides home-based care to others in her community – almost always without support or resources from her government or any other institutions.

Rights-based approaches to development would draw on relevant legal frameworks (where present) to protect rights and demand their enforcement

The four pillars of the Mutapola framework are:

1. The right to comprehensive treatment and care;

2. The right to secure livelihoods (income and assets) and the right to food;

3. Capacity building and support for organisations and activism of women and girls living with HIV and AIDS;

4. An enabling policy and legislative environment on paper and in practice, so that women and girls can claim and exercise their rights.

A Framework for Gender Equality and Rights-Based Approaches

The visual framework below is intended to clarify what we mean by an approach to development that incorporates both a rights perspective and a gender equality perspective. It shows four spheres of life that are critical for a woman's well-being and advancement: political, economic, social/cultural, and personal. In each of the spheres, we have identified some of the rights that women are entitled to, simply by

virtue of being human. Rights-based approaches to development would draw on relevant legal frameworks (where present) to protect rights and demand their enforcement. In addition, they could aim to reform the political system to reflect rights that have not yet been recognised. Rights-based approaches must also build people's consciousness of themselves as rights holders and challenge social attitudes and values to respect rights.
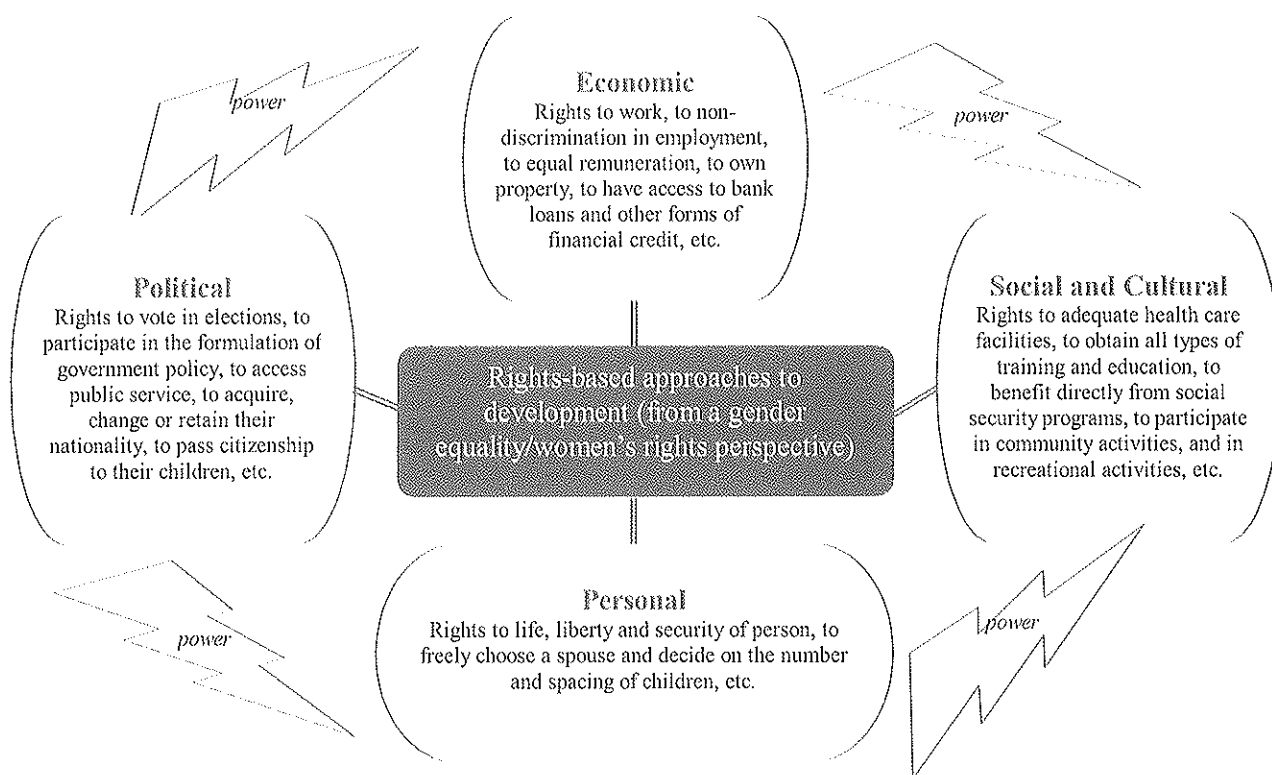
A gender equality and women's rights perspective adds to this approach four critical elements:

1. An understanding of how civil political, economic, social and cultural rights affect women and men differently, and of rights that are particular to women because they are women.

2. A reminder that rights cannot be enjoyed in the public sphere if they are not also present and upheld in the personal or private sphere.

3. Recognition that strategies must link change at an individual level, with change at community, national, and even global levels.

4. A deeper understanding of the many ways in which power works, both to violate rights and to claim and uphold rights.

Part II

Building Blocks for Gender Equality and Rights-Based Approaches

Women's March Against the WTO in 2005. Kristian Buus/ ActionAid,

Gender Equality Building Blocks

Each of the sections below introduces one element in the jigsaw that makes up 'gender analysis'. Each section explores the particular concept and then provides ways to address it.
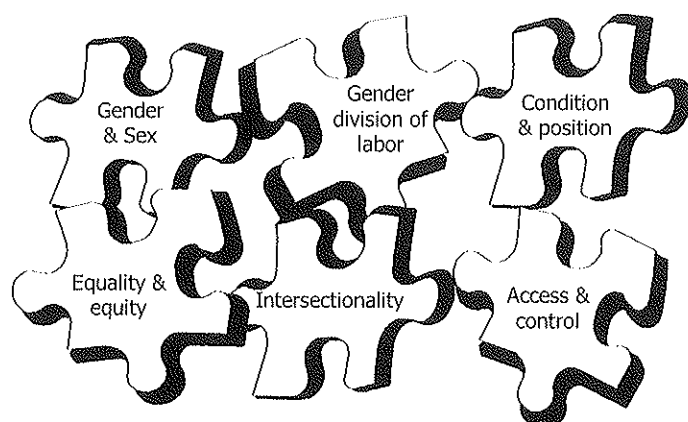
"Gender is not something physical. It refers to the expectations people have of someone because they are female or male."[9]

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[9] *Training for Transformation,* Book IV, 2002, p. 74

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Gender and Sex

Most practitioners distinguish between sex and gender in this way, despite some debate:

Sex is biological, and generally does not differ across cultures and time;

Gender is socialised, culturally specific and always changing.

Gender thus has to do with the characteristics and roles prescribed for men and women, boys and girls by their cultures an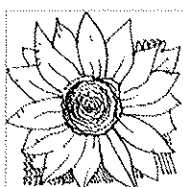d societies. For example, nearly all societies give the primary responsibility of caring for and raising children to women and that for military service and defense to men. However, gender roles can also vary considerably from culture to culture.

Nearly all societies give the primary responsibility of caring for and raising children to women and that for military service and defense to men.

Activity 2: What are the gender expectations of your own culture? Make a list of the differences, in girl/boy pairs, for:
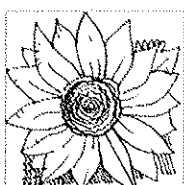
* behaviour
* goals to aspire to
* roles to perform

You can do this individually on a small sheet of paper, or as a group on a flipchart.

For example: *Boys speak up. Girls keep quiet.*

The gender differences are not, in themselves, a problem. The problem is that these social differences are assigned different values. In particular, roles assigned to boys and men are seen as superior to those assigned to girls and women, and tend to be rewarded more in monetary terms. This dynamic of privilege and subordination then becomes embedded in social norms and institutionalized in decision-making structures and opportunities from the household to the parliament.

Subordination is an aspect many people find most difficult to understand about gender. It is an internalised sense of inferiority and subservience. This occurs because women's oppression means that many women themselves come to believe that they are inferior and have certain duties, while men believe they have certain privileges in relation to women. These power dynamics are difficult to address because they are deeply embedded in all of us.

Activity 3: Re-look at the lists you made. For each pair (girl/boy) of attributes, compare the social value placed on each attribute. Which is more highly valued – the goals, roles and behaviour of boys, or that of girls?

Cut the list up so that each pair of attributes is a separate 'block' and spread the blocks on a big sheet of paper (or on the wall). With a pen (or pieces of string and pins) make the links between them. Discuss the ways that these attributes and the values they carry reinforce each other.

Gender is about socially constructed relationships between women and men. But recently, many women's rights advocates have become frustrated with the way the notion of "gender" has been used to claim that a programme must involve both women and men without an analysis of the reasons for or risks of doing so. Andrea Cornwall describes this frustration:

> How useful ... is talk of... 'how important it is to bring men in',... or of that hesitant 'and men' that is added to so many sentences without conviction or feeling or, often, much sense? How different would it feel to say, honestly, directly, clearly, passionately, that if women were equally able to exercise the human rights they have and know the ones to which they should be entitled, the world would be a fairer, better place? What greater opportunities would it create for working in solidarity – across the myriad differences that might otherwise fragment us – by talking about what's at the heart of things: power?[10]

Intersectionality[11]

Intersectionality is an analytical tool for understanding and responding to the ways in which gender intersects with other social characteristics and contributes to different experiences of oppression and privilege. Just as gender-blind programming is likely to fail, so are blunt instruments that slot people into simple categories like "poor", "young", "rural", "lesbian", "gay", "afro-descendant", etc. or, indeed, "women" vs "men". Every one of us has multiple identities. People are members of more than one group at the same time and so can experience oppression and privilege simultaneously – for example, the doctor who is respected in her profession but suffers domestic violence at home.

How different would it feel to say, honestly, directly, clearly, passionately, that if women were equally able to exercise the human rights they have and know the ones to which they should be entitled, the world would be a fairer, better place?

Activity 4: Use the Power Flower (below) to map key elements of your own layered identity and relationship to power. Use the outer circle of petals to describe the characteristics of people that have the most power and privilege in your society. Label each petal. Now consider your own characteristics in respect of each category. Note these on the inner circle of petals.
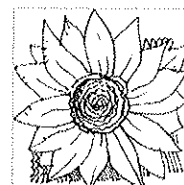
- How many of your personal characteristics are different from those of the most powerful and privileged in the society?
- Which characteristics cannot be changed?
- What does this say about your own power or potential for power?
- How can this influence your work?
- What does this exercise tell you about identity and power in general?

The Power Flower is from VeneKlasen with Miller, A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.
You can adapt the flower by changing or adding new "petals" such as religion, ability/disability, place of origin, caste, etc.
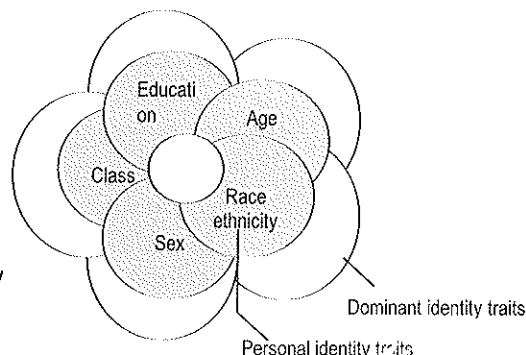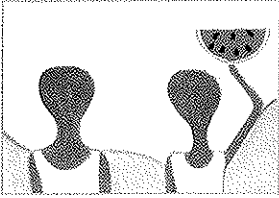
Education

Age

Class

Race ethnicity

Sex

Dominant identity traits

Personal identity traits

Examples of intersectionality

Trafficking: Traffickers target specific groups of women and girls – for example those who are vulnerable because of racial, sexual, economic and descent-based discrimination. Gender considerations alone cannot respond to the problem. For example, sex workers in the Netherlands have organised and won many rights of protection. However, these rights are mainly enjoyed by white, native-Dutch sex workers.

Race and Class: Colombian women of African descent are subjected to racial discrimination and stereotyping. A middle class Afro-Colombian university professor, however, does not experience the same discrimination as a poor Afro-Colombian woman who works as a cleaner in a hotel.

Rent: In Canada, single, black women have a particularly hard time finding apartments as landlords believe stereotypes and consider these women unreliable. Canadian law prohibits discrimination. However, on the basis of sex alone, this discrimination would not be apparent. It would also not be evident in race-only analyses. Courts would fail to see that there is discrimination against those who are single, black and female.

Caste: When a young girl is assaulted at a school bus stop in India, the first reaction is to demand better police security on the road. However, community consultations plus statistical and contextual analysis reveal that this is not primarily a security issue. Rather, the assault reveals discrimination against Dalit girls and women – which demands a different set of solutions.

Every one of us has multiple identities. People are members of more than one group at the same time and so can experience oppression and privilege simultaneously.

An intersectional approach

◈ Gives us a more nuanced understanding of people's situation that can inform more appropriate programme responses.
Intersectionality helps us get beyond a general notion of "the community" so that by understanding how different people experience oppression and privilege differently, development and rights programmes can take those differences into account.

◈ Helps us shift away from thinking of power as a simple dichotomy – that more power for one person necessarily means less power for another. Instead, intersectionality focuses attention on the constantly shifting nature of power. This can help people work together on particular issues across differences. Intersectionality also makes us confront our own ways of discriminating and perpetuating inequalities through our behavior.

The Gender Division of Labor

Activity 5: Focusing on the communities with which you engage, ask yourself how work is organised – in and outside the home:

- What work is done by women and girls (paid and unpaid)?
- What work do men and boys do (paid and unpaid)?
- How does this division of labor – and the choices and realities it creates – reflect (or not) our understanding of rights?
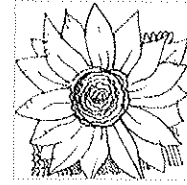
In any community or society, both men and women (boys and girls) work to maintain households and communities, but their work tends to be different in nature and value.

Productive work refers to the production of goods and services. This could be a job, an activity to generate income or to barter or for subsistence. Women's productive work often has less status and is valued less than men's. These different values are then reflected in the calculation of national statistics such as GDP (gross domestic product). That information is then used to determine economic and budget policies.

Reproductive work involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members. It includes bearing and caring for children, cooking, washing, cleaning, nursing, shopping and collecting water and fuel. This work is time-consuming and vital for basic survival. In poor communities, it is labor intensive and demands the time of both women and girls. It is rarely considered 'real work', and so is unpaid and not counted in conventional statistics.

'Gender division of labor' is complicated because it is both a source of interdependence and cooperation and a source of division and conflict between men and women.

Community work is the collective organisation of social events and services, such as ceremonies and celebrations, community improvement activities, political activities, and so on. It is important to include this type of work in any analysis because it can be time-consuming and is part of the cultural life of a community. Both women and men participate but a gender division prevails. For example, women are generally under-represented in local politics and change efforts.

Women's work is generally valued less than that of men. In addition, women generally do much more unpaid work than men. This includes work as 'unpaid family helper', where the woman's husband doing more or less the same work would be classified as 'self-employed'. It also includes unpaid work done in the home caring for other family members and maintaining the household. Further, the fact that the paid work that women do (as domestic workers, teachers, nurses) often resembles the work they do unpaid at home, it is valued and paid less than it should be.

This 'gender division of labor' is complicated because it is both a source of interdependence and cooperation and a source of division and conflict between men and women. It is also complicated because it is flexible and adapts to changing circumstances, such as the illness or

absence of key members of the household, changes in income or in economic opportunities, and so on.

Examples of changing circumstances affecting the gender division of labor include the following:

HIV and AIDS: As the pandemic claims lives, it is shifting responsibilities for productive work – often to children. This shift adds to the burden of caring, which falls primarily on women and girls.

Low-wage plants in EPZs: Many export processing zones (EPZs) and low-wage assembly plants hire only young women. At the same time, traditional agricultural and industrial sources of male employment are often disappearing. These shifts can lead to conflict in family relationships when men lose their jobs and the family depends on women's income.
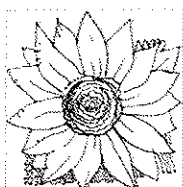
Activity 6: Continuing from Activity 5, focus on a project that is active or planned for the community. Ask yourself:

- How do external interventions (government policies and programmes, NGOs, international agencies) reinforce or challenge the established division of labor?
- What are the implications of this division of labor for achieving your own project goals?
- Will the project reinforce or challenge the existing division of labor?
- What other elements do you need to include because of potential conflict around challenging the existing division of labor?
- How does the division of labor affect women's and girls' ability to enjoy their rights, participate in public life and benefit from public resources?

Gender-blind planning ignores gender division of labor

results

Community Level:
Project timing and demands → limit women's involvement
and/or
→ add to their workload.

Policy Level:
Programs →
(eg home-based care) increase women's burdens
and inequality
→
under-fund women's initiatives.
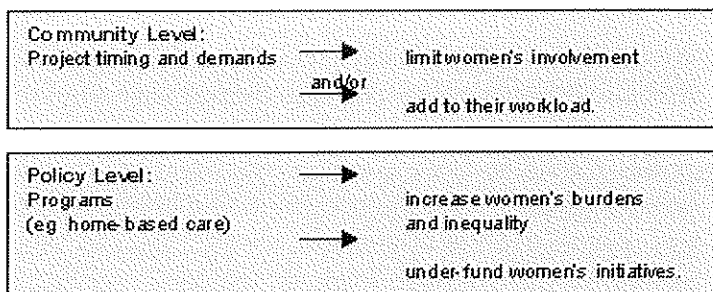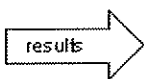
See the Activity Profile on page 69, which talks more about the significance of the gender division of labor for designing and assessing rights-based development initiatives.

Access and Control

When looking at how resources are allocated between men and women, remember to note the difference between access and control.

Access: the opportunity to make use of something
Control: the ability to define its use and impose that definition on others.

Resources can include:

Women's subordinate position can limit their access to and control over resources perpetuating a cycle of exclusion, inequality and oppression.

Economic or productive resources, such as land, equipment, tools, cash, employment.

Political resources such as representative organisations, leadership, education and information, experience in the public sphere, self-confidence and credibility.

Time which is often particularly scarce and critical for women.

Resources can also be understood as including things that provide less tangible advantages that improve a person's position – such as education, political power, prestige, connections and opportunities to pursue new interests.

Women's subordinate position can limit their access to and control over resources in a way that perpetuates a cycle of exclusion, inequality and oppression. Often, women have access but no decision-making power. For example:

* Women may have access to land, but its ownership and decisions about long-term use are determined by men.
* Women may have access to medicines, but no control over who in the household benefits from the medicines.
* Women may be allowed to participate in public meetings or political processes, but do not have a decision-making role and, therefore, cannot define priorities.
* Many income-generating projects fail to effect a significant improvement in women's livelihoods because women do not control their income. Instead, they have to hand it over to husbands or fathers.

Thus access does not guarantee control or benefit.

Activity 7: Discuss and list the answers to these questions on flip charts.

* What productive and political resources do women have access to? And men?
* What productive and political resources do men have control over? And women?
* List the work men and women do, including both paid and unpaid work, and work inside and outside the home. Who benefits in each case?
* Which benefits do men have control over to use as they please? And women?
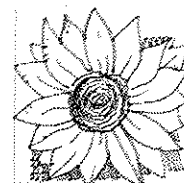
Increasingly, laws are being changed to ensure that women have the right to own and make decisions about resources in the family. Nevertheless, most families and communities continue to place men in a decision-making role. An effective programme therefore needs to consider both the formal laws and the informal practices.
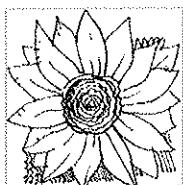
Activity 8: List the major imbalances you mapped in Activity 7, and then discuss these questions:

- How does a programme or policy reinforce or shift these imbalances?
- How can a project and/or an advocacy effort increase women's access to and control over resources?

The Access and Control profile, a useful tool for planning and assessment, is included on page 70.

Equality and Equity

Many people think that ensuring equality of opportunity is enough to address discrimination and inequality. Employment and education policies, in particular, frequently stress equal opportunity. The good and bad about equality is that it treats people the same. The problem is that people – men, women, poor, rich, old, young and different races – do not have the same power, and thus, do not stand on an even playing field from which to take advantage of equal opportunity.

Do we all start from the same place?

Systemic discrimination puts some people in a better place than others to take advantage of opportunities.

> "For women to have equal right to work, for example, they may actually need more than men. They need maternity leave, workplace nurseries, extra safety conditions when pregnant, and as long as they remain principally responsible for reproductive labour at home, they need assistance to free them from household labour to enter the labour market equally. To make matters more complex, not all women are equal either. Women of different age, class, caste, ethnicity, race have different social position and power, and therefore different needs."[14]

Gender equality does not mean that men and women are the same and need to be treated the same. Instead equity, sometimes called "substantive equality" requires that to treat women and men fairly and equitably, there will sometimes be a need for different treatment. Substantive equality thus focuses on equality of impact, not just equality of opportunity.

For example, while men and women share many of the same health needs, because of differences in terms of reproductive health needs, an equitable health budget would dedicate much more than 50% of the resources to women and girls.

Do we all start from the same place?

For women to have equal right to work, they may actually need more than men.

[14] Mukhopadhyay, Maitrayee. "Introduction: gender, citizenship and governance" in Gender, Citizenship and Governance: A Global Source Book, Sarah Cummings, Henk van Dam and Minke Valk (eds). KIT Publishers and Oxfam, 2004.

Practical Needs vs Strategic Interests?[15]

Some gender analysts distinguish between practical needs and strategic interests:

Practical needs, if met, will improve a woman's life but not change her subordinate status. Clean water and quality health care are examples.

Strategic interests, if met, will challenge the inequality between men and women. Political participation and greater shared responsibility for reproductive work are examples.

This distinction initially helped broaden the thinking of development agencies. It encouraged them to consider problems such as domestic violence and safety as part of their agenda.

However, in practice it is not always useful, especially for rights-based development and advocacy efforts.

Why? Often a practical problem – like water or electricity – is easier to mobilise around and will, in the end, turn out to be just as strategic for engaging people in defining and demanding rights.

Practical Needs (often)

ARE Strategic Interests

Common myths about gender equality

Myth: **All women need to be 'emancipated' is more income. Professional and middle or upper class women don't experience discrimination – only poor women.**

Reality: Firstly, in many cases, even if women generate income, they don't necessarily control how it is used. Instead those decisions are made by husbands, fathers or brothers. Secondly, money and class status definitely tend to give a woman more choices and freedom. However, inequality has many elements (remember intersectionality) that shape the way a woman is treated at work, her roles and responsibilities at home, her safety in the street and in the home, and her sexual and reproductive choices. Violence against women, for example, happens to women of all social classes.

Myth: **"We've got at least one woman in the meeting and she can talk about women's issues. If we put a woman in a leadership role, she'll speak for the women."**

Reality: Women are not a unified block, thinking with one mind. There have been many women leaders throughout history who have not

[15] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

been women's rights advocates. Not all women are necessarily aware of or interested in women's rights and gender equality.

Myth: **"Men are responsible for patriarchy – women are just the victims. You can't be doing gender work if you're only working with women since gender is about women and men."**

Reality: Both women and men think and behave in ways that perpetuate inequality. Both can derive both benefits and disadvantages from the way society is structured.

For women, challenging norms and behaviour often generates conflict and can alienate family and friends. For this and other reasons, women do not always see feminism as liberating. For men, although in some ways they benefit from patriarchy, the stereotypes and roles that are defined for them can also be limiting. While both women and men need to make changes to bring about gender equality, it is women who have primarily suffered the negative effects of subordination. And it is women who need the most support to play an active role in decision-making.

"As the old expression goes: 'it is only the one who wears the shoe who feels the pinch'. So, start by discussing with the wearer of the shoe, not the shoemaker, or the seller, or other customers in the shop first! ... The men get involved in different ways and at a different time."[16]

Myth: **"The problem is that many women don't know they have certain rights. They've never even heard of CEDAW! If we raise their awareness about their rights, they'll be motivated to exercise them."**

Reality: While legal change is important, it does not necessarily change people's attitudes and behaviours... Awareness about rights is important, but too often the focus has been on sharing dense legal documents, or overwhelming women with information in a way that can actually be disempowering. Further, women themselves often don't feel entitled to rights, no matter what they are told.

Myth: **"We don't need a special programme for women. We've done 'gender mainstreaming'."**

Reality: In many cases, gender mainstreaming has produced advances. However, often the rhetoric of mainstreaming has had little practical impact in transforming power dynamics and the position of women's rights in organisational agendas. In fact, mainstreaming has often resulted in resources for work with women actually being cut. That's why a two-track approach that includes both a special focus on women and an effort to include gender equality concerns in other programme areas is strongly recommended.

[16] From www.info.gov.za/ otherdocs/2000/transformation. pdf. "*A framework for transforming gender relations in South Africa.*"

Gender Mainstreaming: Gains and Shortcomings

Gender mainstreaming aims to bring about gender equality and advance women's rights by incorporating gender analysis, gender-sensitive research, women's perspectives and gender equality goals into mainstream policies, programmes, projects, and institutions. Thus both men and women would participate in planning and evaluation; agencies could more effectively sensitise men to the needs and interests of women; and women's concerns would be brought to the center stage of development as opposed to being relegated to women-specific projects. Gender mainstreaming was considered a significant achievement by women's rights activists in the mid to late 1990s.

"The choice to mainstream was also based on the understanding that gender issues are everywhere and in everything – they are not found in one or a few arenas. Mainstreaming is about ensuring that gender equality goals are embedded at every level and in all parts of an institution.

> "Gender mainstreaming has a double meaning: it is a strategy and a process of agenda setting and change at different levels within organisations and institutions. It is both a technical and a political process, which requires shifts in organisational cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures and resource allocations of organisations ... Gender mainstreaming is not an objective or an end in itself. It is a means to achieve gender equality."[12]

However, critics of mainstreaming have identified a large difference between concept and practice. Mainstreaming has been hampered by lack of commitment from leaders and inadequate provision of financial and other resources. Simultaneously it has resulted in drastic cuts for women-specific departments and programs.

> "In some instances, gender has been mainstreamed into oblivion ... gender experts are only invited to 'add gender' to existing frameworks, thus mainstreaming is not about challenging the existing analysis of situations, nor is there an assumption that there is something wrong with the mainstream in the first place."[13]

As a result of the disillusionment with the impact of mainstreaming in practice, many women's rights advocates are calling for two-track strategies. These would ensure that mainstreaming efforts have sufficient resources and political power, while at the same time continuing support for efforts with a specific focus on women's rights and gender equality.
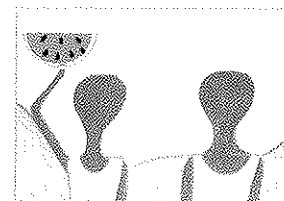
"In some instances, gender has been mainstreamed into oblivion ... gender experts are only invited to 'add gender' to existing frameworks, thus mainstreaming is not about challenging the existing analysis of situations, nor is there an assumption that there is something wrong with the mainstream in the first place."

[12] Win, Everjoice. "Gender Equality: Mainstreamed into Oblivion?" in Gender Mainstreaming: Can it Work for Women's Rights?, AWID Spotlight, number 3, November 2004.

[13] Ibid.

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▦ Gender, Power and Empowerment Building Blocks[17]

'Power' refers to the degree of control over material, human, intellectual and financial resources exercised by different individuals, groups and institutions.

Power underlies all human relationships.
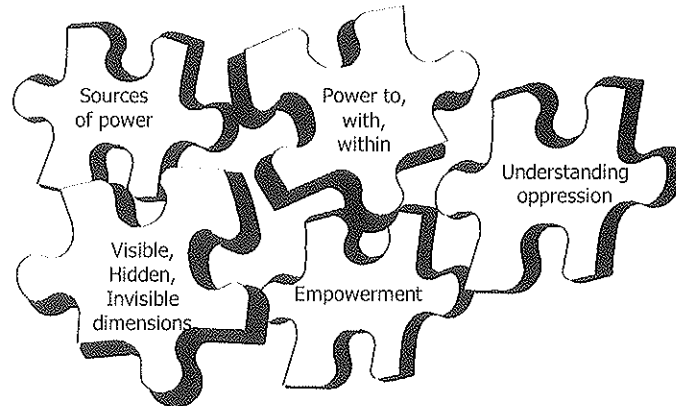
ActionAid's work revolves around a complex set of human relationships:

- Relationships with people (men, women, boys and girls) living in poverty/"excluded";
- Relationships with people in partner organisations;
- Relationships with people who are allies in coalitions and alliances;
- Relationships with people in powerful institutions / governments / donors.
- Relationships with people who are sponsors or supporters;
- Relationships with each other as colleagues, both those in our immediate teams and in other parts of the organisation.

Power is exercised through access to and control over decision-making, and through social, economic and political relations between individuals and groups.

Unless we are sensitive to power ourselves we cannot promote a truly rights based approach in our work.

When we are in a position of power over others we often deny it, feeling ashamed of it. If we deny our power it does not go away. We must recognise it if we are to transform it positively.

Power is exercised through access to and control over decision-making, and through social, economic and political relations between individuals and groups.

Many people, especially poor and marginalised, experience power in an absolute and negative way, for example through state repression or violence in the home or workplace. However, each individual's experience of power and powerlessness differs with gender, race, caste, class, age, sexuality, location and other factors (intersectionality again). For example:

- A man who feels powerless at work in relation to his employer may exercise power in the household over his wife and children;
- Development workers sometimes feel that they have very little power in the face of the entrenched structures that perpetuate poverty – but, from the viewpoint of the communities and individuals with whom they work, these activists appear to enjoy privilege and power.

[17] This section draws from VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

What determines who has more power and who has less power in society and in development processes? Physical traits and social circumstances that are inherited at birth often determine an individual's opportunities, choices, and even sense of self. This happens not because these characteristics are inborn, but rather because of negative or positive value judgments attributed to them. These traits also shape people's experiences with rights, because in practice, rights often serve the interests of more powerful groups.

Sources of Power

When you ask many people, especially poor people, about their power, they will often respond that they have no power. Helping people to identify the power they do have can be important for motivating them to take action.

Activity 9: Think about the different sources of power that exist:

- What are the main sources of power that you see at work around you? (for example, the power of money, military power, or power of position)
- What are your potential sources of power? (for example, power of numbers, of knowledge, or of humor)

Use pictures, role plays or other creative means to illustrate power at work. This activity is a good way to begin a discussion with groups with whom you work.
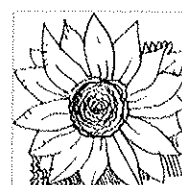
Power at Work: Many Dimensions to How Power Operates

Many development interventions focus on a single dimension of power (usually the most visible). Yet there are usually many dimensions of power that will determine the impact of the intervention. The less visible dimensions are often hidden in cultural and social norms and practices. The following story illustrates how different dimensions of power operate and determine the impact of a strategy.

Lessons on Power from Zimbabwe[18]

Over the last two decades, Zimbabwean women's and human rights groups have been concerned about the lack of women's rights to inherit and own family property. This lack of rights is a violation of women's rights as defined in CEDAW (the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) to which Zimbabwe is a signatory. The lack of control over basic assets is also a serious impediment to the success of development initiatives involving poor women. The sudden loss of all property – from houses and dishes to farming implements – upon the death of a husband, has led to increased poverty for widows and their children. The extent of this problem has been exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

[18] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

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Many women and children in Zimbabwe are left destitute when their husbands die (without a will) due to a social phenomenon often referred to as "property grabbing". Immediately after a death, the wife's in-laws remove the family property, leaving the widow with nothing. In the early 1990s, groups launched an advocacy campaign to reform property laws to give widows basic legal protection against such injustices. They believed that broad public support coupled with information about the problem would compel legislators to reform the laws and give widows automatic protection and inheritance rights without the need for a formal will.

By writing wills, families used existing laws that legitimised a signed document regarding inheritance intentions and thus were better protected from "property-grabbing" when a husband or father died. The evolving slogan for widows in Southern Africa became "cry with one eye open".

The women's groups were mostly urban-based and had good relations with the supportive Law Reform Commission inside government. They believed that there was widespread public support for changing policy on these matters. But traditional authorities in rural areas were firmly against the policy. They felt that, by challenging customary law, the new national law would erode their authority on family matters and control over their communities. These traditional leaders were an important source of political support for the President in rural areas, and had considerable influence. Many other politicians opposed the reforms as a western feminist import that would destroy the African family.

After two years, it became clear that the policy-focused advocacy initiative would fail and could alienate potential allies. The groups therefore shifted their strategy to the courts, which had demonstrated independence and a commitment to the furtherance of human rights. The advocates took the battle to the High Court. They hoped they could win the case on the grounds that customary practice contradicted the constitution. However, the case in the High Court broke down due to a number of problems. The groups then resorted to a community education strategy involving teaching women and men to write wills. By writing wills, families used existing laws that legitimized a signed document regarding inheritance intentions and thus were better protected from "property-grabbing" when a husband or father died. The evolving slogan for widows in Southern Africa became "cry with one eye open".

Questions:

1. Zimbabwean women's groups assumed that the problem of "property grabbing" would be solved by the legislators and the courts. In what ways were their assumptions valid? In what ways were they flawed?

2. What were the different forces at play in this case? What were the sources of power that the women's groups were hoping to draw upon?

3. In the end, what was the strategy that proved most effective in protecting basic rights? Why?

4. Identify and list the different strategies and activities that were carried out as part of this advocacy effort. What could the women's groups have done differently?

As the story shows, there are many dimensions of power that aren't necessarily related to official rules and structures. One way of thinking about the different dimensions of how power operates is as visible, hidden and invisible.

Visible Power
Making and Enforcing the Rules

This includes the formal rules, structures, authorities, institutions, and procedures of decision-making. Examples include elections, political parties, laws, legislatures, budgets, corporate policy, by-laws, etc. Yet even where fair laws and decision-making structures exist, politics never occurs on an even playing field.

Strategies that target this level of power are usually trying to change one or more of the following to be more accountable to poor and marginalised groups: who makes decisions, how decisions are made, and what the outcome of a particular decision will be.

Hidden Power
Setting the Political Agenda

Certain powerful people and institutions maintain their influence by controlling who gets to the decision-making table and what gets on the agenda. These dynamics exclude and devalue the concerns of other less powerful groups. Difficulties in gaining media coverage can further inhibit visibility and legitimacy. So, for example, issues of concern to women or poor farmers are often not even considered relevant policy issues by decision-makers.

By preventing certain voices and issues from getting a fair public hearing, decision-making can be skewed to benefit a few at the expense of the majority. In response, strategies that strengthen organisations of the poor can build collective power and new leadership to influence the way the political agenda is shaped.

Strategies that strengthen organisations of the poor can build collective power and new leadership to influence the way the political agenda is shaped.

Invisible Power
Shaping Meaning, Values and What's 'Normal'

Invisible power isn't really invisible – we see it all around us if we know what to look for. It involves the power that shapes the psychological and ideological boundaries of participation. Invisible power keeps important issues away from the decision-making table, and also out of the consciousness of the different people involved, even those directly affected by the problem. Socialisation, culture and ideology perpetuate exclusion and inequality by defining what is normal, acceptable and safe. So, for example, girls believe sexual harassment from teachers is normal and women blame themselves for abuse from their husbands.

Challenging power at this level requires strategies that help people share their experiences, build confidence in themselves and sharpen their political awareness and analysis to transform the way they perceive themselves and those around them.
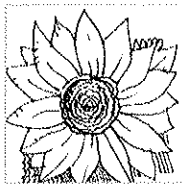
Activity 10[19]: Think about how relationships of domination and subordination play out in your context:

- How do people usually behave when their status is dominant or subordinate?
- What are some of the stereotypes people hold about poor people, old people, women and men, people of different races, etc.?
- What are the social justifications for different groups being dominant or subordinate?
- What prevents this status from changing?

You can make this a group exercise by dividing into two groups: dominant and subordinate. Ask each group to discuss the questions above and write their answers on newsprint. Alternatively, you can ask the groups to present their analysis in the form of a skit. Distribute copies of the chart below and ask for comments.

[19] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

The chart below simplifies issues to a large extent, but it provides some ideas for discussion. Develop your own chart based on local realities.

Dominant Behavior	Subordinate Behavior
• Is hierarchical and patriarchal	• Does not address domination directly: self-initiated action on one's own behalf is avoided, instead people resort to indirect ways of acting and reacting, may express hidden defiance of dominants.
• Sees subordinates in server roles	
• Sees subordinates as incapable of "higher" labor, thinking or positions (whether due to mind, body, race, sex, etc.)	• Tends to know more about dominants than about self
• Dominant actions and culture encourage subordinates to develop traits of submissiveness, dependency, lack of initiative.	• Does not give dominants feedback on how they are perceived
	• Is often self-defeating, including self-putdowns, inability to see choices, withdrawal, and/or aggression.
• Dominants build these concepts into society through philosophy, religion, science, morality, media, education, legal systems, cultural laws, rituals and traditions.	• Subordinates have difficulty working with other members of the subordinate group
	• Subordinates often feel more responsible for helping others than helping themselves. This self-denial is used by dominants to keep subordinates in place.
• Their position, and the position of subordinates, is accepted as normal and natural-as the way it's "supposed to be".	• Subordinates internalise untruths about themselves. Despite these traits, subordinates can and do more toward greater freedom of expression and action.

Transforming Power: Power to, with and within

In development and rights-based work, often there is a focus on the negative aspects of power-oppression, subordination, violation of rights. We describe this as power over, where power is seen as a win-lose relationship of inequality. In this sense, having power involves taking it from someone else, and then, using it to dominate and prevent others from gaining it. This is the oppressive power that people experience when their rights are violated or denied – for example, refusal to provide services without bribes, violent repression of dissent, or employers who refuse to respect workers' rights. There are, however, more constructive forms of power that we can use, described below as *power to*, *power with* and *power within*.

Power to refers to the potential of every person to shape his or her life and world. It relates to the ability of people to learn and to take action. When based on mutual support, the exercise of 'power to' opens up possibilities of joint action, or power with.

> **ActionAid Ghana** carried out a project for women to form farmers groups. The women were trained in record keeping, simple farm accounting and management of loans. After the training, they could apply for a loan. One participant said, "Before [the ActionAid project] I was powerless in my own family... my husband took decisions concerning our family without me. With the loan I was able to hire labour to expand my farm. My farm output has increased and so has my income. Power to me at last. I am now able to contribute substantially to the housekeeping and my husband now respects my view in matters concerning our family. Now I can talk." [from 2003 Extracts on Goal 4; from Ghana]

'Power to' refers to the potential of every person to shape his or her life and world.

- What does the idea of 'power to' tell us about the role of learning, creativity and making small positive changes in processes aimed at building power?
- What happens to people's sense of power when development projects bring in "experts" without space for participants to learn new things for themselves?
- What examples of building 'power to' can you think of from your own experience?

Power with involves finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength. Through mutual support, solidarity and collaboration, it multiplies individual talents and knowledge.

In March 1999, the Treatment Action Campaign organised a *Fast to Save Lives* in Cape Town, Durban and Soweto. The fast was supported by religious leaders, health professionals and even some top government officials. About 500 people lay down in front of one of Johannesburg's public hospitals to symbolise the people who were dying from HIV/AIDS. A few days later the Minister of Health publicly stated that she would join TAC's fight against high drug prices. That

Power with involves finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength.

demonstration was one of the first where TAC members appeared in T-shirts with "HIV-positive" written boldly on the front. One of the founding members of TAC explained the idea behind the T-shirts: "We made the T-shirts after Gugu Dlamini was killed for declaring that she was HIV-positive. We wanted to bring it out in the open. Now we wear them for everything – you can wear one whether you are HIV-positive or not.

- What does the idea of 'power to' tell us about the role of learning, creativity and making small positive changes in processes aimed at building power?
- What kinds of activities can help build common ground in order to exercise 'power with'?
- What examples have you seen or experienced of 'power with'?

Power within has to do with a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge. It includes an ability to recognise individual differences while respecting others. *'Power within'* is the capacity to imagine and have hope. This is often an important starting point in women's empowerment, which involves fostering a sense that "I can" and "I will".

Power within has to do with a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge.

CADEP, an ActionAid partner in Peru, used a *REFLECT* circle over a long period of time to begin to talk about sexual violence in a community of Cusco. Women participants initially described how they felt unable to refuse sex when their husbands demanded it. "He says that I'm his wife and when he wants it I have to do it." One woman reported that when she spoke to a grandmother about the sexual abuse she suffered, she was told "that is life as a woman and you have to keep quiet and avoid shame". As the group analysed sexual violence, women shared their experiences, and the notion of rights – in particular the right to be free from domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape – was introduced. Through discussion and new knowledge, some of the women began to build confidence in the idea that they could aspire to intimate relationships that would be free from violence.

- What is the role of storytelling and sharing personal experience in processes aimed at developing a deeper sense of *power within?*
- How can we as individuals make space to nurture our own sense of *power within* as well as to foster it within others?

Understanding violence against women

Development is about much more than financial well-being. As discussed above, inequality, power dynamics, domination and oppression all influence people's perception of their own well-being and ability to enjoy their rights. For women, violence, and sexual violence in particular, is among the most common and most intractable symptoms and perpetrators of 'ill-being'. The challenge for development and rights interventions that aim to address oppression is that unless *both* the individual *and* the structural dimensions of violence are addressed, positive change cannot be sustained. Consider the following example from a *REFLECT* experience in Bangladesh.

Minoti is Relieved from Daily Torture: Minoti is a *Reflect* circle participant of Kadam Circle of Shakrail village. She has been physically tortured by her husband while he is drunk. At Minoti's wedding her family arranged a job for her husband as dowry, but unfortunately he did not keep the job. He started to demand money from Minoti's family and the physical torture of Minoti by her husband became a regular event. The same problem was raised by other participants in the circle. Circle participants along with their circle facilitator visited Minoti's house and talked to her husband. Through several sittings with him, circle participants tried to convince him not to torture her and informed him of legal steps Minoti can take against his torture. After counseling by the circle participants Minoti is in peace till now.

- How do you think Minoti's husband would justify beating her – what would he give as reasons?
- What do you think Minoti saw as the reason for the beatings?
- Why do you think this kind of violence against women happens?
- Do you think the beatings will stop permanently? Why or why not?
- What else do you think should be done to ensure that Minoti's husband does not beat her again?

For women, violence, and sexual violence in particular, is among the most common and most intractable symptoms and perpetrators of 'ill-being'.

The example from Bangladesh shows that dowry or bride-price can create tensions or be used as an excuse for violence. A further example from ActionAid Ghana bears this out, where one man justified his violence as follows: "I think it is because we pay so much to marry our wives so they must work to justify the money we have invested in them … If I have to pay so much for the lady and at times incur a debt that I have to pay over the years after marrying her, then she must be prepared to do what I say. You see? That is where the problem comes in because if she does not do what I say, I can beat her."

Likewise, alcohol is often blamed for violence against women. Some women's organisations have successfully fought to close liquor shops or limit hours of operation and report that this has led to a significant decrease in violence.

Dowry or brideprice and alcohol cannot, however, be used to explain violence. There are many cases of domestic violence that do not involve alcohol in any way and also have no relation to dowry. Ultimately, violence against women is an expression of power and a desire to exert control over the victim. It signals that women are not considered as equals, or as worthy of respect of their bodily integrity. These perceptions of women are deeply rooted in cultural and social systems, in economic systems, and even in laws and policies. Violence against women is not simply about an individual's attitudes or beliefs – though the latter do play a role.

This is why the case of Minoti raises many important questions. What was Minoti's reaction to the circle's decision to confront her husband directly? Did members of the circle consider that they could have placed her at even greater risk, since evidence shows that women
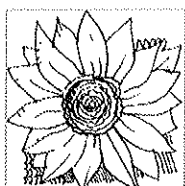
often receive much more severe beatings after their partner learns they have reported domestic violence? Stopping violence in a particular relationship is an important accomplishment, but we need to consider how sustainable this change in the couple's relationship is. Minoti's safety is dependent on her husband's good will. To what extent is his willingness to stop the violence a result of wanting to please an agency such as ActionAid or the partner NGO so that resources will continue to flow into his community?

Violence against women is not simply about an individual's attitudes or beliefs — though the latter do play a role.

How could a programme take the response to Minoti's situation a step further, so that it is not only about convincing an individual man to be gentler with his wife, but about helping Minoti and the many other women in her situation to realise their right to live free from violence? The chart that follows shows how individual change can be combined with a collective approach so that women and their male allies can push for systemic changes.

Activity 11: Rape is a crime that causes very emotional reactions in people. Some think that rape is impossible unless a woman really wants it to happen. When a rape survivor goes to the police station or to a court, she often finds that she has to prove that she did not provoke the rapist in some way. On your own, or with members of your group, over a few months collect newspaper articles on attacks against women or rapes. When you've collected 5-6 articles, look at them all together and consider these questions:

- How do these experiences of women make you feel?
- How is the survivor portrayed? And the rapist?
- What myths/realities about rape do you think these portrayals represent?
- What are the usual responses by different authorities in society (police, health providers, school officials, judges, etc.)?

Alternatively, use the dialogue below to discuss common myths about rape, and to reflect on the reality of this crime.

Dialogue on Myths and Realities about Rape

- "Rape happens a lot these days because women have loose morals."
- "Yes, I think it does happen more often today. But I don't think it is because women have loose morals."
- "But even if they do have loose morals, do they deserve to be raped?"
- "Have you noticed how women dress these days? All those tight trousers provoke men."
- "Eh! I am an old grandmother and even I was raped."
- "And my friend's daughter was raped and she is only 9 years old."
- "Eh, you people! My neighbour's little 2-year-old daughter was raped. Is she provocative?"

The Oxfam Gender Training Manual. Oxfam UK and Ireland 1994.

Strategies Against Violence Against Women

This chart shows the different levels at which violence against women needs to be addressed – from the individual and broad public to institutions, policies and enforcement agencies. No single organisation will do all of these things, but this chart reflects the array of strategies needed to both respond to the immediate effects of violence against women and to attack its root causes.

Actions to:

Respond to the violence:

Attack the root causes of the violence:

Individual (victims or survivors)

Survivors need protection (shelter, crisis intervention, etc.), medical, legal & therapeutic assistance, and support systems

Work with women to:
- develop a social analysis of violence (understand its root causes)
- understand the extent and limits of the law,
- create new options by developing skills (self-confidence, employment, political, etc.)
- organise for political action

The "Public"

Provide information on the prevalence of gender-based violence in society; supply information on available resources

Make violence a political issue, relevant to all. Identify and challenge popular beliefs that reflect tolerance, acceptance of violence among men and women.

Institutions (State/NGO)

Help relevant institutions provide support to survivors; collaborate with government agencies to provide adequate services; train medical, legal and other personnel to respond adequately to survivors' needs/rights.

Identify influential institutions and groups that shape social values and attitudes on gender violence and build constituencies and allies in them. Challenge religious, economic, educational authorities to take action. Engage relevant institutions in political action. Counter negative institutional influences (using protest, education, dialogue, boycott, etc.)

Laws/ Policies

Use legal means available to obtain protection or redress.

At local, national, international levels:
- propose better laws on violence against women (if needed)
- introduce new legal frameworks and arguments
- mobilize public support through campaigns, protests, etc.
- lobby legislative bodies for passage of new laws, procedures, policies.

Enforcement agencies (judges, prosecutors, police, military, traditional & religious leaders)

Pressure police to enforce the law, prosecute gender based violence crimes and be respectful of survivors; propose suitable procedures for dealing with survivors; set up accountability mechanism; identify and use sympathetic courts; challenge the courts through legal and political means to comply with the law.

Educate police and prosecutors to develop new attitudes and skills in dealing with gender violence; monitor police handling of violence cases and police behavior; design alternative approaches regarding survivors and perpetrators; make judges aware of their gender biases and encourage new patterns of judicial behavior; use litigation and test cases to improve behavior in the courts.

Adapted from Schuler, Margaret (1996). "Seizing the Strategic Moment: Building Gender Violence Strategies" in State Responses to Domestic Violence; Current Status and Needed Improvements. Washington, DC: Women, Law & Development International.

▒ What is empowerment?

Empowerment is widely accepted as a "desired end" of development and rights programmes, but how do we "do" empowerment and what does it really look like? Consider the example below.

> **Dada's Story of Personal Empowerment:** "I used to say that I was born twice… I think that today I am another person, I see the world in another way." From the age of seven Dada spent her days doing chores such as fetching water, trampling rice and taking lunch to her father in the fields. After she married, she worked for her husband gathering and breaking babassu coconuts, making dinner, sleeping and waking. Dada's "awakening" began in 1985.

> "When the agrarian conflict began…I started participating in some protests in our community and I enjoyed it… I went to a protest and meeting in St Luís. I found it interesting and we tried to bring that discussion back to our community, and that is how it began. In 1989 with the creation of Assema (a local organisation working with land reform settlement areas to ensure that families occupying the land are able to stay and thrive), we really started and I really became involved. We created a study group of women coconut breakers and then I became director of Assema and I think that helped me learn a lot. I think today that what I learned, the whole apprenticeship, this different understanding that I have today I think I owe to Assema, which invested in me. It was interested in investing in the workers here in this region."

> Dada was director of Assema for three consecutive terms. She was one of the founders of the Women Babassu Coconut Breakers Study Group – which later developed into an interstate movement of women Babassu Coconut Breakers (MIQCB). Since September 2001, Dada has been the general coordinator of the MIQCB.

> The thing Dada is most proud of achieving is: "the understanding I have today, the way I see the world." This understanding has contributed to her autonomy, by which she means freedom in her home, in her relationship with her husband and in her ideological choices. What is still missing, however, to complete this new picture, is financial autonomy.

◆ What does Dada mean when she says she felt she was "living asleep"?

◆ What kinds of activities change that feeling?

◆ When have you felt or seen empowerment in action?

"We are born with rights but not power. That is why empowerment is so important, so people can claim the rights that they are entitled to."[20]

[20] Participant in workshop in Addis Ababa on ActionAid in Practice: Understanding and Learning about Methods and Approaches of Rights and Empowerment, November 17-22, 2003.

From ActionAid Brazil case study: The fight of rural women workers for the preservation of and free access to a natural resource: Assema and the Babassu Law

CHAZ! (or AHA!) Empowerment Framework

The Chaz! framework below, created by women leaders from Central America, illustrates the spiraling, contradictory process of empowerment.
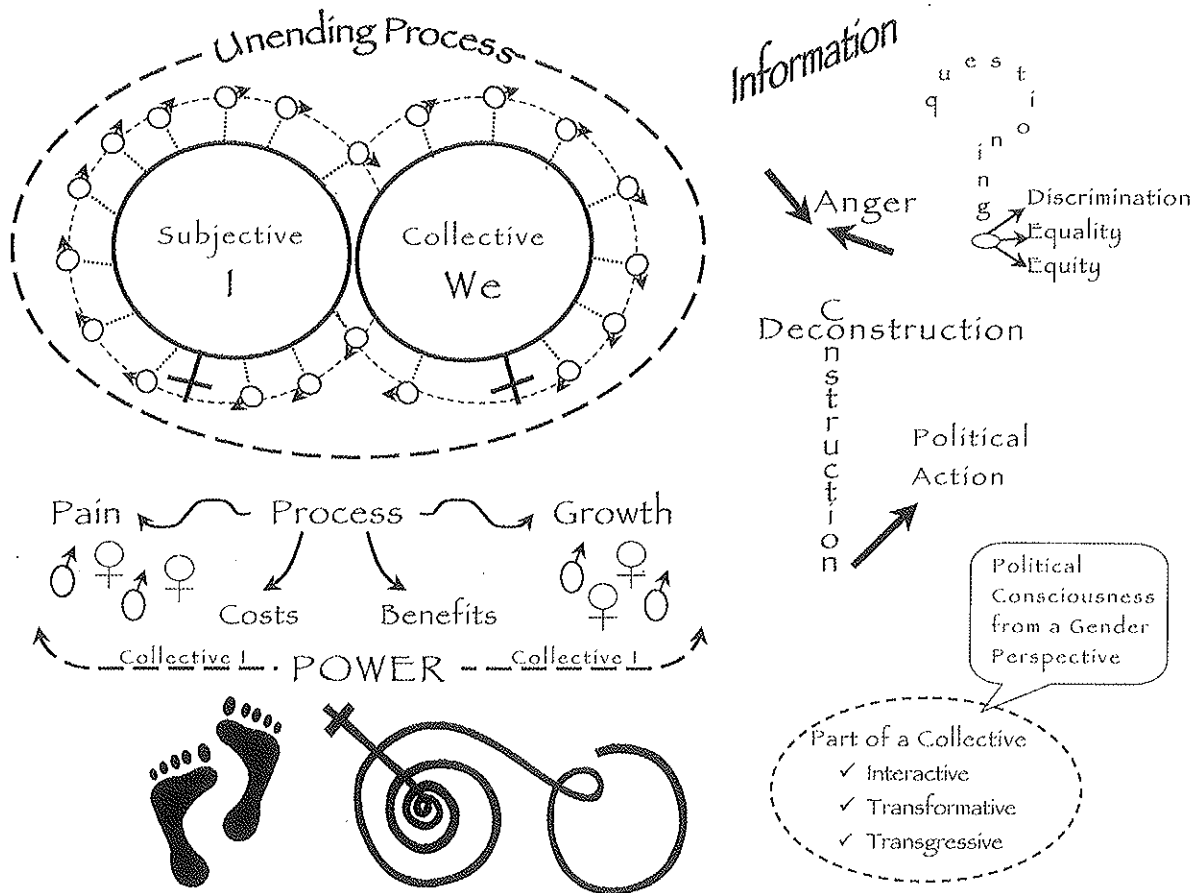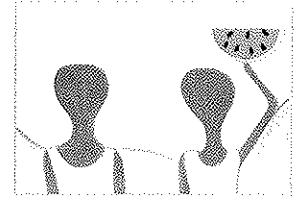
The framework begins in the upper left with the **Unending Process** of change and empowerment. The two circles represent the **self** (I) and **the collective** (we). As the two circles connect (individuals engage and interact with other people, share experiences, learn from each other, etc.), both gain power. This is represented by the outward moving edges of the circle. The **male symbols** around the edges of the circles represent the patriarchy that women's empowerment confronts.
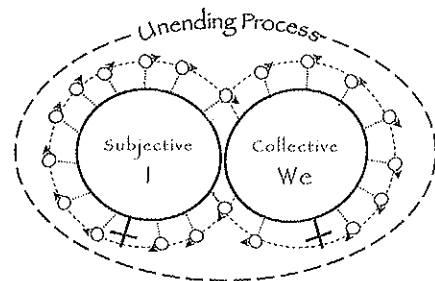
CHAZ! (or AHA!) Empowerment Framework
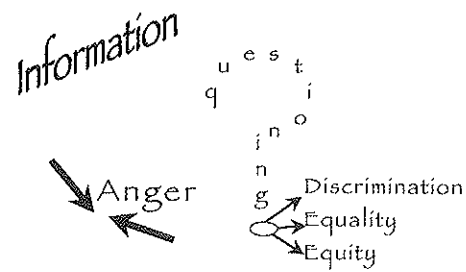
Moving clockwise, the next area of the framework describes the process of "conscientisation." It begins with new information that stimulates questions and anger as a woman recognises injustice and powerlessness in her own life and around her. As she interacts with others, she discovers common predicaments, and begins to doubt that she is to blame for her situation. Her questioning is deepened by exploring ideas like discrimination, equality, equity, and rights. These ideas help her label her constraints and legitimise her desire for change.

Moving to the bottom right, a woman deconstructs (breaks apart) and reconstructs her worldview and sense of self by questioning, labeling, and feeling anger. This is the starting point for political action to change the aspects of her life that limit her.
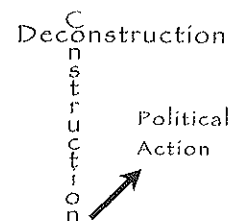
Human rights are the birthright of all human beings and the protection of human rights is the first responsibility of governments.
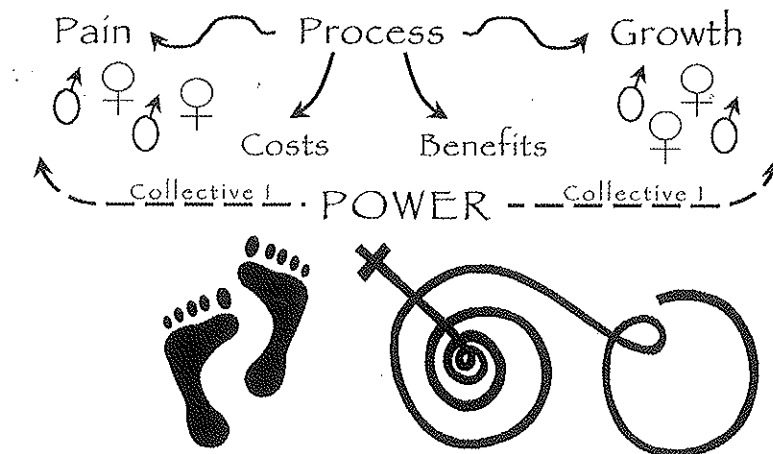
Finally, we see the conflicts of empowerment. The process involves growth and pain, costs and benefits. The spiraling circle with the footprints at the side illustrates the entire empowerment process. The questioning, analysis, and anger lead in a circling inward path until difficult decisions cause a woman to awaken to a new awareness (aha!) and leap forward to land on her feet ready to begin the process again. In some cases, the loss and pain can be softened by links with others. However, sometimes the conflict is so extreme as to cause a woman to retreat, and fear or oppose change.
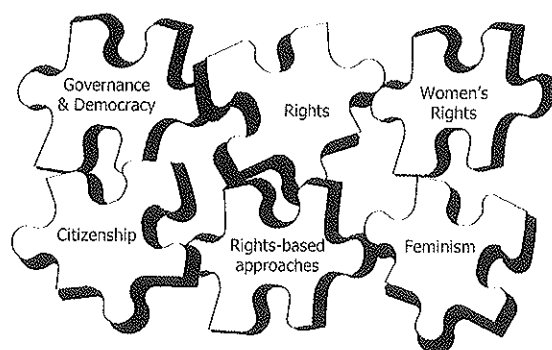
Participatory processes that engage people in personal reflection, that involve sharing life stories and doing a basic analysis of common problems can help people develop a clearer understanding of power and a vision of a better future. These processes should help people question their world and their place in it, affirming their own sources of power and inspiration and discovering how other forms of power affect their lives. Ideally, as they question, people develop a critical and compassionate worldview, and the skills and willingness to act both individually and collectively to improve their world.

There is no neat path to empowerment. The journey is not a linear one and is impossible to forecast. But with clear ideas about processes, we can at least aim to ensure that our programmes are advancing personal growth and new forms of collective and individual power for claiming rights.

> Think back to the case of Minoti in the *REFLECT* circle in Bangladesh. Consider the various elements or moments of empowerment as described in the Chaz! framework.
>
> * What do you think was empowering for her in that experience?
> * What do you think was disempowering for her in that experience?
> * What might you do differently to assist Minoti?

Gender, Human Rights & Democracy Building Blocks

Working with people to define and claim their rights is a *political* struggle. It involves negotiations in formal and informal spheres about access to resources and opportunities. For that reason, we need to look beyond the content of the international human rights system and also understand governance and government, laws and policies, and citizenship and citizen participation.

Rights-based approaches is one potential strategy to transform the social structures and power relations that underlie poverty and injustice.

Governance and Democracy

Rights are closely tied to notions of governance. Governance refers to how decisions are made.

"In its broadest terms governance refers to the relationships between people and different institutions ... This might be between

a government and its citizens, between an NGO and the people with whom they work, or it could be the internal management structure of any organisation ... Moreover, different people will experience governance differently due to their power and position in society."[21]

When we talk about rights, it is important to ask people: What should the relation between citizens and state (or any institutionalised structure for decision-making) look like?

Democracy is a particular form of governance. Many countries and institutions claim that they are democratic. Yet democracy means different things to different people. Democratic political reforms have often gone hand in hand with economic changes that have drastically undermined people's livelihoods. In some cases, these reforms have also been imposed by external forces. So the notion of democracy and making claims on the state can be difficult for people who have lived under repressive, unresponsive, or corrupt governments.[22]

Many people agree that democracy is "more than just elections." It is this deeper idea of democracy being about claiming rights and holding decision-makers accountable that offers a vehicle for excluded groups to frame demands, and gain recognition of their rights.

Citizenship

"A discussion of democracy inevitably reaches the subject of citizenship. And like democracy, the meaning of citizenship is also open to debate. For example, some political theorists argue that a good citizen is one who displays trust and obedience. Some believe that ordinary people lack sufficient judgment and knowledge and should therefore rely on their leaders to solve problems. Other theorists argue that the individual as active citizen is rapidly disappearing, and is being replaced by the individual as consumer.

In contrast, [others] say that the problem is not that people are politically incompetent or distracted by the consumer economy. Rather, the problem is the continued concentration of power in the hands of a few. They believe that more involvement by people in decisions affecting them would improve both government and people's quality of life. Some believe that people's participation is a basic right (regardless of whether one is a "legal citizen"), and that constructive engagement with government, if possible, is the best way to address social and economic problems and conflict."[23]

Gender and citizenship – Feminists view citizenship as both a status and a practice. Beyond the legal rules governing the relationship between an individual and the state, some feminists extend the definitions of citizenship to include the social relationships between individuals and the state as well as between individual citizens.

"[They] argue that the concepts of democracy, equality, and rights are as important in the home as they are in the

[21] Newman, Kate. *Reflect, rights and governance: Insights from Nigeria and South Africa.* London: ActionAid International, n.d., p. 6

[22] Ibid

[23] Ibid

legislature. They extend the boundaries of the 'common good' beyond the public arena to include the family. They say that it is as important for a 'good' citizen to share the responsibilities for the caring of children and older family members as it is to be involved in public activities. They argue that if men took more responsibility for domestic duties, women would be more active in public and economic life.

Further, men's contribution at home would help reduce social problems that are linked to parental neglect. They argue that this could also reduce male-related problems, such as violent crime, because men's lives would be more balanced. At present, society treats what happens in the private world of the family as unrelated to citizenship. For women, however, the chance to be a citizen is often determined by what goes on in that private world."[24]

The women's human rights movement has learnt useful lessons over the last three decades about working with the human rights system.

Gita Sen describes citizenship as operating in four spheres: "a) the political level; b) the economic levels; c) the cultural level of norms and values; and d) the personal level of family, home and relationships."[25] She emphasises that the absence of citizenship at one level puts the others at risk as well. So, for example, if a woman cannot realise her economic citizenship (such as her right to work and receive a fair wage), that will affect how she experiences citizenship in the political and personal realms as well.

The concept of citizenship often assumes some neutral human, devoid of gender, class, caste, age, and other forms of difference. This hides the social relations that make up the individual. It also hides the historical processes that determine which categories of people are the norm on which citizenship and the related rights are based.[26] Achieving substantive citizenship requires looking at different people's position, the roles attributed to them, and the public/private divide. Then, by understanding the differences, we can aim to ensure inclusion and equality.

Human Rights

"Human rights are those rights that every human being possesses and is entitled to enjoy simply by virtue of being human. At the 1993 *World Conference on Human Rights*, governments reaffirmed in the Vienna Declaration that human rights are the birthright of all human beings and that the protection of human rights is the first responsibility of governments. Human rights are based on the fundamental principle that all persons possess an inherent human dignity and that regardless of sex, race, color, language, national origin, age, class, or religious or political beliefs, they are equally entitled to enjoy their rights."[27]

The first attempt to set universal standards of human rights occurred after the Second World War with the founding of the United Nations in 1945 and the formulation and adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)* in 1948. However, the UDHR is not legally

[24] Ibid

[25] From Sen, Gita. "Feminist politics in a fundamentalist world" in Governing for Equity: Gender, Citizenship and Governance, Maitrayee Mukhopadhyah, Ed. Amsterdam: KIT Publications, 2003. Retrieved from http://www.kit.nl/gender/assets/images/ConferenceReport.pdf, page 24.

[26] Mukhopadhyay, Maitrayee. "Introduction: gender, citizenship and governance"

[27] Schuler, Margaret A. and Dorothy Q. Thomas (eds.) Women's Human Rights Step by Step: A Practical Guide to Using International Human Rights Law and Mechanisms to Defend Women's Human Rights. Washington DC: Women, Law & Development International and Human Rights Watch, 1997.

binding. As a declaration, it was intended to be translated into legally binding human rights obligations. Early attempts to develop a legal instrument based on the UDHR led to two treaties, one on civil and political rights, and the other on economic, social, and cultural rights. Since that time, many other instruments have been developed to articulate basic human rights. Rights provide both a legal framework for action, as well as a normative sense of basic standards of human dignity.

It is important to note that many of these early attempts were gender blind. Thus women were excluded from enjoying these "human rights".

For a list of human rights and women's rights conventions, see Appendix II.

Ancient historical documents from many cultures recognise the dignity of all human beings[28]:

Hindu Vedas

Babylonian Code of Hammurabi

The Bible

The Quran

Aztec Code of Nezahualcayol

Iroquois Constitution

Magna Carta, 1215

English Bill of Rights, 1689

French Rights of Man and Citizen, 1789

US Bill of Rights, 1791

What is a rights-based approach?

"The rights-based approach is ActionAid's preferred way of working to achieve its mission – by helping poor and marginalised people to recognise, promote and secure their basic rights."[29]

Over the last decade, there has been growing recognition of the limitations of interventions that aim solely to improve people's material status. People have increasingly acknowledged the need to transform the social structures and power relations that underlie poverty and injustice. "Rights-based approaches" (RBA) have emerged as one potential strategy to do this.

The following list reflects some key characteristics of rights-based approaches.

- **Link strategies** to address basic needs to empowerment which enables people to understand and claim their rights.

- **Unambiguously take sides** with groups that are denied rights.

- **Place unheard voices** of the poor and marginalised at the centre of the discourse through empowering processes that build consciousness and active citizenship.

[28] Schuler, Margaret and Nancy Flowers. *Women's Human Rights Step by Step: Facilitator's Guide.* Washington DC: Women, Law and Development International, 2003.

[29] From ActionAid Induction Pack, section E, *Who We Are.*

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- Use participation as an entry point to the redefinition of rights when planning action aimed at solving basic problems associated with poverty.

- Where services are provided, demand that these respond to needs identified by poor people and that poor people play a role in their management.

- Understand how power operates on different levels to perpetuate subordination and exclusion, and seek to build alternative sources of power in order to challenge entrenched interests.

- Recognize that change involves conflict and risk because it involves challenging power structures.

- Aim to change institutional behaviour, social values and belief systems, and political and ideological structures that perpetuate poverty and exclusion, in addition to seeking changes in laws, budgets, and policies.

- Seek to build an accountable and competent state capable of delivering on rights.

- Aim to redefine rights to address chronic and systematic abuse and inequity, with special emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights.

The relationship between targeting Needs and Rights

Needs and rights are presented as a dichotomy that working toward one is better, or more effective, or more necessary than working toward the other. In fact, ActionAid's experience shows that community development that addresses people's basic needs is a central component of rights-based work. In particular, it can serve as an entry point into work on deeper rights issues.

For example: In one area in Brazil, community members asked ActionAid for resources to develop a water supply. ActionAid discussed it with the community leadership and said "we'll give part of the resources if you get another part from the local government, because this is a state obligation." The mayor of the local municipality had never visited that community. The community leaders negotiated and won partial government support for the water supply. In this process there were two important gains. One, the local government recognised the needs of this community by going there. Two, the community recognised their capacity to negotiate with the government. The hope is that next time, the community will not need resources from ActionAid because they will know they can claim their rights from the government.
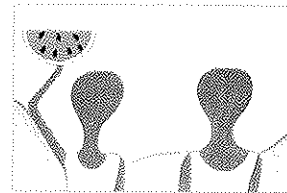
(Example from a participant in the workshop in Addis Ababa on ActionAid in Practice: Understanding and Learning about Methods and Approaches of Rights and Empowerment, November 17-22, 2003.)

Women's Rights

Human rights apply to both men and women equally. However, often the way those rights are framed or applied overlook women's needs or situations. Women's rights include rights that apply to both women and men. But they also include rights that are specific to women or that need to be expanded for women's situations.

Women's rights include rights that apply to both women and men.

Women's rights all too often get reduced to CEDAW. The point of the 'lessons from women's human rights movement' is that rights are constantly being defined, negotiated upheld ... they include, but are certainly not limited to the rights in CEDAW. Besides, starting with a discussion of rights conventions is a sure fire way to put people to sleep ... what's important is that people are able to connect this notion of rights with their own lives, with claims that they would want to make. CEDAW was the result of a lot of women's rights activism, not the starting point for it.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty clarifying what constitutes discrimination against women and an agenda to end such discrimination. It guarantees equality and freedom from discrimination, direct or indirect, by the state and by private actors in all areas of public and private life: CEDAW mandates equality of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. The treaty was adopted by the United Nations in 1979.

CEDAW obliges states to take certain immediate steps to guarantee equality, and to adopt programmatic measures to eliminate particular forms of discrimination. It is overseen by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. As of 18 March 2005, 180 countries – over ninety percent of UN member countries – had signed CEDAW, though many have made reservations in relation to it. The U.S. is the only industrialized country that has not ratified CEDAW.[30]

Dynamism of Rights: Human rights are sometimes seen as set in stone or 'handed down from on high' rather than as the product of struggle to translate human needs and interests into enforceable commitments. Women's rights activists have re-conceptualised rights as an evolving framework that is strengthened by the inclusion of new, previously excluded, voices. For example, in the early-mid 90s, women's rights activists framed 'new' rights-such as the right to live free from domestic violence, or establishing rape during war as a war crime and crime against humanity. These rights were not previously accepted as 'human rights'.

Critical perspective on law and rights: Adopting a rights-based approach does not mean adopting an uncritical acceptance of the international human rights system. Many activists find international rights language unhelpful. Many have critiqued the UN system for its lack of practical impact and inattention to economic and social rights. A rights-based approach requires a critical perspective on the rights

[30] For more information on the multiple potential uses of CEDAW, and exercises to explore different women's rights enshrined in UN frameworks see Mertus, Julie with Nancy Flowers and Mallika Dutt. Local Action Global Change: Learning About the Human Rights of Women and Girls. UNIFEM and the Center for Women's Global Leadership, 1999.

framework and a vision of how it might be improved. Based on this, one can make strategic choices about where existing legal and institutional structures can be used, and where it is necessary to challenge them.

Rights as a political resource: The value of rights lies in the fact that they can sometimes be used as a political tool in efforts to bring about social change. In some circumstances, it adds power to a claim to express it as a right. Recognising when and how to use rights in a strategy is an important part of a rights-based approach.

Focus on social and cultural change: Rights are sometimes thought to exist only in the legal or institutional spheres. In reality, rights exist in every sphere of life-home, school, street, workplace, market, etc. Social and cultural beliefs are usually more important than laws in preventing the poor, women, and other marginalised groups from making choices and exercising rights. Thus, addressing these social factors is as important as seeking changes in law and policy.

Empowerment and exercising rights: Claiming rights can be empowering individually and collectively as people gain confidence, define collective demands, increase their knowledge, and build new relationships.

Activity 12: Reflect on the following:

- What groups are working for women's rights in your community/city? In your country?
- What have been key women's rights struggles in your area in the last five years?
- What have been major advances for women's rights in your community?
- What have been major setbacks?
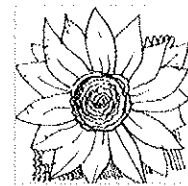
If you don't know the answer to these questions, try to contact an organisation that works on women's rights issues. Ask for a recent report or, even better, meet with them to learn about their work and the issues they are dealing with.

When culture overrides the law[31]

The gulf between the law and practice

Getting progressive laws passed to protect women's rights is difficult, but the real battle is in getting them implemented. This is the reason why the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for instance, has comprehensive reporting requirements from each state that is party to the treaty.

Around the world there are many examples of negative cultural practices and restrictive interpretations of religious norms prevailing over the law:

[31] Kinoti, Kathambi. AWID Resource Net: Friday File. Issue 257, Friday, January 13, 2006.

- In South Africa, despite a recent ban on virginity testing, the practice continues unabated, with traditional leaders like King Goodwill Zwelithini openly expressing defiance.[1]

- In Pakistan, a woman was reportedly gang-raped on the orders of a jirga allegedly as a punishment for sexual offence her brother had committed.[2]

- In Guinea, since 1965, female genital mutilation has been a crime punishable by death, yet the overwhelming majority of young girls still undergo the practice.[3]

- In many Latin American countries abortion is legal but doctors refuse to do it on religious grounds.

Traditional legal mechanisms still prevalent

Although human rights are rooted in the inherent dignity of every individual, for some people the culture of rights is associated with a Western worldview.

Most of the countries where there is a gap between the law and practice were colonised by Northern powers who introduced a legal system that mirrored the system in their own countries. The new legal system generally largely ignored the traditional law of the colonised people. The new laws therefore did not take adequate account of the power wielded by culture and traditional modes of governance. Yet this power still exists. A 2002/3 UNIFEM study in Somalia showed that most people, even before the collapse of the Somali state in 1991, were far more likely to refer their disputes to the council of elders (known as 'guurti') than to the courts. During the war and the reconstruction of the country, the elders performed an indispensable role in maintaining social order. Sometimes, even if people would like to access the protection of the state, it is practically impossible. In some parts of Kenya such as the vast Turkana District, government services are stretched so thin that people would have to walk for hundreds of kilometres to get to a police station. Traditional all-male councils of elders in these and many other communities perform an important quasi-legislative and judicial role. However, they also tend to perpetuate discrimination against women and violation of women's human rights.

The introduction of a new legal system alongside the ancient system did not automatically win people over to the 'Western' way of thought. Also, some argue that one of the reasons for the gap between laws in the books and the practice on the ground may be the 'culture of rights.'[4]

Although human rights are rooted in the inherent dignity of every individual, for some people the culture of rights is associated with a Western worldview. Proponents of traditional practices such as virginity testing and female genital mutilation condemn aspects of 'Western' culture such as 'sexual permissiveness' and point to the value of 'protecting women's honour.' They also stress their human right to practise their culture.

Rights talk versus culture talk

Mahmood Mamdani uses the following example to illustrate how different cultures may perceive the same violation:

"Imagine that a man slaps a woman in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. At the same time another man slaps a woman in a popular neighbourhood in Khartoum [Sudan], and yet a third does the same in a classroom at the Sorbonne in Paris. All three women protest: the woman in Paris that her rights have been violated, the woman in Khartoum that her dignity has been violated, and the woman in KwaZulu-Natal that custom has been violated. Every victim protests. But the language of protest is different in each case."[5]

According to Mamdani, the language of protest bears a relationship to the language of power. So protest employs the language of rights in Paris, dignity in Khartoum, and custom in KwaZulu-Natal because those in power claim to uphold rights in Paris, dignity in Khartoum and custom in KwaZulu-Natal.

The question for women's rights advocates then becomes:

How do we appeal to the overriding values of the different power structures in order to protect women's rights?

Notes:

1. See La Franiere, Sharon. 'Tradition binds African women, despite laws', New York Times, Sunday, January 1, 2006. http://www.whrnet.org/

2. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4223436.stm

3. Ibid note 1.

4. Nhlapo, Thandabantu. 'The African customary law of marriage and the rights conundrum', *"Beyond Rights Talk and Culture Talk*," Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2000.

5. Mamdani, Mahmood, ed. "Beyond Rights Talk",' op.cit. p. 1.

What's so scary about FEMINISM?

Many people consider "feminism" as a dirty word. Some women avoid identifying themselves as "feminists" because it has been portrayed as something overwhelmingly negative – women that hate men, women that want to be men, etc. – and not about building a better, more just world for both women and men.

We understand feminism as a political philosophy and a social movement based on an analysis of how power dynamics work to oppress, exploit and dominate women and other marginalized groups. Feminism is thus not only about a struggle for women's rights, but about challenging all power structures that oppress and exploit individuals based on aspects of their identity such as ethnicity, race, class, caste, sexuality, ability, etc.[32]

[32] See also Mouffe, Chantal, "*Feminism, Citizenship and radical Democratic Politics*" in Feminists Theorize the Political, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott. Routledge, 1992.

However, it is important to note that there are many different understandings of the principles and core objectives of feminism.

Paying our Dues to History

It is the process of debate that helps to deepen our understanding.

Each of the "building blocks" that we have discussed in this chapter draws from the long history of struggle, reflection, and achievement by women's rights champions throughout the world. These ideas and practices will continue to evolve as part of on-going struggles for justice.

As ActionAid embraces women's rights as the core of its agenda, it must recognise that it is "getting on a moving train" and seek to learn about the history of women's rights movements in the places it works. It must also seek alliances with the organisations that have been doing that work.

The timeline on the following page traces a few of the key developments in the last century. We then discuss some of the main trends and concepts that have evolved through struggles for women's rights and that can help inform rights-based practice. All of the concepts describe here are contested and few have only one definition. Indeed, it is the process of debate that helps to deepen our understanding.
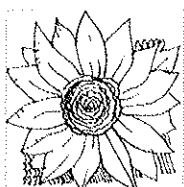
Activity 13: Draw up a timeline from your own country or community.

- What were the major milestones?
- Who were the main activists and which organisations?
- What has changed? What hasn't and why?
- What lessons do we learn from this history?
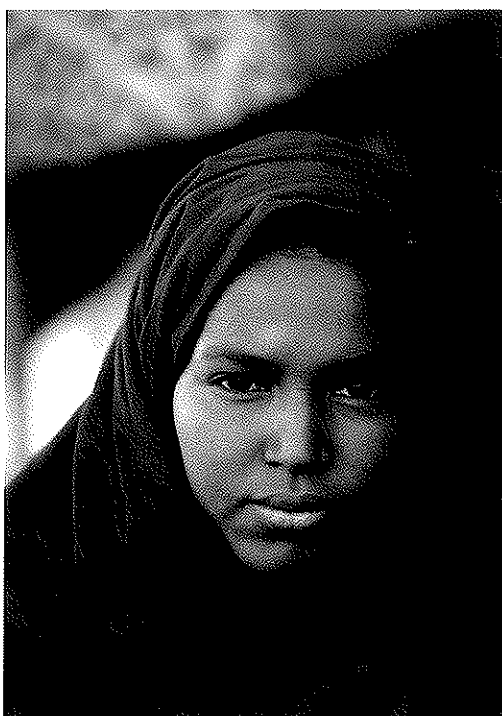
Portrait of Tuareg woman.

Women's Rights - A One-Century International Timeline [33]

Feminism Thinking and Practice		World Events and Movements	Human Rights Conventions on Rights	NGOs and Development Frameworks re Women
Pre- 1900s	Abolitionists opposed slavery & women's oppression Suffragettes	Legacy of anti-slavery movement	1215 Magna Cara French Rights of Man & 1789 Citizen	
1900s	1st Wave: *rights to vote, education some reproductive choices; emphasis on public sphere*			
1950s	The birth control pill developed	1950s Anti-colonial independence struggles	Declaration of Human 1948 Rights	1950s Welfare approach
		1960s Civil Rights and other rights- based social movements		
1970s	2nd Wave: *personal = political emphasis on private sphere* *sexual orientation in the North*	1970s Post-colonialism	UN Decade for Women - 1975 1985 Copenhagen Conference 1979 CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All	1970s WID Women in Development *service perspective*
1980s	Professionalisation 3rd Wave: driven by women of the South and black women of the North *multiple identities, differences*	1980s HIV/AIDS crisis	Forms of Discrimination Against Women 3rd World Conference on 1985 Women Nairobi Conference	NGO-ization 1980s GAD Gender and Development *work with men too*
1990s	Postcolonial & transnational women's movements violence + reproductive rights women's political participation and democratization *affirmative action, quotas sexual orientation in the South*	1990s Human rights (new freedoms in S.Africa, E.Europe)	1993 Vienna Conference *Women's rights as human rights* 1994 Cairo Conference *HIV/AIDS as a rights issue* *reproductive? sexual rights* 1995 4th World Conf on Women *Beijing Platform for Action* 1999 Cairo + 5 2000 Beijing + 5	1990s Gender mainstreaming Capabilities approach RBA Rights-Based Approaches *linking women + impact of poverty*

[33] We recognise that many of the events and definitions of terms included on this timeline are highly contested. This is one representation ͡tical moments in the last ͜͜at have influenced women's rights th͜͜king and practice.

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Part III

Design and Planning for Women's Rights and Development

Ethiopia. Petterik Wiggers/Panos/ActionAid

The emphasis in this section is less on the tools per se than on how the tools should be used to ensure that planning addresses gender inequality.

What does the previous section mean for how AAI staff design and plan programs? This section includes tips and tools for integrating some of the thinking described there into program planning.

There are a wide range of "tools" – participatory mapping, transect walks, Venn diagrams, calendars, wealth rankings, semi-structured interviews, etc. – that ActionAid staff use for program design and planning that are equally relevant for incorporating a gender and rights perspective. Thus the emphasis in this section is less on the tools *per se* than on how the tools should be used to ensure that planning addresses gender inequality. Some of the questions to ask along the way are: Are you getting the information that you need to understand the different realities, needs and interests of women and men? How are you using that information? How are you accounting for differences in their lives so that women can participate in what you are doing?

Following is a list of some of the tasks involved in program design and planning, along with tools discussed in this chapter. Rights-based planning requires knowledge about and activities to address: i) perceptions, values and norms, ii) needs, the nature of exclusion and its causes, iii) who's who in a community, iv) informal structures of power at local level and v) institutional systems and impact andvi) laws and policies.

DESIGN / PLANNING TASK	TOOL
Entering communities and getting to know the context	● Problem-posing codes
Contextual or structural analysis	● Structural Analysis ● Naming the Powerful ● Mapping the Rights Context
Problem identification and prioritization	● Gender Division of Labor ● Access and Control Profile ● Priority Group Analysis ● Framework for Gender Equality & Rights-based Approaches: Dimensions of the Problem
Sharpening analysis, Sharpening strategies	● Problem Analysis: Causes, consequences, solutions ● Triangle Analysis and Planning Framework ● Power Analysis ● Mapping Power
Monitoring and evaluation	● Signs of Change

Your strategy will vary, depending on whether you've been working with a particular community for many years or if you are just getting to know a community for the first time.

▒ Entering communities and getting to know the context

This section is about ways to get to know people, learn about how they live, how they understand the problems they face and the strengths they have to draw on. It's also about questioning our own assumptions.

Starting the Conversation – Popular Education Methodologies

Of course your strategy will vary, depending on whether you've been working with a particular community for many years or if you are just getting to know a community for the first time. But in general, when you are entering a community that you plan to work with around women's rights issues, you need to gather information and talk with people to help inform what you're doing. Informal one-on-one conversations, surveys, storytelling, participatory needs assessments, focus group discussions, and games are all ways of establishing relationships and trust and getting a sense of where people are and what they want for themselves, their family, and their community. Over time, you can deepen the understanding these initial conversations provide.

Problem-posing Codes

Problem-posing is sometimes referred to as the 'but why?' method. A facilitator's questions encourage people to explore why problems exist and so probe their social, economic, cultural, and political roots. 'Codes' – a term from popular education methodology – can help to start the reflection process. Codes are meant to:

- raise questions, not provide answers,
- show the unobvious roles of the obvious
- show contradictions,
- reflect on social reality,
- be more than just a 'visual aid' used to illustrate a point,
- use humor, exaggeration, drama, irony, and surprise to provide distance on difficult issues.

A code can be a drawing, skit, song, or story that helps to begin a discussion with relevant examples rather than asking directly about problems. This allows people to get comfortable with a topic, and after discussion, they may be able to relate the analysis to their own lives more readily. Usually, a code simply depicts a situation that then becomes the focus of dialogue. Codes are especially helpful for dealing with sensitive problems such as rape, domestic violence, and HIV/AIDS. The development of a suitable code requires careful observation and consultation to ensure that it's appropriate for the context.

Discussions around codes do not always follow a predictable sequence. Rather, the facilitator needs to guide a process that takes people from the personal to the concrete to the abstract and back again. These steps may help you to plan such discussions.

A code can be a drawing, skit, song, or story that helps to begin a discussion with relevant examples rather than asking directly about problems.

Introductory Step: Self-Analysis and Affirmation

Dialogue requires confidence. If participants do not already know each other, encourage them to introduce themselves. Questions such as "What inspires me?" or "What are my hopes and fears for myself, my family, my community?" can help affirm the importance of everyone's contribution.

Step 1: Description – What do you see happening in this picture? (skit, film, etc.)

Using the code, encourage participants to describe exactly what is happening. Often this may be something that is a daily occurrence for them. More educated people tend to use shorthand terminology to describe situations, such as "gender violence" or "conflict". This step tries to avoid such abstraction by talking about concrete details.

Step 2: First Analysis – Why is this happening?

Keep asking why? so that participants question as well as describe. Take advantage of the comfort people may feel in talking about a situation that is not directly related to their own lives. It is useful for the facilitator to know enough about the issue to be able to ask questions that helps people analyse and challenges myths, stereotypes, or misinformation.

Step 3: Real Life Comparison – Does this happen in your community? In your life?

Encourage people to give examples of how the situation in the code happens in their lives.

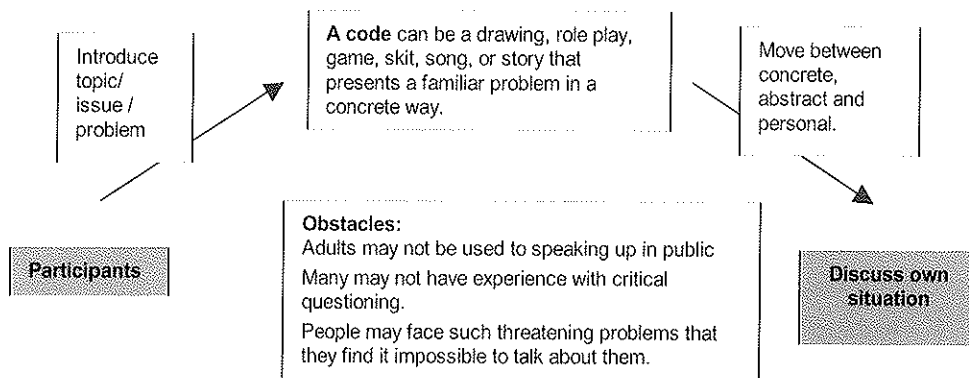## Step 4: Related Problems – What problems does this lead to?

This step looks at the consequences of the problem. In this step, if the facilitator is knowledgeable about the issue, she or he can provide additional information to supplement what participants contribute.

Step 5: Deeper Analysis – What are the root causes of these problems?

This step encourages participants to probe deeper into problems, returning to "but why?" After discussion, the facilitator can add information and challenge simplistic explanations.

Step 6: Alternatives and Action – What can we do about it?

To link the discussion to action, begin by asking "What can we do to address this problem here in our community?" This step can serve as an initial brainstorming for a group that then can lead to further analysis and organising.

Introduce topic/ issue / problem

A code can be a drawing, role play, game, skit, song, or story that presents a familiar problem in a concrete way.

Move between concrete, abstract and personal.

Participants

Obstacles:
Adults may not be used to speaking up in public
Many may not have experience with critical questioning.
People may face such threatening problems that they find it impossible to talk about them.

Discuss own situation

I'm going to sell my cards at the market. Everyone likes them!

I've told you that I don't give you permission for stupidities! Now go wash those clothes.

Example: A Code from Peru

This drawing was in a book[34] developed by Asociación Peru-Mujer for use by community legal educators in their work on issues of violence against women.

[34] Peru Mujer, Formas de Violencia en el Hogar Contra la Mujer, Cuadernos Legales 3, 1988.

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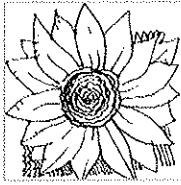
Activity 14: What are some questions that would help to guide a discussion on the drawing? Below, we give some of our ideas as well.

◈   Think about a particular issue or problem that you are currently working on. Can you imagine a code that would help you engage people in a conversation related to that issue?

Possible questions to use with the code:

◈   What is happening in this picture?

◈   Why doesn't he want her to sell her cards?

◈   How do you think this makes her feel?

◈   What do you think would happen if she goes despite his opposition?

◈   Have you seen this happen in your community?

◈   What can we do about it?

Stages of Awareness[35]

Paulo Feire was a Brazilian educator who developed methods for developing critical awareness as a first step in enabling poor people to fight for their rights. Freire theorised different stages of awareness:

"Magic" or "traditional" awareness: when people explain the forces that shape their lives in terms of myths or powers that are beyond their understanding and control. They tend to passively accept what happens to them as fate.

"Naïve" awareness: reflects an incomplete understanding. People may not accept their hardships completely passively but they accept existing values, rules and the social order, and often try to imitate them to get ahead. They try to make the best of their situation, but do not critically examine or attempt to change the social order.

"Critical" awareness: involves looking carefully at the causes of problems. People start to question the values, rules and expectations passed down by those in control. They realize that only by changing these can their problems be corrected.

In reality, no one is wholly at one stage or another.

[35] From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma City: World Neighbors, 2002.

[36] From Chapman, Jennifer and Amboka Wameyo, *Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy: A Scoping Study.* ActionAid, 2001, p. 35

[37] Refer to the section in this chapter on "stages of awareness".
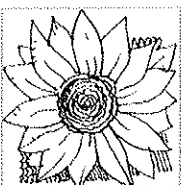
Activity 15: Review the example[36] below from a programme working with bonded labourers that looked at how their attitudes had shifted. The example uses categories developed by Paulo Freire[37] to characterise how people were thinking. Consider a programme that you are working on that involves changing people's thinking. What would traditional, naïve, and critical perspectives sound like?

Traditional:

"We are *Kamaiya* by age old tradition."

"We are *Kamaiya* by birth and it is our Karma."

"We will not die of hunger in landlord's house being *Kamaiya*."

"Without having a piece of land, how to cope with survival?"

Naïve:

"We can't repay the Sauki (debt). How can we be liberated?"

"We are exploited and sold by landlords time and again, what option do we have to be liberated?"

"How to secure our daily wages?"

"We are not interested to be bonded, but we are landless."

Critical:

"We can survive freely, we do not want to be bonded like a bull."

"Slavery is illegal. It must be punished by the law in practice."

"Our labor must be valued and be calculated."
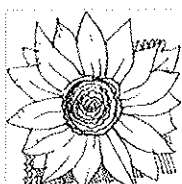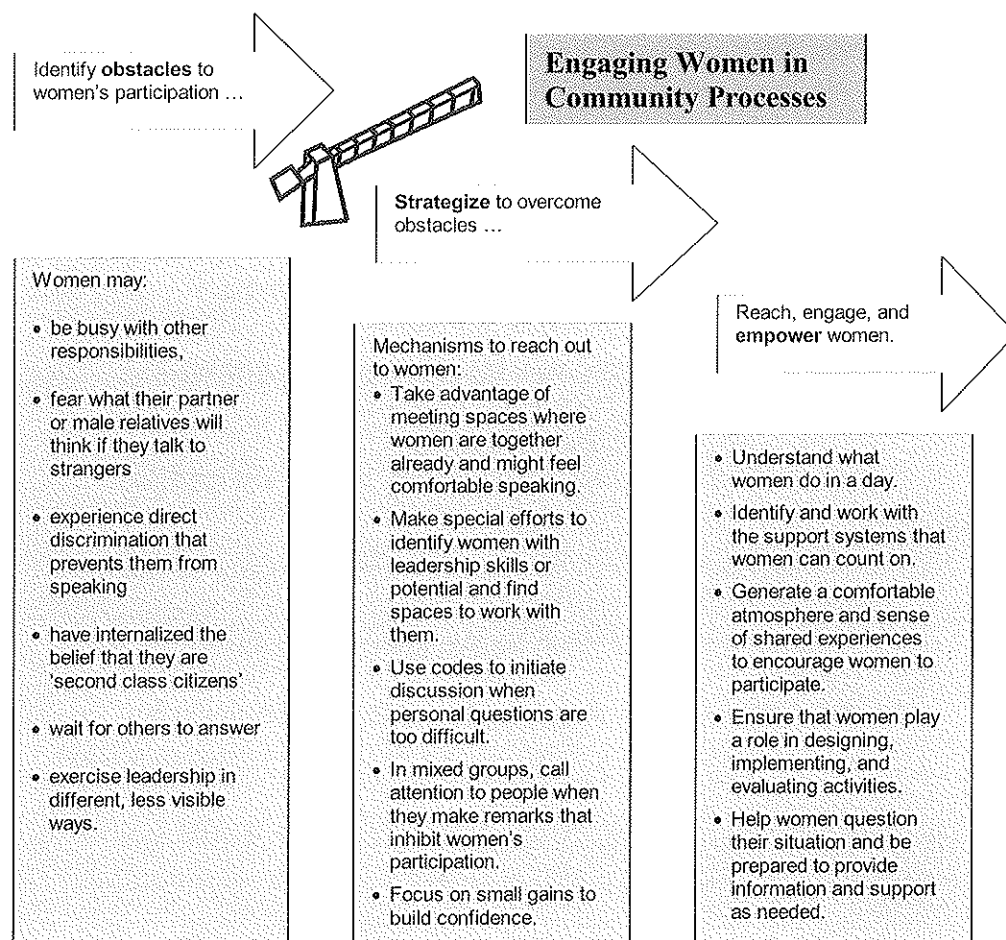
Important Note on Risk

Asking questions and encouraging people to speak their mind is not always easy. It can sometimes be risky. In many communities it is dangerous for women to speak with strangers, let alone voice their opinion on sensitive issues like rape or incest. If they do so, they may be threatened by male family members. If you are taking the lid off problems that are hidden, make sure that there are support services if people need help.

In many communities it is dangerous for women to speak with strangers, let alone voice their opinion on sensitive issues like rape or incest.

For example, in Kenya in the late 1980s, a legal rights group launched a campaign against family violence. They placed posters throughout Nairobi asking people to denounce this "crime". They were overwhelmed by women calling for help and were not able to meet the demand. The campaign seemed to provoke more family conflict when women spoke out. In the end, the organisers decided to take down the posters and rethink their strategy.

To minimise risk:

◆ work with local groups where possible;

◆ get to know the local area, its social and cultural taboos, and its political dynamics before organising public discussion;

◆ if you hold focus groups or public meetings, prepare facilitators well beforehand.

From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

Identify **obstacles** to women's participation ...

Engaging Women in Community Processes

Strategize to overcome obstacles ...

Reach, engage, and **empower** women.

Women may:

- be busy with other responsibilities,

- fear what their partner or male relatives will think if they talk to strangers

- experience direct discrimination that prevents them from speaking

- have internalized the belief that they are 'second class citizens'

- wait for others to answer

- exercise leadership in different, less visible ways.

Mechanisms to reach out to women:

- Take advantage of meeting spaces where women are together already and might feel comfortable speaking.

- Make special efforts to identify women with leadership skills or potential and find spaces to work with them.

- Use codes to initiate discussion when personal questions are too difficult.

- In mixed groups, call attention to people when they make remarks that inhibit women's participation.

- Focus on small gains to build confidence.

- Understand what women do in a day.

- Identify and work with the support systems that women can count on.

- Generate a comfortable atmosphere and sense of shared experiences to encourage women to participate.

- Ensure that women play a role in designing, implementing, and evaluating activities.

- Help women question their situation and be prepared to provide information and support as needed.

Activity 16: Review an approach you have used in the past when entering a community. List the steps in the first column. In the second column, note how you might adapt each step in order to more effectively engage women.

▨ Making Participation Work[38]

[38] From VeneKlasen, Lisa. *Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, DRAFT, 1999.

[39] Adapted from: Jules N. Pretty (1995) *Regenerating Agriculture: Policies and Practices for Sustainability and Self-Reliance.* Earthscan Publications Ltd. London and Joseph Henry Press, Washington DC

All of the tools described here assume that ActionAid staff will be doing the analysis and planning in collaboration with partner organisations and, in some cases, community members. This section encourages you to reflect on the nature of people's participation in your rights-based programming. There is general agreement that active participation by intended beneficiaries – poor people, women, workers, etc. – is necessary for lasting success if the task has anything to do with empowerment or social change. Yet participation means different things to different people. The typology[39] below describes some of these differences.

Token Participation: People sit on official committees but they are not elected and have no real power.

Passive Participation: People participate as recipients of information. They are told what has been decided or what has already happened. Those in power pass on this information but do not listen to people's responses.

Participation by Consultation: People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information gathering processes, and control the analysis. The professionals are under no obligation to include people's views.

Participation for Material Incentives: People participate by contributing resources, for example labor, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. People provide these resources but are not involved in decisions as to what is done. They have no stake in carrying on with things when the incentives end.

Functional Participation: People participate at the request of external agencies to meet predetermined objectives. There may be some shared decision-making, but this usually happens only after the big decisions have already been made by external agents.

Interactive Participation: People participate in joint analysis, and development of action plans. Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals. The process involves methodologies that seek all the different perspectives. Because groups are involved in decision-making, they have a stake in maintaining the project. Local institutions are strengthened.

Self Mobilisation: People participate by initiating actions independently of external institutions. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but control how the resources are used. The mobilisation may or may not challenge existing distribution of wealth and power. Government and NGOs sometimes provide support.

Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals.

Some people see ideal participation as one where everyone participates equally. But people's contributions are not "equal" – people participate in different ways and make different kinds of contributions. Allowing different perspectives to be heard means acknowledging how differences can translate into unequal power dynamics, and adjusting the dynamics to facilitate more "equal" communication and decision-making.

Although participation is desired for many development programs, it usually has a cost. It means using time and other resources to take part in activities. For that reason, it is important to consider men and women's other commitments during the day, and to be respectful of the many demands on people's time.

Participation in certain kinds of activities may involve a risk for people, especially women. Therefore people may choose not to participate, and it is important to respect their right to make that choice.
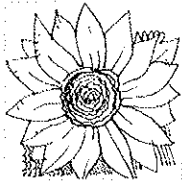
Activity 17: Focusing on an area of your own work, discuss these questions:

❋ What is the nature of women's and men's participation in your programme/activity?

❋ What is the benefit that women/men receive from participating?

❋ What are the risks to women/men of participation?

❋ To what extent are women active agents in different stages of programming?

▨ Introducing Women's Rights

As highlighted in previous sections, introducing or talking about women's rights issues in most contexts is very difficult. But it can be done. With a good political understanding, strategic approaches and the right tools and methods, change does happen – as this example from Peru shows.

A Peruvian NGO, CADEP, used REFLECT to promote a collective analysis of domestic violence in a rural community, to find out how families and couples were being affected. The process built on a high level of trust established through many years of work with this community. Participants were carefully selected (for example, couples could not participate together, and no one over the age of 45 was involved). In the initial workshops, men met separately from women, and community leaders separately from community members. The idea was to create a safe space to encourage open discussion of sexual and domestic violence, starting from people's own experiences.

One participant noted: "I had never in my life before talked about this, but it felt good to do it." Gradually, the discussion focused increasingly on sexual violence. The women's group discussed the many different forms of sexual violence, while the men felt they knew what they needed to know and were reluctant to discuss it. Little by little, as the discussion advanced. The men began to recognise how sexual violence often played a part in their own relationships with their partners, although they still considered these attitudes and behaviour to be 'normal'. Over time, changes in attitudes emerged – a very slow process in practice.

❋ Why do you think CADEP chose not to have couples participate together? And why not people over 45?

❋ What do you think would have happened if CADEP had not separated men and women initially? And community leaders/ members?

❋ What do you think would have happened if CADEP had tried this process in a community they had never worked with before?

Lessons from the CADEP experience

❖ For every project and community, you will have different considerations in terms of selection criteria and who should participate. In this case, the CADEP staff felt that people over 45 were too "set in their ways" and would likely be obstacles to the process. CADEP was starting with the most likely chances for success. They wanted to build momentum that could help influence others in the community and not be easily overridden as 'outside' thinking.

❖ Power dynamics and differences shape participation in any group. So it is important to take steps to facilitate participation of different people. In this case, CADEP did this by separating men and women, and community leaders from community members, to encourage people to express themselves.

❖ Questioning gender dynamics and talking about women's rights touches people in a very intimate way and can be very uncomfortable for both men and women. As with any sensitive topic, people rarely want to speak about it with someone they do not know or trust. Activities that begin to establish a relationship, opportunities to show respect for and interest in people in a community can be important first steps before engaging them in a conversation around women's rights issues.

It is important that rights-based strategies find ways of promoting the input, participation, and empowerment of women and other disadvantaged groups.

Recognising differences

Sometimes development initiatives fail to challenge gender and other forms of inequality because a "community" is treated as if it were a homogenous group.

All communities, no matter how small, encompass diverse interests and degrees of power. It is therefore important that rights-based strategies find ways of promoting the input, participation, and empowerment of women and other disadvantaged groups.

> **Activity 18:** Discuss a community mapping exercise you know well. How do maps constructed by women differ from those constructed by men? How are they similar?
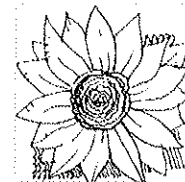
▓ Tools for Analysing Context and Structures

A situation (or contextual) analysis helps strengthen understanding of the systems where poverty and inequality take root. This can contribute to developing more effective strategies. While the context may be defined geographically at local, national or regional levels, contextual analysis should also look at the global dimensions of systems and structures, and the interrelationship of forces operating at different levels. ActionAid has many tools for this kind of analysis and below we offer some additional ideas.

## A Note on Introducing Information about the **Global Level**

It is always best to start with what people know, by taking a local problem and asking why, why, why? In doing this, the group will often start touching on external, even global, causes.

Many of the global issues that are discussed here may seem irrelevant for some communities. There is a tension between what people feel they need to know, and 'hidden' forces that shape people's well-being and ability to claim their rights.

Care should be taken when doing these kinds of analyses with community members. If people feel like they have absolutely no knowledge, it can be a very disempowering experience, and further encourage them to rely on 'experts' for answers. However, if the questions build on what people do know about these forces, and help them to seek out information that they don't already have, it can help motivate them to learn more and take action.

An analysis of this nature is probably something that you'll do once every 3-5 years unless there are major changes or events. You will then deepen your analysis with more specific problem-related analyses discussed in the next section.
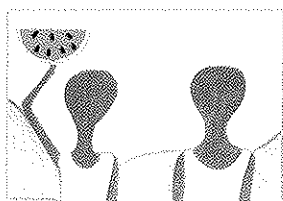
Structural Analysis

Below we have included a series of questions for each of the core elements of any social system: economic, political, and ideological/cultural structures. You may not have answers to many of the questions raised. This information is, however, important for understanding structural issues related to inequality and marginalisation. Seeking out this information can be a gradual task that is done by members of the community, complemented where necessary by external information that ActionAid staff or other facilitators provide.

Using an image of a tree, consider the following elements:

The roots are the base of the system – its **economic structure**. Economics has to do with who owns what, the primary sources of income and economic productivity, how people survive, their conditions of life, and how economic resources are distributed.

◆ What are the main industries (e.g., agricultural, mining, service, manufacture, trade)?

◆ What are the main goods produced and exported? What are the main imports?

◆ What services are produced (e.g., tourism, banking)?

◈ What are the dominant corporations? Who owns them?

◈ What are the main sources of formal employment (e.g., tourism, mining, agriculture, electronics, service). What percentage of workers are employed in the informal economy?

◈ Where are women employed? Where are men employed? Where are young people employed? Do employment and income levels differ on the basis of ethnicity and gender?

◈ What is the situation in terms of access to water, land, food, shelter, education and natural resources? What groups experience difficulties in accessing these resources?

◈ What role do foreign corporations play in the economy? What role do multilateral organisations like the IMF and the World Bank play?
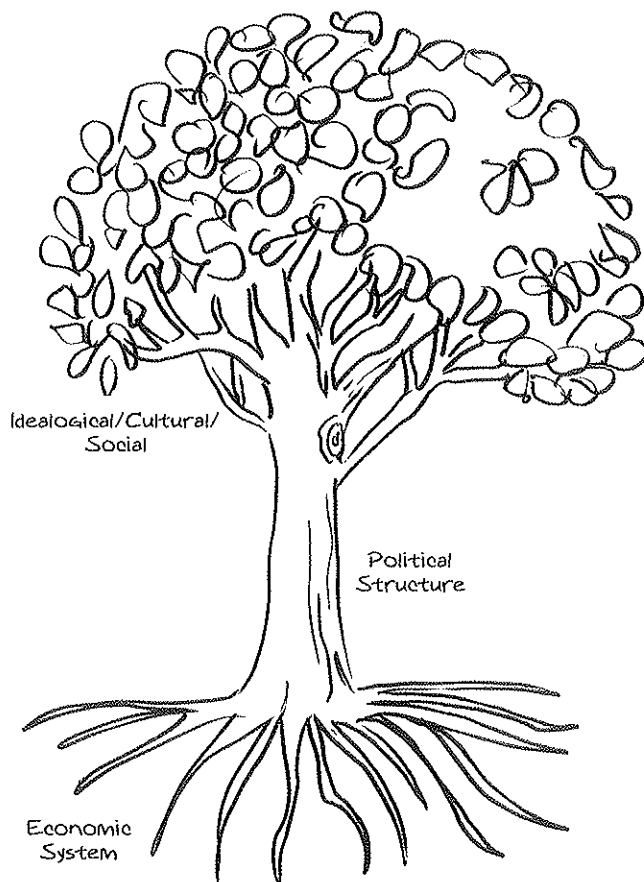
Ideological/Cultural/ Social

Political Structure

Economic System

Economics has to do with who owns what, the primary sources of income and economic productivity, how people survive, their conditions of life, and how economic resources are distributed.

The trunk is the **legal and political structure** that makes the system run smoothly. It regulates the system through laws, policies and institutions.

◈ Who/which institutions make the laws? How are laws enforced?

◈ Who/which institutions make the key budget decisions?

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❖ What kinds of people are elected and appointed to government? Which economic, gender, racial, and ethnic interests do they represent?

❖ Do certain kinds of people benefit more from political processes than others? Who?

❖ What other political forces or structures significantly affect people's lives?

❖ To what extent are basic rights such as religious freedom, personal and political expression and freedom from arbitrary detention respected? Are these rights denied or restricted for certain groups in society? How are they different for women and men?

The branches are the **ideological, cultural, and social elements** of society. This includes beliefs and institutions such as churches, schools, and the media that shape values, ideas, and norms.

❖ What are the main expressed values of government (for example, freedom, unity)? Are these different from the values reflected in how government actually operates?

❖ How does society treat women? How does it treat different ethnic groups? What messages does society send about women's roles and men's roles?

❖ What are the main family-related values? How is "the family" defined?

❖ What are the roles and power of different religious groups in society? How do dominant religious groups view major problems affecting the poor and marginalised?

❖ What values and lifestyle do religions and the media promote?

❖ Which cultural institutions or players shape the values and ideas besides government, media and religious structures?

❖ Does society tolerate difference from the "norm" in terms of social identity and political perspectives? Over what issues is there significant disagreement?

Looking at the information gathered above, how do these structures (economic, legal/political, and ideological/cultural) influence one another?

❖ In what ways do they promote rights?

❖ In what ways do they violate rights?

❖ What challenges and opportunities do they offer to work for women's, rights?

From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma City: World Neighbors, 2002.

Naming the Powerful

Building on the results of the structural analysis above, make a chart that lists the main economic groups (or players) in the particular context you are analysing. Identify who the decision-makers are in each group. Put names in the "Who?" column. Then write what appear to be their main interests in the last column. Remember that what some actors say they are interested in is not always reflected in their actions. So check whether what you have written represents real interests as evidenced by the actions of those groups or individuals.
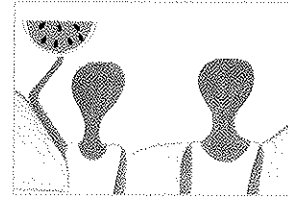
Example: Economic Groups

	Who? (Leaders)	Interests
Banks		
Major Industry		
Chamber of Commerce		
Trade Associations		
Major Property Owners		
International Agencies / Donors		
Other Opinion Leaders		

Next, identify the political groups, decision-makers (elected, appointed, or otherwise) in formal government, and define their interests in a similar chart. Consider national legislators, regional, state, or district officials, local government officials, politically influential communities or groups, etc.

Finally, repeat this process for media (owners, editors, and journalists), religious, traditional and civil/social service leaders.

❖ Where do the interests of these powerful actors converge with your interests?

❖ Where are the principle conflicts?

❖ What does this mean for your work to promote women's rights?

❖ Where are the most serious changes needed?

❖ Where are there big opportunities for change?

Remember that each of the arenas described may have both a national and an international component. For example, 'government' may include the national public sector as well as international governance institutions such as the United Nations. The 'market' includes national and local businesses as well as international financial institutions and multi-national corporations.

Mapping the Rights Context: Local to Global Macro Analysis

This tool can also be applied to different levels – a country, region, or the globe. Before getting started, review the definitions below of the different "arenas" (state/government, market/private sector, civil society, community). These definitions provide a common starting point for the exercise, although these terms are sometimes used in different ways.

The State consists of the people, procedures and institutions of government. The state's authority and duties, and people's access to public decision-making, resources and opportunities are defined and regulated through laws and policies. Policies and laws are enforced and implemented through government ministries, the police, courts, schools, local government and ministries, and other institutions.

The Market refers to the arena where the exchange of goods and services occurs and where business, industry, and multi-nationals operate and where trade, investments and consumption happen. The market is also where profit is generated. The distribution of economic resources is a key factor in determining the opportunities and conflicts in the market and society at large.

Civil Society refers to the arena of social interaction between the family, market, and the state. Within civil society, people organise to advance specific agendas – NGOs, social movements, trade unions, CBOs, religious groups, foundations, scholars, research institutes, and others. Civil society is not homogenous, nor harmonious. As in the other arenas, there are patterns of privilege, exclusion, conflict, and ideological difference.

The definition of the Community/Family level will depend on the scope of the work being done. It is essentially the place where people make their livelihood and interact with one another. It includes family relationships as determined by birth, lineage, marriage, common law partnership, or other social commitments. These relationships usually extend beyond a single household to other households and groups. The community can be an important source of individual well-being and stability, but it can also be the source of abuse of basic rights and freedoms. It is a central force in shaping relationships between men and women.

A Note on Culture: Many people note that culture is also an important consideration given the tremendous power of cultural norms and traditions. To represent culture in this exercise would imply an all-encompassing circle that influences each arena. Instead, we think it is important to be able to recognise the dominant cultural factors shaping power and decision-making in each arena. For example, the influence of customary leaders might be considered part of the state sphere, a prevalent belief that any regulation can distort economic efficiencies would increase the power of the market, or the way culture shapes attitudes about women, ethnic minorities and social differences could impact all of the arenas.

Next, using the table below as a guide, reflect on the following questions for each of the four "arenas":

❖ What are the major trends? Think about the last ten years, what have been major shifts or changes in this arena? For example, at a global level for the state/government arena, people might mention growing militarisation of the state, loss of state power to private/ multi-national corporations, crisis of international governance institutions (like the UN), the HIV and AIDS pandemic, etc.

❖ What impact are the trends having in these arenas? Building on the example given above, impacts might include: increasing rates of incarceration, states unable to fulfil basic elements of social contract/essential services, government offices are understaffed/do not respond adequately to citizens' demands, etc.

❖ What are some of the concrete problems that poor and marginalised people are most concerned about? How are these connected to the trends, if at all? For example, people do not have access to safe drinking water — this is a result of insufficient state financial support to maintain the necessary infrastructure and service. Women are expected to carry the burden of care for sick and elderly since state-run clinics are closed or under-staffed, etc.

Country: Dynamics of power Arenas	State/ Government	Market/ Private Sector	Civil Society	Women & men at community level (poor and marginalized)
What are the major trends in each arena? *(positive or negative, a major trend can affect more than one arena, it can also be the result of either national or international actors)*				
What impact are the trends having in these arenas?				
What are some of the concrete problems that poor and marginalized people are most concerned about? How are these connected to the trends, if at all?				

Once you've finished, step back and consider the following:

❖ What seem to be the most important/urgent trends?

❖ What did you learn from this analysis that might be useful to you in your work?

❖ Where are there opportunities to challenge the negative trends and problems?

❖ What major problems or issues were identified that affect poor and marginalised people? Women and men?

Just Associates. Structural Analysis Toolkit, 2002.

▨ Highlights of the Trends Shaping Women's Rights[40]

Neo-liberal Economic Reform: For two decades, a fixed set of economic reform measures have been implemented from St. Louis to Nairobi. The reforms include privatisation of essential services, reduction of labor and environmental standards, deregulation and 'open' markets and 'free' trade. The resulting increases in poverty, unemployment, and the gap between 'haves' and 'have-nots' have exacerbated conflict worldwide. The terrain of economic policy has shifted in terms of the identity and power of the key actors and institutions (with the WTO, regional agreements, multinational conglomerates and the IFIs as dominant players) as well as what is considered acceptable economic policy. "Women must now and in the foreseeable future engage with supra-national actors including international financial institutions and private sector corporations (whereas in the past, the primary sites of struggle for women's movements were the household, the workplace, and the state)."

The Shrinking Role and Capacity of National Governments: This has implications for equality and justice advocates because budgets and delivery mechanisms for social policy have been gutted, and with them, the possibilities for enforcing and protecting rights. Government strategies of low wage growth are also built on the exploitation of women's labor and the rollback of social protections means increased care and reproductive burdens on women. Decentralisation, as part of this trend, has in some instances been a blow to women's equality as authority is devolved to oppressive local elites.

Fundamentalisms: The growth of religious, cultural and ethnic fundamentalisms with the accompanying explosion of organized mass-based groups has fueled a backlash worldwide against women's equality. Political religious movements are taking women's lives, denying or undermining women's education, decision-making, ownership of resources, as well as mobility and controlling women's sexuality.

Conflict, Militarisation and a Focus on Security as a Means for Control: This trend has obvious implications for rights, freedoms and budgets. In addition, private sector actors and interests are increasingly tied to military interventions and local rebel and armed factions while private armies are on the rise. Male-centered, militaristic culture utilises women in conflicts for power. This ranges from the reliance on women's labor to maintain fatherless families and rebuild war-torn nations, to loss of public services and economic and social rights when resources are diverted, to the prostitutes around military bases to the abuse of women within the military to rape of women in war. Women may also be militant fighters themselves, complicit in allowing the conflict to flourish or active in peace negotiations.

Alternative trends are also emerging that offer opportunities for gender equality advocates. For example, the evolving "crisis of the

[40] Adapted from Kerr, Joanna. *"From 'opposing' to 'proposing': finding proactive global strategies for feminist futures"* in The Future of Women's Rights: Global Visions & Strategies. Joanna Kerr, Ellen Sprenger, Alison Symington (eds.) New York: Zed Books, 2004. VeneKlasen, Lisa *"Old Lessons, Fresh Insights, New Strategies: Notes on Mapping Gender Equality and Economic Justice Strategies"*, background paper for AWID Gender, Justice & Globalization Strategy Meeting, 2004.

Washington Consensus" creates opportunities to build support for economic alternatives. The increased linkages between organised labor, NGOs and social movements are promising signs of louder voices and more leverage. The growing convergence between the human rights and development agendas is creating opportunities for strengthened coalitions around economic, social and cultural rights as a key element of a new change agenda. Finally, many (non-gender focused) NGOs and social movements, like ActionAid, are placing more emphasis on gender equality in their agendas.

Identifying and Prioritising Problems

Analysing the division of labor among women and men is useful for understanding the different roles and time commitments in a community.

As you get to know a community, you will almost certainly hear about some of the problems that women (and men) face. But because discrimination and exclusion of women is so often accepted as normal, it may take extra effort to surface women's rights issues. The tools described in this section are specifically aimed at understanding the problems women and girls face as a result of inequality.

Gender division of labor

Activity Profile				
	Women / Girls	Men /Boys	Location	Time occupied
Productive work (production of goods and services for consumption and trade) - Paid employment - Harvesting the fields - Making crafts to sell - Etc. (*Note whether these activities are paid or unpaid*).				
Reproductive work - Bearing and caring for children - Caring for elderly - Caring for ill - Cooking - Cleaning & washing - Collecting water & fuel - Other				
Community work - Organise events, ceremonies, etc. - Participate in associations - Other				

The Activity Profile above can be used to gather and organise information about who does what kind of work in a community where a particular programme will be carried out. It asks you to consider where the activity takes place and the amount of time and frequency of the activity.

Analysing the division of labor among women and men is useful for understanding the different roles and time commitments in a community. It can also help to identify conflicts between men and women, and the ways that workload and roles shape dominance and subordination. Finally, it assists with planning to ensure that any development initiative is targeted at women, supports their active participation, and benefits them.

Discuss the following:

◆ Based on this analysis, how are women and men impacted differently by the problem that ActionAid's intervention is addressing?

◆ Will the proposed intervention reinforce or challenge the existing division of labor?

◆ In what ways will the productive, reproductive and community work of women and men be affected by the intervention?

◆ In what ways will these different types of work affect the project?

Access and control profile[41]

The Access and Control Profile helps to specify power differences between women and men, but can also be applied to any disadvantaged subgroup. For example, you can consider economic status, race, age, or religion. The profile asks questions about who has access to and who controls resources.

The profile asks questions about who has access to and who controls resources.

Using a matrix like the one here, participants can analyse who has access to and control of which resources and benefits in the community or household.

RESOURCES	Access		Control	
Economic and productive	Men	Women	Men	Women
-Land				
-Equipment				
-Education and training				
-Labor				
-Cash				
-Other				
Political				
-Leadership				
-Education and training				
-Information				
-Citizenship skills				
-Legal rights	Ensuring equal opportunity			
-Other				
BENEFITS				
Income				
Property ownership				
Basic needs (food, clothing, shelter)				
Education				
Political power and prestige	Leveling the playing field			
Other				

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[41] Adapted from: March, Smyth, and Mukhopadhyay, *A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks*, Oxfam Publishing, Oxford 1999, 34.

Surfacing Sensitive Problems: It is often difficult to begin talking about very sensitive problems that affect women, such as rape, domestic violence, reproductive rights concerns, trafficking, prostitution. Be willing to give space, if the women prioritise other issues, to work on those while continuing to build the trust necessary to begin to tackle the more sensitive concerns.

Priority Group Analysis

Priority Group Analysis looks at the needs and potential of a marginalised group within a community.

Draw one large circle with a smaller circle inside it. The large circle represents the whole community. The small circle is the marginalised group that you choose to prioritise. Write in the larger circle all the problems being addressed by the program that affect the entire community. Next, write problems that affect the priority group in the inner circle. Some of these problems will be the same as in the larger circle and some may be different.

Analyse the circles and problems. Here are some questions to guide analysis:

◈   How do the problems in the two circles differ? How are they the same?

◈   What solutions will give priority to the needs of the marginalised group and also have potential to gain support from the larger community?

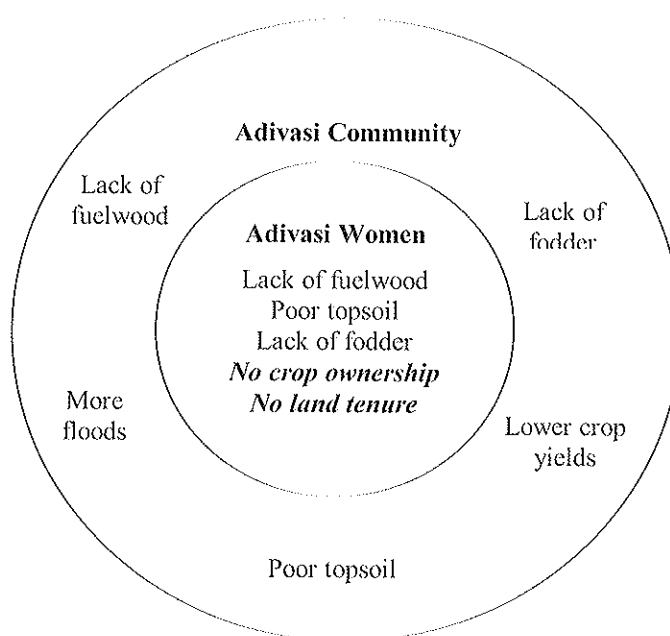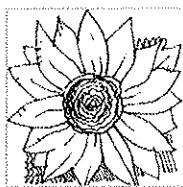◈   What can the marginalised group contribute (i.e., knowledge, people, other resources)?
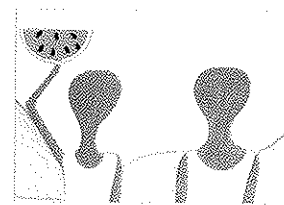
The large circle represents the whole community. The small circle is the marginalized group that you choose to prioritize.

Example: SARTHI, an NGO based in Rajasthan India, has been helping Adivasi women organize themselves around rehabilitation and management of common lands. (Adivasi are an indigenous community.) The larger circle represents the problems that affect the Adivasi community.

Because the SARTHI program focuses on the rehabilitation of grazing lands, problems related to the lack of vegetative matter are listed. Some of the programme-related problems affecting the Adivasi women are the same as those facing the whole community. The two issues at the bottom of the inner circle are examples of structural discrimination that are at the heart of why women are more marginalised. Strategies may address a couple of the issues that men and women share but will also need to work on the gender specific elements of the problem.

Adivasi Community

Lack of fuelwood

Lack of fodder

More floods

Adivasi Women

Lack of fuelwood
Poor topsoil
Lack of fodder
No crop ownership
No land tenure

Lower crop yields

Poor topsoil

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Activity 19: For a project, advocacy effort or policy reform in which you are involved, discuss and analyse:

How and to what extent it will alter the conditions of women and men?

How and to what extent it will improve women's position in society?

▦ Framework for Gender Equality and Rights-Based Approaches

Dimensions of the Problem

Our "Framework for Gender Equality and Rights-Based Approaches" includes four main spheres in the life of a person:

Personal: referring to the situation of the individual in terms of physical and mental health and well-being, including control over sexuality.

Social/Cultural: social beliefs, values and behaviours, education and information, access to and participation in civil society organisations, etc.

Economic: access to and control of income, credit, and/or land, non-discriminatory employment opportunities, etc.

Political: ability to have a voice in decision-making, including through electoral processes, etc.

All of these spheres are overlapping and inter-connected, which is why problems in one area constrain the extent to which women can enjoy their rights in another. What makes gender inequality particularly insidious is the combination of private and public oppression. For that reason, when identifying problems, it is important to also reflect on three different dimensions:

Self-Private-Public: Self refers to personal confidence, psychology, relation to body and health. Private includes relationships and roles in families, among friends, sexual partnerships, marriage, etc. Public is the area outside the family – it may refer to community relations, place of work, the market, or other situations.[42]

[42] From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma City: World Neighbors, 2002.
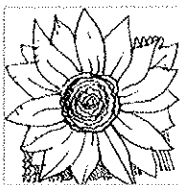
Activity 20: Using the following matrix, think about the different dimensions of problems related to each of the main "spheres".

Start by looking at each one individually, jotting down the various related aspects. Then ask how/whether the different problems reinforce each other (for example, women may stay in violent relationships if they do not feel they have the economic means to support themselves).

	Self	Private	Public
Personal			
Social & Cultural			
Economic			
Political			

Below is an example using common women's rights problems:

	Self	Private	Public
Personal	Blames herself for her problems	Is physically and emotionally abused by her husband	Domestic violence is dealt with as a private matter, not considered a crime.
Social & Cultural	She accepts traditions that reflect women as 'inferior' to men	Family decision-makers do not prioritise girls' education	School texts discuss men's achievements; do not recognise women's contributions.
Economic	Does not feel she's entitled to keep her income, instead she gives it to her husband	Husband controls income and owns property.	Banking laws require husbands' permission before married women can open accounts.
Political	Lacks confidence to voice opinions on politics	Many family and reproductive duties leave no time for political activities.	Electoral laws make it hard for women to run for office.

▓ Sharpening Analysis, Sharpening Strategies

Following are more tools for deepening your analysis in order to design more effective strategies. We do not except that you will use every tool here or that you will use them all in the order presented. Use them as they appear helpful to your situation, and adapt them to respond to the context, literacy levels of participants, and other factors.

Problem Analysis: Causes-consequences-solutions[43]

This framework helps analyze problems by making the links between causes, effects and solutions.

This framework helps analyse problems by making the links between causes, effects and solutions. It emphasises the need for social and political, as well as policy, strategies.

1. Before beginning the analysis, develop a problem statement that reflects the problem your group is working on. The problem statement should include a description of who is affected by the problem and how, concretely, the problem affects them. The problem statement should help people understand the scope of the problem and why that problem is worth attention

2. For the problem that you have identified, make a chart with three columns. The headings of the columns are: "Causes", "Consequences", and "Solutions".

3. Begin by brainstorming the causes of the problem. Write each cause in the first column of the chart. Try to think about economic, social and political causes.

4. Repeat the process for consequences, and then solutions. Note whether some consequences impact women and men differently. Similarly, note whether solutions involve women, men or both. Sometimes there are not clear cause-effect relationships between causes and consequences. So the causes, consequences, and solutions do not have to be linked or related horizontally.

5. When you've finished, discuss with your group the following questions:
   ◈ Who is responsible for the solutions identified?
   ◈ Which solutions is ActionAid already involved in?

Triangle analysis and planning framework[44]

This framework can be used for two main purposes. First, it can be used to analyse how a combination of policies, institutions, and social values and behavior contribute to a problem/issue. Second, the framework can be used to clarify strategies to address each of those dimensions.

The triangle analysis is useful because it highlights the specific aspects of the socio-legal-political system that need to be changed. In some cases, a response to the problem may need to focus on changing the content of the law or policy. In other instances, the content may be fine but the law is not enforced, hence the need to focus strategies on getting the legal or other government structures to implement the law.

[43] From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma City: World Neighbors, 2002.
[44] ibid.

Whatever the analysis reveals, all strategies must target culture since social norms operate behind the scenes to define power relations and access.

Laws and policies can be unjust in three ways:

i. Content: the written policy or law can be discriminatory, or may contradict a basic right.

ii. Structure: policies and laws may not be enforced. Or, if they are, they may be enforced unfairly favoring some groups of people and neglecting others.

iii. Culture: if citizens are unaware of a policy or law, or if social norms and behavior undermine their enforcement, the law does not exist in practice.

Meaning of the Sides of the Triangle for Analysis

Content refers to written laws, policies and budgets relevant to a specific issue. For example, if there is no law to criminalize domestic violence, one part of a solution may be introducing a law. Also, even if a law or policy exist, unless there is funding and institutional mechanisms for enforcement, it will not be effective.

All strategies must target culture since social norms operate behind the scenes to define power relations and access.

Structure refers to state and non-state mechanisms for implementing a law or policy. This would include, for example, the police, the courts, hospitals, credit unions, ministries, and agricultural and health care programs. Structure can refer to institutions and programs run by government, NGOs or businesses at the local, national and international levels.

Culture refers to the values and behavior that shape how people deal with and understand an issue. Values and behavior are influenced, among other things, by religion, custom, class, gender, ethnicity and age. Lack of information about laws and policies is part of the cultural dimension. Similarly, when people have internalised a sense of worthlessness or, conversely, entitlement, this shapes their attitudes about and degree of benefit from laws and policies.

Socio-Legal-Political System

Structure   **Content**

Culture
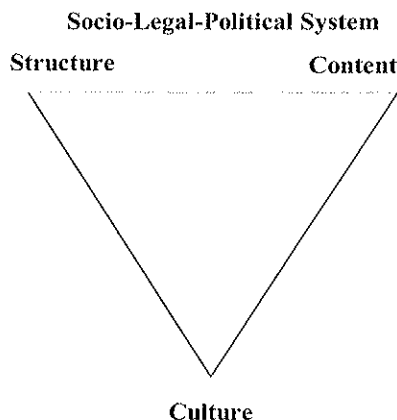
The questions below can help guide your analysis.

Guiding questions for analysis of content

* Is there a law or policy that contributes to the problem by protecting the interests of some people over others?
* Is there a law or policy that helps address the particular issue you have chosen?
* Is adequate government money budgeted to implement the solution described in the policy or law?

Guiding questions for analysis of structure

* Do the police enforce the law fairly?
* Do the courts enable men and women, rich and poor, to find a solution?
* Is the legal system expensive, corrupt or inaccessible?
* Are there support services where people can get help to access the system fairly?
* Do existing programmes and services work in a discriminatory way?
* Does a government or non-governmental agency exist to ensure the law is implemented?

Guiding questions for analysis of culture

* Are there any political or social values and beliefs that contribute to the problem?
* Do cultural beliefs contradict basic rights?
* Do women and men know their rights? Do they know how to access their rights?
* Do family and social pressures prevent people from seeking a fair solution?
* Do psychological issues play a role? Do people believe they are worthy of rights?

Example:

1. Analyzing the Problem: Domestic Violence		
Content	**Structure**	**Culture**
o This problem falls between the family and criminal codes because there are no explicit laws applying to abuse within the home when it is not between husband and wife. o A law against domestic violence exists but there are no emergency procedures such as interdicts to offer immediate protection to women in danger. o The law regards what happens in the "home" as a private matter.	o The law is adequate but judges and police see domestic disputes as a private matter and do not intervene. o Police and courts encourage couples to stay together even when a woman's life is clearly in danger. The family and children are seen as more important than the woman's rights. o There are no alternatives for women where they can get protection, for example safe houses, hotlines, etc. o Hospitals do not report cases of domestic violence.	o Women blame themselves for the abuse and feel ashamed. o The public sees "wife beating" as a problem of poor, uneducated people. Many people believe it is caused by alcohol abuse or poverty. They don't see that it also happens among upper classes. o Family violence is part of a cycle of violence where power is used to exert control rather than to seek peaceful resolutions. So, women beat children, children beat each other and animals, employers abuse employees, men beat women. o "Minor" abuse is considered normal or sign of love. o It is believed that men have the right to beat their wives to "keep them in line."

2. Mapping Strategies		
Content	**Structure**	**Culture**
- Reform criminal and family codes to make domestic violence a crime punishable by law. Ensure that the definition includes non-marital relationships. - Make domestic abuse a public crime but give women the right to decide what happens to the perpetrator. - Provide for emergency protection measures such as restraint orders, etc. - Allocate budget funds for legal aid, family dispute centers, safe houses, public education, hotlines.	- Train police and judges about the nature of domestic abuse. - Establish a women's wing at local police stations with trained personnel to deal with psychological aspects of the crime. - Set up safe houses, and hotlines for emergency protection. - Train hospital personnel to identify and handle cases of abuse.	- Media campaigns, theatre, demonstrating the impact on women, men, children and society. Make people see domestic violence as a public concern and a crime. (NOTE: If you denounce domestic violence publicly, make sure that there are support services for women to seek help.) - Have prominent men speak out against it publicly. Establish men's groups. - Run workshops to teach conflict resolution, confidence-building, etc. - Create community support groups and women's counselling initiatives.

As the second part of the above example shows, this tool can also be used to map out strategies or to evaluate whether the strategies being used respond to the analysis of the problem.

Activities to challenge Content might include research to determine the impact of existing laws on women (or to document women's situation and how they could benefit from different laws), drafting alternative policies, and lobbying for policy and/or legal change.

Activities to influence Structure might include training for police, judges, or other officials within the system to shift their attitudes on women's rights issues, providing legal representation to help people use the system, etc.

Activities to influence Culture might include media campaigns, legal education, constituency building, public fora, etc.

Defining Goals, Expanding Rights

The following framework[45] illustrates tasks needed to ensure that formal human rights are effective human rights in people's lives.

DEFINE   ENFORCE

RECOGNIZE
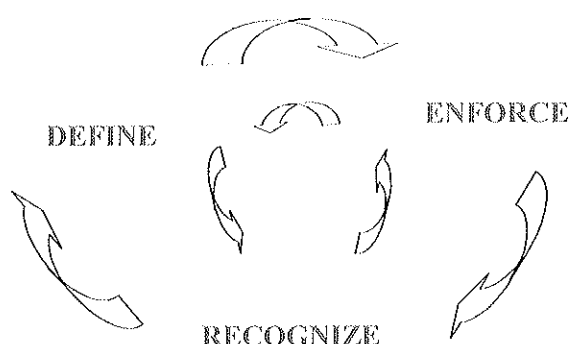
[45] See Schuler, Margaret, Women's Human Rights Step by Step: Strategy Workbook. Washington DC: Women, Law and Development International, 2004.

Define the nature of the right and what constitutes a violation; incorporate it as a right into law; document violations; show how rights are violated and prove culpability.

For example: In the late 1980s in Botswana, a Citizenship Act was passed that denied women the right to pass their Botswana nationality to their children and foreign husbands. A coalition of women's rights groups worked to amend the act and expand full citizenship rights to women. Ultimately, their strategy included a test case by an individual woman, to challenge the constitutionality of the Act. This test case was accompanied by lobbying of lawmakers and extensive public education. The test case was successful and a Citizenship Amendment Act was passed going even beyond the requirements of the court decision.[46]

Enforce the right, assuring its enjoyment by all, holding violators accountable, seeking justice for victims and making the system responsible.

For example: Through the efforts of women's rights activists, rape in war was defined as a war crime and crime against humanity. Activists in the Philippines tried to use this definition to uphold the rights of women survivors of rape and sexual slavery-sometimes called "comfort women" during World War II. They sought to hold the government of Japan responsible for the violations. Their specific demands included: an apology from the Prime Minister; recognition of the war crime; direct compensation from the Japanese government to the victims; and adding the issue of comfort women to the school curriculum.[47]

Recognize, or gain acceptance of the right in the law, as well as in people's values and behaviours.

For example: In 1997, the Kenyan government adopted a National Plan of Action to Eradicate Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). A small group of mothers, who themselves had endured FGM, came together because they were concerned about what the practice would mean for their daughters in terms of health, education, and future life prospects. They proposed the creation of alternative rites of passage for girls and tried to raise public awareness and support for these alternatives. Such programs are gradually gaining recognition of FGM as a violation of women's rights.[48]

[46] From Schuler, Margaret A. and Dorothy Q. Thomas (eds.) Women's Human Rights Step by Step: A Practical Guide to Using International Human Rights Law and Mechanisms to Defend Women's Human Rights. Washington, DC: Women, Law and Development International and Human Rights Watch, 1997.

[47] Ibid.

[48] From Spindel, Cheywa, Elisa Levy and Melissa Connor. With an End in Sight: Strategies from the UNIFEM Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women. New York: UNIFEM, 2000.
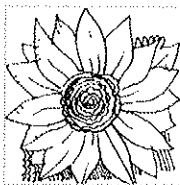
Activity 21: Consider an initiative that you're currently planning.

❖ What would the priority goals be in relation to the human rights system?

❖ Should the work focus on defining a right(s), enforcing a right(s) or gaining recognition of a right(s)?

▓ Power analysis[49]

This exercise will help programme planners think about how to respond to the different dimensions of power. It can also be used with partners, to name the different forces that influence the issues they are working on.

This exercise will help program planners think about how to respond to the different dimensions of power.

Before starting the exercise, be sure that people are familiar with the distinctions between visible, hidden and invisible power (discussed on p. 31). Give some examples to help clarify the distinctions.

The exercise is best done with small groups. Give each group flipchart paper and markers. Using the matrix below, ask them to respond to the questions below. You can also use the example on the next page to illustrate what is required.

❖ What are some examples of visible, hidden and invisible power that you have seen in your work? You may have examples of power that has worked against your efforts, as well as examples of positive power that has strengthened your work.

❖ What are potential strategies to either counter the negative impact of these uses of power, or to build on the positive power?

	Examples	Responses / Strategies
Visible		
Hidden		
Invisible		

[49] From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma City: World Neighbors, 2002.

	Examples	Strategies to influence this dimension of power
Visible: Making & Enforcing the Rules	Biased laws/policies (e.g. health care policies that do not address women's reproductive needs); Decision-making structures (parliaments, courts, etc.) are closed to people's voices and unrepresentative The principle of 'equality' exists in law, but parliaments and courts are not adequately representative of women and minorities.	- Lobbying & monitoring - Negotiation & litigation - Public education & media - Policy research, proposals - Shadow reports - Marches & demonstrations - Voting & running for office - Piloting innovations - Collaboration, etc.
Hidden: Setting the Agenda	Leaders of social movements and organisations are labelled trouble-makers or unrepresentative. Issues such as domestic violence, childcare, and others are relegated to the private realm of the family and therefore not considered worthy of public action. Crucial information is concealed or inaccessible. The media does not consider marginalised groups' issues to be mainstream or newsworthy.	- Building constituencies around common concerns - Strengthening organisations, coalitions, movements, and accountable leaders - Mobilising around shared agendas; demonstrating clout through direct action - Participatory research and dissemination of information that legitimizes the issues of excluded groups, etc.
Invisible: Shaping Meaning, Values & What's 'Normal'	Among marginal groups, socialisation creates feelings of subordination, apathy, self-blame, powerlessness, unworthiness, hostility, anger, etc. Poor farmers blame themselves for poverty, despite unequal access to global markets for fairly priced goods. Women blame themselves for domestic violence.	o Education for confidence, citizenship, collaboration, political awareness & analysis, using alternative media o Sharing stories, speaking out and connecting with others, affirming resistance, linking concrete problems to rights o Investigation, action research and dissemination of concealed information, etc.

Mapping power[50]

Power maps are used to identify institutions, groups, and individuals with influence who are interested in changes your program seeks. This information is needed to build alliances and support. It also helps in assessing risk.

In the mapping process you will look at:

♦ Who's at the table: formal decision-makers;·

♦ What's on the table: the issues, agendas and policies they are discussing;

♦ What and who are under the table: players and agendas that exert influence from behind the scenes.

1. Review the chart on the next page. Make sure that the categories match the context and revise as necessary.

   ♦ The first category of players in the chart refers to structures and individuals within the formal arena of public decision-making. This includes officials, legislators, the executive, and appointed personnel.

   ♦ The second category contains all other influential players in the private sector, civil society and among traditional and religious leaders. These categories should include both national and local players.

   ♦ The final category contains international actors.

2. In the first column, write the institutions that have a stake in the problem or issue you are working on. In the second column write the names of individuals who are leaders and decision-makers in those institutions in relation to your issue. If you did the *Naming the Powerful exercise* (p. 65), you can use those results to feed into this analysis. Remember to think about the different dimensions of power (from the previous exercise). An institution or individual may not officially have power in a particular area but they may have influence 'under the table'.

3. In the last column, note the viewpoint and visible/hidden interests of the identified player with respect to the issue. If the viewpoint of the institution and the individual are different, mark both. Note any differences between their public and private stances.

4. Next to the institution and name of the individual, categorize their level of support (supporter, uncommitted, opposed, don't know). Also rank the power of the player on a scale 1-4, with 1 being the most powerful and 4 the least powerful.

[50] From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma City: World Neighbors, 2002.

Questions for discussion may include:

♦ Who are your immediate allies? Who will you need to persuade to support you? Who are your strongest opponents?

⬧ Who is the key formal decision-maker on this issue? Who is the key decision-maker under the table? Which of the two is more powerful?

⬧ What do the positions of the various players tell you about how you must design your messages: to the public? to government? to legislators?

⬧ How does this analysis change your short-term goals and objectives?

⬧ Does it help you with the types of activities you will be doing in your strategy?

From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

Major Players	Institutions/ Structures	Key Individuals	Opinion-Interest/Rank
1. Government Decision makers and Actors			
National			
Provincial/State			
Local/District			
Other			
2. Other Influential Actors			
Business/Corporate			
Media			
Political Parties			
NGOs			
Community Groups			
Membership Groups			
Labor			
Religious Institutions			
Academics and Professionals			
Other			
3. International Actors			
Donors and Foundations			
NGOs and Support Groups			
UN Bodies			
World Bank and IMF			
Other Governments			
Banks			
Multinational Corporations			
Other			

▦ Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation involves some basic, even common sense, questions.

Numerous tools exist for monitoring and evaluation.

In this discussion, we focus on ways of ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation process is examining advances for gender equality and women's rights.

Ultimately monitoring and evaluation involves some basic, even common-sense, questions:

In general:

What impacts are ActionAid actions and programs having? What insights does this information provide for our thinking about how we will make rights real? In other words, were are our assumptions correct? What unintended impacts (both positive and negative) is our work having?

In relation to a specific program or campaign:

What has changed? Why? What remains to be changed? What was unexpected? We also want to look at equality and power relations between women and men including any shifts in:

- ◈ Who gets what?
- ◈ Who does what?
- ◈ Who decides?
- ◈ Who sets the agenda?[51]

M & E Considerations

- ◈ Remember, as with other steps in program development, there may be times when you want to do these analyses with women and men separately.

- ◈ Do the indicators you are using for monitoring and evaluation look at change in men and women separately?

- ◈ Who defines success? Be sure to engage the women and men you are working with in defining what they consider to be indicators of success.

- ◈ What resistance is your work encountering? Resistance may be preventing you from reaching your goals, but – especially on women's rights issues – backlash can be a sign that your work is challenging the way people think, and that's an important impact to note.

- ◈ Have you identified short-term, realistic aims that help you advance toward your long-term goal? Signs of small successes can be motivating and keep the momentum going for long-term change processes.

[51] Srilatha Batliwala, personal correspondence with Lisa VeneKlasen, October 2005.

Signs of Change[52]

Below we return to our framework for Gender Equality & Rights-Based Approaches and the four areas that it included. No program will take on all of these areas at once, but all need to consider the personal/family dimension and how it relates to the others. Also remember the triangle framework of content, structure and culture when looking for advances and setbacks.
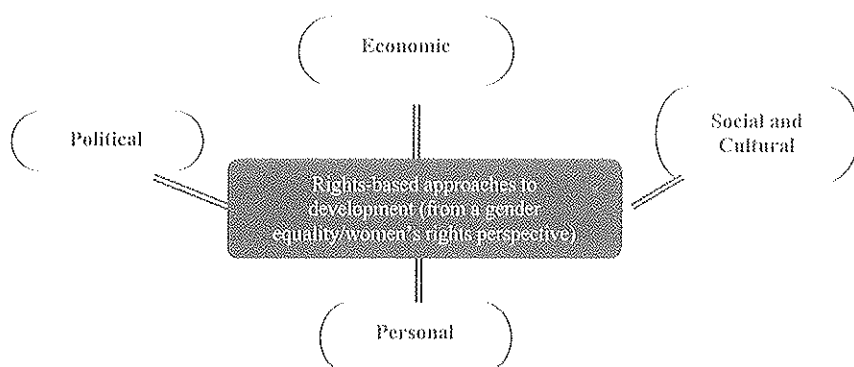
Specific monitoring and evaluation questions in terms of our framework could include the following:

Political/ Legal

What has changed in terms of women's:

- Voice and power in public decision-making
- Participation in or election to public office in local, national or other governance bodies
- Access to court systems
- Protection from state-sponsored violence
- Awareness of key political issues, contributions to political debates
- Awareness of their political/legal rights
- Access to quality legal information and services

What has changed in terms of the law/policy/institutions:

- To be more effective, inclusive and fair?
- To ensure adequate and fair allocation and use of resources?
- To ensure accountability and transparency?
- To ensure that the necessary systems and structures are in place to fulfil state/government duties to citizens – men and women?

Economic

What has changed in terms of women's:

- Control over their income
- Ownership of assets (land, capital, etc.)
- Employment conditions (safety, discrimination, harassment, etc.)
- Employment choices
- Access to the market

[52] This framework draws from several sources: "Advocacy Action and Impact Chart" (VeneKlasen with Miller, 2002), A Project Level Handbook: They Why and How of Gender-Sensitive Indicators (Canadian International Development Agency, 1997), "Proposed Global Research Protocol for CARE's Strategic Impact Inquiry on Women's F   werment" (CARE, 2ᵣ

* Access and understanding of relevant economic information
* Awareness of economic rights
* Access to producers' or other economic associations and leadership within those associations

What has changed in terms of the economy or major economic actors:

* Does business practice and behavior reflect respect for women's rights, including needs for maternity leave, childcare, etc.?
* Is training and/or monitoring in place to encourage respect for rights?
* Are accountability mechanisms in place?

Remember the triangle framework of content, structure and culture when looking for advances and setbacks.

Cultural/ Social

What has changed in terms of women's:

* Access to and completion of quality public education and other educational opportunities throughout life
* Active participation in and/or leadership of civil society organisations
* Presence in the media and prominent social organisations?
* Ability to move freely within and outside her home?
* Awareness of her social and cultural rights?

What has changed in terms of educational, religious, media, or other civil society and cultural organisations and leaders:

* Do school curricula reflect gender equality values and behaviours?
* Do traditional religious leaders uphold women's rights?
* Do the media portray women in a way that is respectful of their human dignity and rights?
* Do social and cultural institutions and leaders foster a culture that reflect values of cooperation, collaboration, trust, inclusion, reciprocity, and equity?
* Do dominant leadership and organisation styles promote inclusion and rights?

Personal / Family

What has changed in terms of women's:

* Control over their sexuality
* Control over reproductive choices and health
* Self-image and self-esteem (sense of self as a subject of rights)
* Educational attainment
* Decision-making in relation to household finances, child-rearing and other family and home matters
* Living conditions (access to housing, food, water, healthcare)
* Workload (considering both paid and unpaid tasks)
* Bodily integrity (freedom from physical and sexual violence in the home)
* Ability to pursue friendships
* Relationships with others, including other women, built on a foundation of respect for difference.

Claiming and Promoting Rights

Woman from Mali.

W e have looked at different tools for analysing problems, and beginning to build a strategy. This section focuses on choosing and implementing strategies for claiming and promoting rights.

▓ Connecting Analysis with Strategic Action

Women's rights will always be a struggle. It is precisely because of the long-term and broad nature of the struggle that we need to ask where the focus of the struggle should be at a given moment, in a particular context. This is where the need to be strategic comes in. For example:

◈ Consider a region in which agriculture is the principle source of livelihood, supplemented by home-based activities such as weaving and sewing, carried out mainly by women. Women's main production activities include growing vegetables, hoeing, weeding, harvesting, threshing, and small-animal husbandry (e.g. poultry, milking). Because of poverty, socio-economic inequality and lack of gender equity in the region, there is a bias in the local educational system towards the education of boys from wealthier households.

Remember the triangle framework of content, structure and culture when looking for advances and setbacks.

◈ All primary and secondary education is provided in village-based public schools, and teachers are mainly educated local people, with 75% of the teachers being men. The number of teachers is insufficient for the potential number of students. Although the law requires compulsory primary schooling from age 6 to 13 years, enforcement is poor.

◈ Enrolment rates show substantial differences across different socio-economic groupings and between girls and boys. Gender bias is found in the enrolment rate at the primary level: 50% for girls compared to 80% for boys. Bias towards wealthier socio-economic groups is also found in the enrolment rate at primary level. When socio-economic groups are classified from 1 to 5 on the basis of total income, group 1 (wealthiest) displays 90% enrolment rate and group 5, 15%.[53]

Possible strategies to increase girls' participation in school might include:

◈ providing incentives for parents to send girls to school,

◈ improving school equipment,

◈ training and hiring more women teachers,

◈ pressuring the government to enforce the compulsory nature of schooling,

◈ ensuring adequate budget allocations in line with fulfilling education rights, etc.

How would you choose one strategy over another?

What do we mean by strategy?

A strategy:

◈ Has clearly articulated goals and objectives that reflect a clear understanding of the context

◈ Has a series of planned activities designed to fulfil these goals in line with a vision and long-term agenda for change

[53] From Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). *Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators*, 1997.

◈   Is carried out over a period of time in a systematic way, reflecting the opportunities and constraints of the moment

◈   Is carried out by a group in a collaborative and organised way.[54]

A good strategy should use the relevant organisation's strengths and take advantage of external opportunities. It should also be:[55]

Appropriate:

Will the strategy further the group's vision and mission?
Will it make good use of the organisation's strengths?
Will it fit the community conditions where the group operates?
Will the group's constituency be able to participate?
Will it exacerbate or reduce social tensions within the community?

Adequate

Will the strategy be sufficient to address the problem?
Does the problem justify the effort and resources that will be expended?

Effective

Will the strategy achieve the stated objective?
Will the strategy further the group's mission and address the problem in a reasonable timeframe?

Efficient

Will the strategy make optimum use of the organisation's material and human resources?
What are the strategy's costs in terms of people's time, energy, and materials in relation to benefits?

Sensitive to side effects

Will the strategy increase demand for basic services or resources?
If so, is there capacity to meet that demand?
Will the strategy generate resistance due to traditions, religion, etc?
How can this resistance be minimised?
How will those in power respond to shifts in social relationships, demands for change, etc?
What will happen if violence breaks out?
Will the negative consequences be counterbalanced by the positive benefits?

A good strategy should use the relevant organization's strengths and take advantage of external opportunities.

▨ Framework for Gender Equality and Rights-based Approaches: Elements of a Strategy

The Framework for Gender Equality and Rights-based Approaches introduced on page 72 can also be helpful for making strategy choices. Revisit the problem analysis that you did using the framework on page 80. What kinds of strategies could be used to address the problems identified in each area?

Following is an example from ActionAid's work in Conflict and Emergency situations. Think of examples from your own work and construct a table.

[54] Adapted from Schuler, Margaret. "*Conceptualizing and Exploring Issues and Strategies*" in *Empowerment and the Law: Strategies of Third World Women.* Washington DC: OEF International, 1986.

[55] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

Gender-related concerns in Emergencies

Key issues	Concerns	Responses
Protection from violence & abuse	• Increased vulnerability to violence, prostitution, sexual coercion • Lack of safety in camps & communities • Rape as a weapon of war • Domestic violence	• Safety standards in camps & communities (e.g. light in latrines) • Consultation with both women & men • Human rights advocacy
Representation & participation	• Women's needs & opinions not taken into account • Lack of access to decision-making mechanisms • Lack of skills & confidence • Social & cultural constraints	• Consultation & active engagement of both women and men in discussions & meetings • Opportunities to learn new skills • Advocacy
Women's domestic and reproductive roles	• Loss of home, domestic utensils... • Lack of access to, & control over, basic resources (food, water, fuel) • Lack of information about entitlements (e.g. compensation packages) • Overburdened daily routine	• Relief distribution through women • Balanced allocation of responsibilities for distribution & management of relief • Provision of relevant information
Women's productive role & economic rights	• Increased number of household members dependent on women's labour • Lack of access to employment opportunities • Pressure on women's time • Labour migration (often male). Increased burden on women	• Social or economic support • Access to information & registration processes • Consultation • Advocacy
Humanitarian principles & women's rights	• Humanitarian imperative vs promotion & protection of women's rights	• Education, awareness, dissemination of information on rights & humanitarian standards • Witnessing & influencing
Public & private space	• Loss of public & private space • Overcrowding • Privacy & safety of women & girls • Breakdown of social networks	• Minimum standards for disaster response • Support of social & family networks

Choosing and developing rights strategies

Below, we briefly discuss some strategies that are common elements of rights-based responses to problems.

◈   Research and information gathering

◈   Political consciousness, rights education and awareness-raising

◈   Public education and media

◈   Building alliances and coalitions

◈   Developing new leadership

◈   Organisational learning and change

◈   Policy engagement

Any time you choose a particular course of action, be sure to consider the following questions:

◈ Why would you do this activity now?

◈ What would you expect to be the impact/result?

◈ How will you know that you are succeeding?

◈ When will you need to shift to a different strategy to continue moving forward?

Research and Information-Gathering

Research provides the necessary information for planning, message development, and negotiating with decision-makers. When it's gathered in a participatory way, research can also strengthen alliances, build constituencies, and help develop citizenship skills. The following box gives an example of the role played by information and participatory research in the Right to Know movement.

The "Right to Know" Movement in India[56]

The Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) has, in a little over a decade, developed into one of India's most powerful social justice movements – recognised internationally for its *Right to Information Campaign*. While working on a campaign to secure minimum wages for its constituents, MKSS realised that official secrecy was preventing their accessing the project records needed to establish the legitimacy of the claims made by the workers. The right to information thus became the call of thousands of workers in Rajasthan. In 2000, their efforts were rewarded when the Rajasthan State Legislature passed the Right to Information Act that provided all citizens with access to public records. *Social audits* have been a central strategy of MKSS's work. Such an audit involves collective scrutiny by communities of public funds, often through a public hearing. There are five stages in the process.

Stage 1: Gathering Information – India has a tradition of record keeping that provides a detailed paper trail for all public financial transactions. Every bit of money expended in public projects is recorded, accompanied by signatures approving the transactions. In the first years of the right to information campaign, the MKSS depended upon sympathetic officials to provide them with this information. Later, after the right to information law was in place, the MKSS used the provisions of the law to request documents.

Stage 2: Collating Information – Having obtained official records, the next challenge is deciphering the details they contain. MKSS members familiarised themselves with the jargon, assisted by volunteers experienced with official documentation processes. This knowledge was then passed on to members of the MKSS – sometimes semi-literate – who would stride into government offices and demand copies

[56] Adapted from Ramkumar, Vivek, "Case Study: The Right to Know Movement in India" Part II, Just Associates, 2004.

of project documents using terms like UC, MB, ledgers, etc. MKSS members then passed on their knowledge about what the scribbles in official records meant to village residents.

Stage 3: Distributing Information – Copies of project documents are distributed house to house in villages where public hearings are to be held. Residents who have worked on project sites check the information to see if it matches what they know about the project. This process generates enormous excitement as residents identify names of dead or fictitious people in the rolls. This verification process also helps to identify workers who have received smaller sums than those shown. The information distribution process can take from one week to a few months and helps MKSS members build momentum within communities leading up to the day of the public hearing.

Stage 4: The public hearing – A formal panel, consisting of eminent citizens of the region, chairs the hearing. Community members are given an opportunity to voice their opinions on the efficacy of selected projects. Workers on projects and residents identify false information contained in public records. Elected representatives and government officials responsible for the projects are then invited to respond to the comments. Village residents are quick to point out lies in their statements. In some public hearings, even family members of corrupt officials have testified against them. In some instances, public officials have admitted their wrongdoings.

Stage 5: Follow-up to the public hearing – The MKSS uses the information and publicity obtained through the public hearings to engage the state government in discussions on reforms to planning and implementation processes.

Confidence is Critical

We have emphasised how the socialisation of women and girls leads to an internalisation of feelings of worthlessness and powerlessness. For that reason, it is not enough to provide them with information about their rights. They must also come to believe that they deserve to be subjects of rights and have the confidence to claim their rights.

ActionAid-Ethiopia developed a program focused on enhancing girls' self-confidence as an early step in reducing school drop-out rates among girls. The program began by establishing girls clubs – with about 120 girls from 6 different schools. The clubs met every fortnight to discuss different issues. Capacity building was also incorporated into the meetings on issues like reproductive health and gender issues in schools. These processes were designed to enhance girls' self confidence and assertiveness. Over time, teachers reported that they noted an increase in these girls' participation in classes.[57]

[57] This example was drawn from a presentation by Martha Gebre of AAI-Ethiopia.

The importance and limitations of research-driven strategies
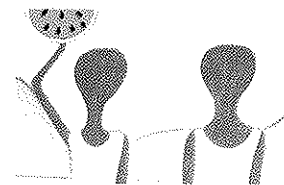
Historically, human rights advocacy often focused on documenting and denouncing violations. Operating within the constraints of repressive dictatorships, external researchers would go to a country and do the necessary fact-finding in order to develop a strong argument to persuade the international community to put pressure on a government. While many risky political contexts continue to exist, many other countries have experienced dramatic political changes that significantly shift the terrain for human rights work. Human rights activists and organisations now flourish in many countries. This changes the role of the outside advocate and international organisation to one of support, rather than the driving force.

Research continues to be important but an exclusively expert-driven approach needs to be modified so that the human rights effort helps to build a culture of human rights. Approaches to information-gathering and sharing need to expand to include public education and mobilisation, mass media strategies and engagement with the institutions meant to enforce rights, such as police, judges, legislators, etc.

We often assume that solid arguments based on extensive research and 'facts' will automatically convince decision-makers or other people. However, there may be many conflicting power dynamics at work and information is not necessarily the most powerful. For that reason, it is important to think about how to build power behind your demands. Solid information is important, but what else do you need (an influential ally, large numbers of supporters, etc.) to persuade people and decision-makers to listen?

Political Consciousness, Rights Education and Awareness-Raising

Political consciousness helps people recognise, understand, and act to address the injustice in their lives. Developing such consciousness involves at least five elements:

1. Knowledge about how the political and economic systems function
2. A sense of history and current events
3. A lens for analysing why and how imbalances of power operate
4. Concern about how these things destroy human potential and dignity
5. A sense of rights, responsibilities and solidarity with excluded groups[58]

[58] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

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Many of the tools and exercises discussed in the section on planning can help to build critical consciousness, by engaging people in questioning, seeking out information, and analysing their situation. "Problem-posing codes", discussed on page 54 can also contribute to political consciousness. Activities that give people a chance to do and discover things for themselves are important. External facilitators play a role in introducing new information – especially on a topic such as rights. However, the following box discusses the limitation of programs that only tell people about rights, without engaging them in a reflection and action.

Rights and Citizen Education Programmes: Lessons Learned[59]

Many rights and civic education programmes exist worldwide but they have mixed impact. The low success rate of some programmes is often a result of an emphasis on information alone. Such programmes typically provide pamphlets, flyers, and brief talks that simplify legal information or describe how the political process works. However, it is not only lack of information that keeps women, poor people, and other marginalised groups from exercising their rights.

Some of the reasons that information-centered education programmes fail are:

❖ There is no clear link between the information about laws, rights, and government procedures and the concrete problems people face daily.

❖ Delivery of information that treats citizens as passive recipients can reinforce the perception that the law, rights, and government are too complicated and not intended for people like them.

❖ In places with low literacy levels, written materials reach very few people.

Making expert information simple is not enough. The knowledge must also be relevant to people's needs so it can help them solve problems and improve their lives. Making rights and citizenship real means starting with everyday problems.

Tips for developing effective rights education programmes include:

❖ Know your audience. Assess their needs, knowledge, and interests before designing materials and workshops. Gain their "buy-in" by negotiating goals and activities.

❖ Be problem-centered, not information-centered. For example, instead of starting by explaining laws and rights, begin by having people analyse common problems. Then introduce discussion of the laws and rights linked to those problems. Instead of producing a pamphlet on "Family Law", focus the pamphlet on "Family Problems" or "Who's Responsible for Taking Care of Children" (maintenance and custody) and describe common situations people face.

[59] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

❖ Let learners define the problem in their own terms. In a local government support project in India, PRIA (Society for Participatory Research in Asia) conducted an educational campaign with citizens and local government officials in *panchayats* (local government bodies). The curriculum centered on three questions: "What is democratic governance?", "What are our roles in the *panchayat*?", and "How can these roles be performed well?" These questions enabled officials and citizens to define how they can work together to achieve their aims and the information they need to be able to do this.

❖ Link new information to problem-solving. Discussions can begin with analysis of problems, and continue with the introduction of new information that might help in exploring possible solutions.

❖ Include action planning as a final step of the education. "How can we use this information to address this problem and exercise our basic rights?".

❖ Distribute written materials at discussions, street theater, or other media programmes to give people something to help them remember what they have seen and discussed.

▒ Public Education and Media

Education and media strategies build public support and can influence decision-makers. They include things like getting articles published in newspapers or popular publications, radio interviews, "soap operas" or stories, or using alternative media such as music, theater or poetry. Community meetings can also be an opportunity to share information and educate the public.

When planning a public education and media strategy, it is important to clarify:

❖ Who is the audience that you want to reach? (Just women? women and men? A particular age group? What language do they speak? etc.)

❖ The message you want to convey. See the box on tips for message development. If possible, pretest your message to see if your audience understands it in the way you intend.

❖ How you can best get your message to your target audience? (Where do they usually get their information? Do you have access to those channels of information? Alternatively, where are common gathering points where you can speak with people?)

[60] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.* Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

Principles of Message Development[60]

1. Know your audience. 2. Know your political environment (controversies, big issues, fears). 3. Keep your message simple and brief. 4. Use real life stories and quotes. 5. Use precise, powerful language and active verbs. 6. Use clear facts and numbers creatively. 7. Adapt the message to the medium. 8. Allow your audience to reach their own conclusions. 9. Encourage audiences to take action. 10. Present a possible solution.
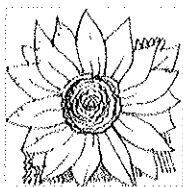
Activity 22[61]: Start by brainstorming ways to organise women in your community using traditional means of expression such as songs, dance, drama, puppet shows, comedy routines. For each technique, reflect on how you could use it to:

◈ reach women in the community?

◈ educate women about their rights?

◈ mobilise women to act on an issue?

Throughout southern Asia, UNICEF has initiated a multimedia campaign project featuring stories about a little girl named Meena. There are videos, comic books, and posters of Meena's adventures, each of which illustrates an important right for girls. This project works to change negative images of girls and advocates for their equality. Meena teaches girls and boys as well as men and women about positive roles for girls.

Imagine bringing a campaign like UNICEF's Meena to your community. Consider:

◈ What would Meena be doing in your community?

◈ If you could convey one message through Meena, what would it be?

◈ Who would be the first target audience?

◈ How would the audience best be reached?

When doing public education and media work around women's rights, it is important to remember the sensitivity of many of these issues and to gauge the likeliness for backlash. The text boxes below share two examples from activists who discovered the challenges of openly addressing sensitive women's rights concerns in the media.
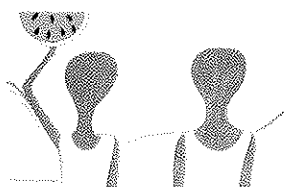
UGANDA: Who talks about vaginas?

In 2004, a group of women's rights activists in Uganda decided to produce a performance of the *Vagina Monologues*. It was to be a part of the 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign and would draw from the success of the *Monologues* in other African countries like Kenya, Zambia and Congo. The Ugandan government had generally been supportive of women's rights campaigns in the past and the organizers felt that Ugandans would be open to the production. At the same time, the play would raise money for groups based in Northern Uganda working with women in the conflict situation there and the activists expected that such a good cause would be widely supported. However, when the group announced that they were planning a performance of *Vagina Monologues*, the media went into a frenzy. Soon, public officials and even the First Lady began to oppose the play. The bold mention of "vagina" ran contrary to the government's

countrywide abstinence campaign. There were many letters to the editor and radio shows indicating outrage. Religious leaders came out against the effort. Donors grew concerned about whether they should continue to financially support the production. In Parliament, there was a sense that "the play should be stopped because it would erode the moral fabric of the Ugandan society". Ultimately the national Media Council banned the play. The activists have since reflected on their experience. Despite the problems, they feel that having such a broad public debate on an issue that is so often kept in private was still an important achievement.[62]

NIGERIA: Safe Motherhood = Abortion Rights

In 1992 a group of activists in Nigeria developed a proposal to reform the law relating to abortion. With the country under military rule, the new law could have been put into effect with the approval of the Minister of Health and the President. However when abortion opponents learned of the draft law, they publicised it. The resulting media furore put an end to the possibility for abortion law reform. The same group has, however, continued to work behind the scenes over the last decade to build awareness and public support for abortion reform. Many of them are medical professionals and they have done research on the injury and death inflicted on Nigerian women who are forced to seek unsafe abortions or who carry unsafe pregnancies to term. Using the concept of "safe motherhood", the group has been educating medical students about the problem. It ultimately succeeded in getting approval of the "Nigerian Medical School Curriculum on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights", which includes modules on family planning and the need for safe abortion. They have also begun to build an alliance with other civil society organisations and politicians to draft a new abortion bill to introduce in the National Assembly.[63]

▧ Building Alliances and Coalitions

Collaborating with other organisations is an inherent part of ActionAid's practice. It is also critical for advancing women's rights. As ActionAid increases the scope of its women's rights activities, it should build upon the track record of leaders and women's groups, rather than unintentionally displacing them because of ActionAid's sheer size and fundraising capacity. ActionAid's women's rights efforts will, in turn, add clout and scale to the women's rights agenda. Its efforts will be welcomed by women's groups and movements as long as the organisation takes care to publicly acknowledge and find ways to support the activities of women's rights advocates.

[62] Adapted from Nakaweesi-Kimbugwe, Solome, "V...Monologues in Uganda", 2005, pending publication in AAI women's rights organizing case stories collection.

[63] Oye-Adeniran, Boniface, Carolyn Long, Isaac Adewole. "Advocacy for Reform of the Abortion Law in Nigeria" in Reproductive Health Matters 2004; 12:209-217.

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Working with Partner Organisations

ActionAid's partner organisations may have very different ways of thinking about the role of rights, and particularly women's rights, in development. How can ActionAid follow through on its own commitment to women's rights without "forcing it" on other organisations?

The answer is to start with the problem – what is the focus of the partner's work? What is their analysis? Raise questions that can help them think about other angles to the problem. Rights, gender and power analysis can help people deepen their understanding of the root causes and potential solutions of just about any problem they are working on, even if you don't use those exact terms to begin with. Don't start with a lecture on CEDAW. Instead ask how women, men, boys and girls are affected differently by the problems they face, or apply some of the tools in this kit with partners. Invite partners to participate in staff meetings or trainings that relate to a particular women's rights issue or program. Put them in contact with local women's rights activists and organisations that are concerned about similar issues.

Broadening Alliances

[64] From "*Operationalizing Rights Approach to Development*", ActionAid Asia Regional Workshop, July 31 - August 4, 2000, Bangkok

At times, ActionAid will seek to work in coalition with other organisations. These will include partners but probably also other organisations. The table below lists a range of different institutions that ActionAid might collaborate with in its rights-based work:

Range of institutions that we will have relations with [64]						
Inter-government	National Government	Miscellaneous power holders	CSOs, NGOs		The 'public'	Village level
Development: UN ...and many more regional bodies e.g. African Union, ECOWAS, SADC, SARC etc	Parliament Executive Legislature Judiciary Government committees Government departments Parastatals Local government Regulatory bodies	Landlords Local business and entrepreneurs Business and private sector Multinationals Political parties Political leaders Police Army Trade Unions	International & National NGOs Frontline partners Women's groups Capacity builders Advocacy groups Activists Networks Religious Institutions Consumer groups Youth groups Cooperatives Trade and professional associations Rotary groups Mass movements	Media/ journalists Lawyers Academia/ policy Minority groups Indigenous groups Farmers groups Stateless people and refugee groups Teachers groups Student activists Oppressed groups: Rural/ Urban Children's groups	Voters Individual leaders and activists Consumers	Village political institutions Village welfare institutions Village religious institutions Village activist institutions

The table suggests expanding relationships with many different kinds of powerful actors in a society. It also highlights the importance of linking with groups working at different levels – local, national, regional and international.

These linkages are important for sharing information and experience, and because many local problems are shaped by international decision-making.

However, there must be very careful scrutiny of what "working with" some of these institutions really means? For example, you may end up getting co-opted to support a dictatorship! Or, ActionAid's name may end up being used to legitimise a very bad policy or project.

Be strategic. Define the terms of "engagement". Know when to disengage.

The example below reflects one experience of ActionAid-Brazil in working together with a range of different allies and organizations.

Working Together for Food Security[65]
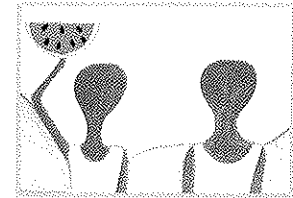
In 2000, in the small Brazilian community of São João de Meriti in Rio de Janeiro, 40% of children under 14 years of age lived in families with incomes of less than half minimum wage. As a result they suffered from severe health problems, including malnutrition, with a high rate of infant mortality. Many children were forced to leave school to work. For fifty years, the local political class held tight control of power, and poor people saw little opportunity for changing the power dynamics.

With ActionAid support, several community organisations came together to tackle the problem of food security, specifically for women and children. Their initiative came to be known as Mutirão, meaning "joint effort group". Faith-based groups, neighborhood and cultural associations and social movements came together in Mutirão.

The process started with organising – getting groups discussing the problem and potential strategies. Through this a core group was established with responsibility for carrying the effort forward. Next they focused on reaching out to community-based organisations, building on existing relationships. Through this process, more than 400 volunteers were recruited to form "joint effort groups".

The volunteers received training to deepen their understanding of the problem of malnutrition, including its clinical and political dimensions. Then they did research to gather evidence of the problem. They weighed 5,930 children to diagnose levels of malnutrition and publicised the results – close to 20% of children were on the verge of malnutrition, and almost 7% suffered from acute malnutrition.

With a firm sense of the extent of the problem, members of the coordinating organisations felt ready to develop a public policy proposal, a plan to combat Mother-Infant Malnutrition. The plan was

[65] Adapted from Antunes, Marta and Jorge Romano, "*Combating Infant Malnutrition – An Experience of Networking in the Social Struggle for the Human Rights to Food and Sustainable Nutrition*" in Reinventing Development? Translating Rights-based Approaches from Theory into Practice, Paul Gready and Jonathan Ensor (eds). Zed Books, 2005.

presented to public officials and to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food when he was in Brazil.

Important achievements were gained. Locally, the Mutirão got a commitment from the municipality to send a doctor to each community task-force to weigh and monitor children. Those diagnosed as vulnerable would then be eligible to participate in federal or state assistance programs. The Municipality also agreed to hold a Municipal Conference on Food Security. At the state level, initially a program was adopted to fight child malnutrition. This later received a set-back when the state leadership shifted. However many of the organisations that make up Mutirão continue to pressure for better policies to address malnutrition in their community and county.

For reflection:

Nearly 95% of the volunteers were women.

How should this fact have influenced the approach?

What could be a follow-on strategy to ensure the right to food for community members of São João de Meriti?

▨ Developing New Leadership

Building grassroots leadership takes a long time. It does not happen through a few workshops. ActionAid and its partners might, however, identify potential leaders through workshops or projects.

Leadership potential might be seen in a range of different characteristics such as anger at injustice, optimism, confidence, honesty, and the ability to work with others.

Poor women face particular obstacles in becoming leaders. These include their domestic responsibilities as well as social norms about who can be a leader. As a result, leadership development for women will usually need specially thought-out approaches and extra effort.

Transformational Leadership[66]

The notion of "transformational leadership" proposes that leadership is a combination of personality traits, behaviors, and contextual factors.

Personality traits considered important include:

* Self-confidence (confidence to act)
* Sense of power and control over one's life
* Vision (of change)
* Sensitivity to the environment and organisational context
* Ability to understand complex cause-effect relations and to develop plans

Behaviors that characterise transformational leaders include:

[66] Adapted from Sashkin, Marshall and Molly G. Sashkin. Leadership That Matters: The Critical Factors for Making a Difference in People's Lives and Organizations' Success. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2003.

❖ Effective communication (including being a good listener)

❖ Trust (instilling trust in others and trusting others)

❖ Respect for others, caring

❖ Creating opportunities for others

Feminists add the following:

> "Transformative leaders mobilize people in ways that encourage collaboration, respect, shared values and action. Transformative leaders know both how power and conflict work and how their own needs, aspirations and identities interact with those of others.
>
> They are active learners and listeners and create the space for others to learn, make decisions, and act. They accept certain responsibilities that come with being a leader, but recognise that success depends on engaging others as informed decision-makers."[67]

Leadership development can involve a range of activities, from workshops, courses, and in-service training programs to apprenticeships and accompaniment.

To be effective leaders, people need knowledge of laws, political systems, and human rights; and process skills such as facilitation, communication, team building, and organisational development. They also need to be able to plan, analyse and persuade.

Many of these skills can be learnt best in the process of ongoing struggles.[68]

Dalocha Integrated Rural Development Programme[69]

When the water scheme was started, the husbands of the members were not happy that it was going to be managed by women. But the decision had been made based on community meetings. Once the women had proved their ability, the husbands' attitudes began to change. They now allow their wives to participate in the group activities without suspicion or chastisement. They also allow their wives to attend literacy classes.

But, women are still considered inferior. Female genital mutilation is still universally practiced. Polygyny places a heavy burden on women to bear many children. Forced marriages between young girls and old men is still common.

For reflection:

Women have assumed a new leadership role as managers of the water project. How can their leadership within their communities be further expanded? What kind of follow-up strategy would you propose to build on the success of the water project and challenge the persistent discrimination against women?

[67] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

[68] Ibid.

[69] From AA Africa, Gender Mainstreaming Experiences in East Africa, May 2002.

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▓ Organisational Learning and Change

Gender equality 'out there' in the world cannot happen if it is not prioritised inside the organisation as well. For ActionAid consistency between discourse and practice on women's rights requires addressing these issues both inside the organisation and working to help partner organisations to do so. *Rights to End Poverty* sets out what we want to achieve with and for women inside and outside. It is important to operationalise these aspirations at every CP, unit and level.

Theory on organisational learning identifies four organisational functions[70].

Below we briefly describe these functions and how they relate to ActionAid's ability to "walk the talk" of gender equality.

Environmental interface:

Ability to deal with external forces, obtain needed information from the environment, and filter out unnecessary information. This can be done through interactions with other individuals (like consultants or constituents) and organisations, participation in conferences, active scanning or research, experimentation, etc.

❖ Does your unit or CP regularly interact with women's rights groups?

❖ Does it participate in major events (local or international) relating to women's rights/gender equality?

❖ Is someone in the unit or CP responsible for following key women's rights issues and/or events and sharing this information with others?

Action/Reflection

Ability to define and pursue appropriate goals. Goal-setting is based on existing knowledge, learning from past experience and reflection on the basic assumptions underlying the organisation's work.

❖ Are women's rights a stated part of the organisation's goals?

❖ Are goals regularly refined based on evaluations and learning?

❖ Are the goals known to all members of your unit or country team?

❖ Are there incentives in place for taking action on women's rights? Is there accountability in place to take action when someone ignores the women's rights mandate?

Dissemination and diffusion

The systems to disseminate information and ensure that the organisation can effectively work toward its goals.

❖ Where are women situated in the organisation? Are they in positions of leadership? Is their voice heard? Are there effective procedures in place for when there is a complaint of discrimination?

[70] Schwandt, David R. and Michael J. Marquardt. Organizational Learning: From World-Class Theories to Global Best Practices. Washington DC: St. Lucie Press, 2000.

◈ Is there an investment in building women's rights capacity within the organisation?

◈ Are individuals who raise women's rights concerns within the organisation taken seriously? Are they isolated?

◈ Are lines of communication adequate? Are staff overwhelmed by the information they receive?

Memory and meaning

The "sense-making" function of the organisation. It is sometimes referred to as "organisational culture", the shared values and beliefs (explicit or implicit) that guide people's action within the organisation.

◈ What are the dominant "unspoken" values (as communicated through people's language and behaviors)? Do they reflect the organisation's "spoken" commitment to gender equality?

◈ What message does the organisational environment convey? For example jokes and posters or working hours and travel schedules – are these in line with a commitment to women's rights?

◈ What is the reaction to people who raise concerns inside the organisation? Are questioning and dissent encouraged or discouraged?

▩ Policy Engagement

The words "rights-based approaches" often brings to mind human rights conventions and lobbying to get national governments to sign on to (or implement) those conventions.

A policy engagement strategy could encompass many different activities, including:

Lobbying
Involves attempts to meet face-to-face with decision-makers to persuade them to support a proposal.

Litigation
A well-publicised court case can draw public attention to a problem, and sometimes leads to legal reform or fairer enforcement. Some countries have a legal mechanism called 'class action'. Where this exists, groups of people affected by abuses of power can use a court case to fight for justice collectively.

Collaborating with Decision-makers
When there is agreement between you and decision-makers, NGOs, grassroots groups, and government, civil society groups might collaborate directly with government to design and/or implement legislation or state services. Similarly, joint citizen-government monitoring initiatives are becoming increasingly common.[71]

[71] VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002.

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Effective Lobbying

Four key steps can help lobbying advance to serious negotiation. They are:

1. Familiarise yourself with the system, procedures, timelines, and key leaders and players;

2. Classify the players on the basis of where they stand on your issue and how much influence they have either as key decision-makers themselves, or in persuading others (such as civil servants);

3. Inform and build relationships through visits and briefings to help them understand your issues and to gain their trust in you as both a reliable source of analysis and a representative of people's voices;

4. Get attention and show your power by timing your media, outreach, and mobilisation activities in such a way that decision-makers are aware of the support behind your proposals.

From VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller. A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation. Oklahoma: World Neighbors, 2002

■ Questions about Policy Engagement

"Policy engagement does not always impact decision-making. It is easy to believe that access to policymakers will translate into influence, but in practice this is rarely true.

"Policymakers sometimes construct these policy spaces to educate citizens about the choices they have made or to appear consultative, thus diffusing public criticism. For this reason, many activists worry about being "co-opted" by policy engagement.

"Some NGOs that work closely with governments are criticised for losing their independence and connection with people when working with government consumes all of their energy and time. So a plan to engage should include the option to disengage if the political costs outweigh the benefits."[72]

In deciding when to engage and when to disengage, the following questions could be useful:

◆ Who initiated the opportunity to engage? Often a group will have more power when it has taken the initiative. Where government has taken the initiative, the motivation will not always be clear. Where, however, government creates the opportunity because of your advocacy, you might be in a particularly strong position.

◆ What are the costs to you of engaging? How much time, energy and money will it require? What other things might be neglected because of your engagement? Are the potential benefits greater than the costs?

[72] From VeneKlasen with Miller (2002). See also Brock, Karen, Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa, Power, Knowledge and Political Spaces in the Framing of Poverty Policy, IDS (draft), September 2001, and the workshop report from Making Change Happen: Advocacy and Citizen Participation, available at www.justassociates.org.

❖ What are the potential and likely achievements? Are you likely to achieve a change in policy and/or implementation? Can you use engagement to raise awareness? Will your constituency and allies learn useful skills through the process?

Gender Budgets[73]

Gender budget initiatives "break down the government's budget in order to see how it responds to the differentiated needs of and impacts on women, men, girls and boys as well as on other axes of social differentiation (such as race, ethnicity, class, and caste). Their main purpose is to examine whether public expenditures are allocated in an equitable way, and hence promote gender equality. Following this line, gender-sensitive budgets are neither separate budgets produced for women, nor limited to achieving an increase in allocations specifically targeting women."[74]
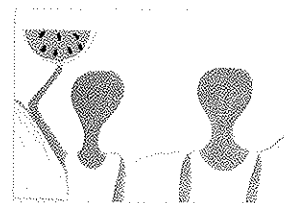
Budgets are important because without them, government cannot implement policies successfully. There may be wonderful commitments on paper, but they are meaningless without the necessary funding. The budget is actually a law, and thus is a commitment that the government can be held accountable to. A gender-sensitive budget analysis generally focuses on the impact of the budget. However, the ultimate aim is to have gender considered during the budget's formulation.

Reasons for a gender budget analysis:

❖ To promote equity, efficiency and effectiveness in government policy and implementation (For example, it might cost more to deliver services to rural areas but it is something the government must do);

❖ To promote accountability and transparency in government

❖ To ensure that governments fulfill and protect key human rights, such as the right to health, housing and education, by determining the budget resources that must be committed.

Doing a gender analysis of a budget generally involves the following steps:

❖ **Situation analysis:** Describe the situation of women and men, girls and boys and different subgroups in the sector.

❖ **Activities:** Look at government policy, programs and human rights commitments and ask if they are designed to make the gaps in well-being bigger or smaller. Do the policies address human needs? Are they adequate to address those needs?

❖ **Inputs:** Determine if an adequate sized budget is allocated to implement a gender sensitive policy or fulfill a human right to which government has committed.

❖ **Outputs:** At the end of the fiscal year, check how the monies budgeted functioned: did the expenditure match what the

[73] Adapted from presentation by Debbie Budlender, "Fair and Responsive Budgeting: Tools and lessons from gender and pro-poor budgeting", January 14, 2003.

[74] See Hofbauer Balmori, Helena with Debbie Budlender. "Gender & Budgets: Overview Report" BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack. Institute of Development Studies, 2003.

allocation was? who was reached? did women or men ultimately attend the classes? were textbooks and other materials made available?

* **Impacts:** Did the use of budget funds change the situations described in the situation analysis? If not, perhaps the policy was ill-conceived.

Following are examples of different gender budget initiatives.

The impact of social spending cut-backs on the time use of women in Ecuador

A1992 study found that the cut-backs in social spending resulting from structural adjustment meant that women spent more time shopping for cheaper items and had to buy in smaller quantities. Food preparation also took longer because they could afford less processed food. Because women had to spend more time earning income, young women and girls had to do more of the reproductive work in the home, leaving less time for school work.

(Esim 2000). [Cutting Edge Pack, p. 27]

User fees and female education: Bangladesh and Uganda

Bangladesh: A survey showed that four of the five most important constraints to female secondary education were related to costs.

(Esim 2000).

Uganda: Girls' enrolment increased substantially when a universal free primary education policy was introduced that stated that girls within each family should benefit equally with boys.

(Baguma and Muhanguzi 2000). [p. 31 of the Cutting Edge Pack on Gender & Budgets]

The role of women Parliamentarians in the South African Women's Budget Project

The South African Women's Budget Initiative was established in 1995 soon after the first democratic post-apartheid elections. The initiative was a collaborative effort between the Gender and Economic Policy Group of the Parliamentary Committee on Finance, and two policy-oriented research NGOs.

The initiative was considered non-governmental because parliamentarians were seen as representing civil society. The organisers hoped that by linking researchers and the parliament their work would be taken forward effectively in advocacy.

Pregs Govender, one of the leading parliamentarians, said: "Networks and alliances between gender-sensitive women as well as some men in cabinet, in Parliament, in departments and in civil society at national, provincial and local levels have been forged in the course of this exercise and these will be the key to taking it forward."[75]

[75] See Hofbauer Balmori, Helena with Debbie Budlender. "Gender & Budgets: Overview Report" BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack. Institute of Development Studies, 2003.

(Budlender 2002: 137-8; Budlender 1996:3). [p. 41 of the Cutting Edge Pack on Gender & Budgets]"

▓ Be Innovative: Strategies that Build Power

The list below covers a range of creative strategies that women's rights activists have used "beyond the legal system" to combat violence against women. They reaffirm that there are no set recipes for promoting women's rights and offer inspiration for creative thinking that responds both to the opportunities and constraints of a particular context, as well as women's own interests and priorities.

In India, women have organised to press for new legislation to address sexual violence and dowry harassment and to educate young people about the problems. Women in India have also humiliated male abusers by picketing their site of employment.

In Croatia and Serbia, women organised SOS Hotlines for women victims of violence and opened shelters for women; in order to support itself, the shelter in Serbia runs its own second-hand clothes store and a chicken farm.

Mexico's *Red Nacional contra la Violence hacia la Mujer* (National Network Against Violence Against Women) held a National Forum on Sex Crimes which presented 88 papers and testimonials about rape and domestic violence to the Mexican House of Deputies.

In Germany, a museum opened an exhibition on women's labour migration and its relationship to gender violence as part of the international '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence' campaign.

In Zimbabwe, the Musasa project works with local police and prosecutors to sensitise them to issues of domestic violence and rape.

In Jamaica, the artistic collective Sistren uses interactive workshops and street theatre to prompt discussion on issues of domestic violence and rape. The Women's Media Watch protests objectionable portrayals of women in the media, and Teens in Action performs drama to encourage discussions among young people on issues of male-female relationships and violence.

In Peru, women in Lima have organised themselves into neighbourhood watch committees; women wear whistles that they can blow to call other women for assistance.

In the Philippines, women have established a rape crisis centre which gives feminist counselling designed to empower the victim.

Two international women's organisations, Asian Women's Human Rights Council and Women Living Under Muslim Laws,

organized a "Women's Mission for Sarah", to free from jail a young Filipino domestic worker, Sarah Balabagon, who was raped and then imprisoned in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for the premeditated killing of her rapist-employer. The international coverage the "Women's Mission" helped to build was a factor in Balabagon's sentence reduction and passage out of the UAE.[76]

▩ On-going Assessment

Following are some questions to keep in mind as you take forward your rights-based programming.

☐ What is the vision of decision-making and power relations that guides your work? Is it explicit and shared?

☐ Do staff and partners have a common analysis of the problem and understanding of how to address it? Why are you proposing these particular strategies?

☐ How was shared analysis of the problem developed? Who was involved in that analysis? What voices were absent and why?

☐ Do you have the information needed about the problem? About those playing a role in the problem? Can you identify how it is a rights issue? Does the public see the problem as important? If not, what can be done to persuade them of its importance?

☐ How does the program engage women and men in thinking about their role in relation to the state? about rights?

☐ How does the program engage women and men in thinking about the power dynamics present in their everyday lives?

☐ How are women and men engaged in planning and decision-making so that new leadership skills are being built?

☐ How do (different) women understand the problems they face?

☐ How will women and men be involved in initiatives? Will participation just increase the workload of women, without giving them a role in decision-making? How will the impact on men differ from that on women?

☐ Are your looking at multiple factors of exclusion (gender, ethnicity, class, age, etc) and how are you addressing them?

☐ Have you considered what the potential response or backlash might be – not only public but personal – for example if women are speaking openly about violence?

[76] From Mertus, Julie with Nancy Flowers and Mallika Dutt. Local Action Global Change: Learning About the Human Rights of Women and Girls. UNIFEM and the Center for Women's Global Leadership, 1999.

☐ In what ways will the project lead to women's increased empowerment? Increased participation in decision-making?

☐ Do any objectives challenge the sexual division of labor, tasks, opportunities and responsibilities?

☐ Are you proposing specific ways to encourage and enable women and their children to participate in the project despite traditionally more subordinate position within the community?

☐ Does implementation involve existing women's organisations and networks?

☐ Do monitoring and evaluation indicators look at change in men and women?

Guatemala. ActionAid

Ethiopia. ActionAid

Appendices

*Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of
Discrimination Against Women*

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Noting that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women,

Noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the principle of the inadmissibility of discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex,

Noting that the States Parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights have the obligation to ensure the equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights,

Considering the international conventions concluded under the auspices of the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women,

Noting also the resolutions, declarations and recommendations adopted by the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women,

Concerned, however, that despite these various instruments extensive discrimination against women continues to exist,

Recalling that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity,

Concerned that in situations of poverty women have the least access to food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs,

Convinced that the establishment of the new international economic order based on equity and justice will contribute significantly towards the promotion of equality between men and women,

Emphasizing that the eradication of apartheid, all forms of racism, racial discrimination, colonialism, neo-colonialism, aggression, foreign

occupation and domination and interference in the internal affairs of States is essential to the full enjoyment of the rights of men and women,

Affirming that the strengthening of international peace and security, the relaxation of international tension, mutual co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic systems, general and complete disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control, the affirmation of the principles of justice, equality and mutual benefit in relations among countries and the realization of the right of peoples under alien and colonial domination and foreign occupation to self-determination and independence, as well as respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, will promote social progress and development and as a consequence will contribute to the attainment of full equality between men and women,

Convinced that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields,

Bearing in mind the great contribution of women to the welfare of the family and to the development of society, so far not fully recognized, the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children, and aware that the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination but that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between men and women and society as a whole,

Aware that a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women,

Determined to implement the principles set forth in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and, for that purpose, to adopt the measures required for the elimination of such discrimination in all its forms and manifestations,

Have agreed on the following:

PART I

Article I

For the purposes of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of

eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

(a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;

(b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;

(c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;

(d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;

(e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;

(f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;

(g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

Article 3

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to en sure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

Article 4

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

Article 5

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

(a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the

inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

(b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

Article 6

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

PART II

Article 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

Article 8

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

Article 9

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

PART III

Article 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate

discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

(b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the samequality;

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

(d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;

(e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particulary those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;

(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;

(g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;

(h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;

(b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;

(c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;

(d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of

treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;

(e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;

(f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;

(b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;

(c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;

(d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph I of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Article 13

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The right to family benefits;

(b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;

(c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all

aspects of cultural life.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

(a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;

(b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;

(c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;

(d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;

(e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self employment;

(f) To participate in all community activities;

(g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;

(h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

PART IV

Article 15

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.

2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.

3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private

instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.

4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

Article 16

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same right to enter into marriage;

(b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;

(c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;

(d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;

(f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;

(h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

PART V

Article 17

1. For the purpose of considering the progress made in the implementation of the present Convention, there shall be established a Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) consisting, at the time of entry into force of the Convention, of eighteen and, after ratification of or accession to the Convention by the thirty-fifth State Party, of twenty-

three experts of high moral standing and competence in the field covered by the Convention. The experts shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution and to the representation of the different forms of civilization as well as the principal legal systems.

2. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.

3. The initial election shall be held six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention. At least three months before the date of each election the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to the States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating the States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties.

4. Elections of the members of the Committee shall be held at a meeting of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At that meeting, for which two thirds of the States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those nominees who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

5. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. However, the terms of nine of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election the names of these nine members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.

6. The election of the five additional members of the Committee shall be held in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this article, following the thirty-fifth ratification or accession. The terms of two of the additional members elected on this occasion shall expire at the end of two years, the names of these two members having been chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.

7. For the filling of casual vacancies, the State Party whose expert has ceased to function as a member of the Committee shall appoint another expert from among its nationals, subject to the approval of the Committee.

8. The members of the Committee shall, with the approval of the General Assembly, receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide, having regard to the importance of the Committee's responsibilities.

9. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.

Article 18

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect:

(a) Within one year after the entry into force for the State concerned;

(b) Thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.

2. Reports may indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under the present Convention.

Article 19

1. The Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

2. The Committee shall elect its officers for a term of two years.

Article 20

1. The Committee shall normally meet for a period of not more than two weeks annually in order to consider the reports submitted in accordance with article 18 of the present Convention.

2. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. (amendment, status of ratification)

Article 21

1. The Committee shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities and may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States Parties. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the report of the Committee together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit the reports of the Committee to the Commission on the Status of Women for its information.

Article 22

The specialized agencies shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their activities. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

PART VI

Article 23

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions that are more conducive to the achievement of equality between men and women which may be contained:

(a) In the legislation of a State Party; or

(b) In any other international convention, treaty or agreement in force for that State.

Article 24

States Parties undertake to adopt all necessary measures at the national level aimed at achieving the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 25

1. The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

3. The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

4. The present Convention shall be open to accession by all States. Accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument of accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 26

1. A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any State Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. The General Assembly of the United Nations shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such a request.

Article 27

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying the present Convention or acceding to it after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 28

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.

2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present

Convention shall not be permitted.

3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to this effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States thereof. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received.

Article 29

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

2. Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of the present Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph I of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by that paragraph with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

3. Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 30

The present Convention, the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, duly authorized, have signed the present Convention.

Optional Protocol to the
Convention on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women

The States Parties to the present Protocol,

Noting that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women,

Also noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Resolution 217 A (III). proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex,

Recalling that the International Covenants on Human Rights Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex. and other international human rights instruments prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex,

Also recalling the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women4 ("the Convention"), in which the States Parties thereto condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women,

Reaffirming their determination to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to take effective action to prevent violations of these rights and freedoms,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

A State Party to the present Protocol ("State Party") recognizes the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women ("the Committee") to receive and consider communications submitted in accordance with article 2.

Article 2

Communications may be submitted by or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals, under the jurisdiction of a State Party, claiming to be victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in the Convention by that State Party. Where a communication is submitted on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals, this shall be with their consent unless the author can justify acting on their behalf without such consent.

Article 3

Communications shall be in writing and shall not be anonymous. No

communication shall be received by the Committee if it concerns a State Party to the Convention that is not a party to the present Protocol.

Article 4

1. The Committee shall not consider a communication unless it has ascertained that all available domestic remedies have been exhausted unless the application of such remedies is unreasonably prolonged or unlikely to bring effective relief.

2. The Committee shall declare a communication inadmissible where:

(a) The same matter has already been examined by the Committee or has been or is being examined under another procedure of international investigation or settlement;

(b) It is incompatible with the provisions of the Convention;

(c) It is manifestly ill-founded or not sufficiently substantiated;

(d) It is an abuse of the right to submit a communication;

(e) The facts that are the subject of the communication occurred prior to the entry into force of the present Protocol for the State Party concerned unless those facts continued after that date.

Article 5

1. At any time after the receipt of a communication and before a determination on the merits has been reached, the Committee may transmit to the State Party concerned for its urgent consideration a request that the State Party take such interim measures as may be necessary to avoid possible irreparable damage to the victim or victims of the alleged violation.

2. Where the Committee exercises its discretion under paragraph 1 of the present article, this does not imply a determination on admissibility or on the merits of the communication.

Article 6

1. Unless the Committee considers a communication inadmissible without reference to the State Party concerned, and provided that the individual or individuals consent to the disclosure of their identity to that State Party, the Committee shall bring any communication submitted to it under the present Protocol confidentially to the attention of the State Party concerned.

2. Within six months, the receiving State Party shall submit to the Committee written explanations or statements clarifying the matter and the remedy, if any, that may have been provided by that State Party.

Article 7

1. The Committee shall consider communications received under the present Protocol in the light of all information made available to it by or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals and by the State Party concerned, provided that this information is transmitted to the parties concerned.

2. The Committee shall hold closed meetings when examining communications under the present Protocol.

3. After examining a communication, the Committee shall transmit its views on the communication, together with its recommendations, if any, to the parties concerned.

4. The State Party shall give due consideration to the views of the Committee, together with its recommendations, if any, and shall submit to the Committee, within six months, a written response, including information on any action taken in the light of the views and recommendations of the Committee.

5. The Committee may invite the State Party to submit further information about any measures the State Party has taken in response to its views or recommendations, if any, including as deemed appropriate by the Committee, in the State Party's subsequent reports under article 18 of the Convention.

Article 8

1. If the Committee receives reliable information indicating grave or systematic violations by a State Party of rights set forth in the Convention, the Committee shall invite that State Party to cooperate in the examination of the information and to this end to submit observations with regard to the information concerned.

2. Taking into account any observations that may have been submitted by the State Party concerned as well as any other reliable information available to it, the Committee may designate one or more of its members to conduct an inquiry and to report urgently to the Committee. Where warranted and with the consent of the State Party, the inquiry may include a visit to its territory.

3. After examining the findings of such an inquiry, the Committee shall transmit these findings to the State Party concerned together with any comments and recommendations.

4. The State Party concerned shall, within six months of receiving the findings, comments and recommendations transmitted by the Committee, submit its observations to the Committee.

5. Such an inquiry shall be conducted confidentially and the cooperation of the State Party shall be sought at all stages of the proceedings.

Article 9

1. The Committee may invite the State Party concerned to include in its report under article 18 of the Convention details of any measures taken in response to an inquiry conducted under article 8 of the present Protocol.

2. The Committee may, if necessary, after the end of the period of six months referred to in article 8.4, invite the State Party concerned to inform it of the measures taken in response to such an inquiry.

Article 10

1. Each State Party may, at the time of signature or ratification of the present Protocol or accession thereto, declare that it does not recognize the competence of the Committee provided for in articles 8 and 9.

2. Any State Party having made a declaration in accordance with paragraph 1 of the present article may, at any time, withdraw this declaration by notification to the Secretary-General.

Article 11

A State Party shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that individuals under its jurisdiction are not subjected to ill treatment or intimidation as a consequence of communicating with the Committee pursuant to the present Protocol.

Article 12

The Committee shall include in its annual report under article 21 of the Convention a summary of its activities under the present Protocol.

Article 13

Each State Party undertakes to make widely known and to give publicity to the Convention and the present Protocol and to facilitate access to information about the views and recommendations of the Committee, in particular, on matters involving that State Party.

Article 14

The Committee shall develop its own rules of procedure to be followed when exercising the functions conferred on it by the present Protocol.

Article 15

1. The present Protocol shall be open for signature by any State that has signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention.

2. The present Protocol shall be subject to ratification by any State that has ratified or acceded to the Convention. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. The present Protocol shall be open to accession by any State that has ratified or acceded to the Convention.

4. Accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument of accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 16

1. The present Protocol shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the tenth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying the present Protocol or acceding to it after its entry into force, the present Protocol shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 17

No reservations to the present Protocol shall be permitted.

Article 18

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment to the present Protocol and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall thereupon communicate any proposed amendments to the States Parties with a request that they notify her or him whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting on the proposal. In the event that at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of the States Parties present and voting at the conference shall be submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations for approval.

2. Amendments shall come into force when they have been approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and accepted by a two-thirds majority of the States Parties to the present Protocol in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.

3. When amendments come into force, they shall be binding on those States Parties that have accepted them, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Protocol and any earlier amendments that they have accepted.

Article 19

1. Any State Party may denounce the present Protocol at any time by written notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Denunciation shall take effect six months after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General.

2. Denunciation shall be without prejudice to the continued application of the provisions of the present Protocol to any communication submitted under article 2 or any inquiry initiated under article 8 before the effective date of denunciation.

Article 20

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall inform all States of:

(a) Signatures, ratifications and accessions under the present Protocol;

(b) The date of entry into force of the present Protocol and of any amendment under article 18;

(c) Any denunciation under article 19.

Article 21

1. The present Protocol, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit certified copies of the present Protocol to all States referred to in article 25 of the Convention.

Appendix II

Other Conventions

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

This U.N. Convention bans torture under any circumstances and calls on governments to prevent and prohibit torture. The convention defines torture as any intentional act that causes mental or physical pain and suffering and is inflicted for purposes such as obtaining information, coercion, punishment or discrimination. The convention's definition includes acts that are inflicted by a person acting in an official capacity such as a police officer or military personnel. The convention also includes as victims persons who are forced to observe torture for purposes of intimidation. Under the convention, there is no justification whatsoever for torture, be it war, national emergencies or orders from a superior. Each member state must provide training to military and law enforcement officials in addition to periodically reviewing its interrogation methods and investigating allegations of torture. The convention also created the Committee against Torture, to which any individual may lodge a complaint. Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also forbid torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cat.html

Convention on the Rights of the Child

National governments commit themselves to protecting and ensuring children's rights and agree to hold themselves accountable for this commitment before the international community by ratifying this instrument. It spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere - without discrimination - have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The Convention protects children's rights by setting standards in health care, education and legal, civil and social services. These standards are benchmarks against which progress can be assessed. States that are party to the Convention are obliged to develop and undertake all actions and policies in the light of the best interests of the child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights - civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm

Convention on Civil and Political Rights

This covenant details the basic civil and political rights of individuals and nations. Among the rights of nations are: the right to self determination and the right to own, trade, and dispose of their property freely, and not be deprived of their means of subsistence.

Among the rights of individuals are: the right to legal recourse when their rights have been violated, even if the violator was acting in an official capacity, the right to life, the right to liberty and freedom of movement, the right to equality before the law, the right to presumption of innocence until proven guilty, the right to appeal a conviction, the right to be recognized as a person before the law, the right to privacy and protection of that privacy by law, freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of assembly and association. The covenant permits governments to suspend some of these rights temporarily in cases of civil emergency only, and lists those rights which cannot be suspended for any reason. It also establishes the UN Human Rights Commission.

http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cpr.html

Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

The protocol adds legal force to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by allowing the Human Rights Commission to investigate and judge complaints of human rights violations from individuals from signator countries.

http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cpr-prot.html

Convention on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights

This covenant describes the basic economic, social, and cultural rights of individuals and nations, including the right to: self-determination, wages sufficient to support a minimum standard of living, equal pay for equal work, equal opportunity for advancement, form trade unions, strike, paid or otherwise compensated maternity leave, free primary education, and accessible education at all levels and copyright, patent, and trademark protection for intellectual property. In addition, this convention forbids exploitation of children, and requires all nations to cooperate to end world hunger.

http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_cescr.htm

Appendix III
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· Stepping Stones

· REFLECT

· STAR

· Mutapola Framework

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