

Making It Real: Gender Equity and Diversity Newsletter



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Welcome...

to the latest edition of CARE USA's Gender Equity and Diversity Newsletter!! The newsletter includes information on regional, country office-level and headquarter initiatives to promote organizational and programmatic positive change in Gender Equity and Diversity. To be included in the next issue, please send your ideas or updates by January 31, 2012 to Doris Bartel, Acting Team Lead of Gender and Empowerment in the Program Partnerships Learning and Advocacy (PPLA) division at dbartel@care.org or Allison Burden, Senior Advisory GED in the Global Support Services division at aburden@care.org.

Gender and Climate Change *by Agnes Otzelberger*



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Over 40 participants from 12 organizations and institutions working in or with the (climate change) Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa recently participated in a learning workshop in Ghana on Gender and Community-Based Adaptation (CBA). Through the workshop, participants deliberated on the relationship between gender roles, norms and relations, climate change and strategies to adapt to it, and defined the practical implications.

Climate change is yet another factor driving social inequalities, including those between women and men, girls and boys. Our responses

to climate change, however, provide new opportunities to narrow these gaps. The participants focused on sharpening the overall understanding of gender as a key factor in shaping the distribution of rights, resources and power that undermines or supports people's capacity to adapt to climate change, and issued key recommendations for putting these insights into practice.

Did you know...CARE International is now an official member of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance? For information please contact Agnes Otzelberger, Africa Adaptation and Global Gender Advisor, at aotzelberger@careclimatechange.org

For additional information on gender and climate change please visit:
http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/ALP2011_Gender_and_CBA.pdf

http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/JotoAfrika_11112011.pdf

<http://www.careclimatechange.org/adaptation-initiatives/alp>

CARE Ethiopia Female Staff Receive Training

by Nigist Abraha

In keeping with CARE Ethiopia's commitment to gender, equity and diversity in the workplace, the country office recently conducted a Self Discovery Program for its female employees. The six month program included a series of tailored learning events that were designed to promote professional and personal development—specifically targeting female staff—in recognition of the social, cultural, and educational contexts that may inhibit women's assertiveness, confidence, and ability to influence discourse and actions in the workplace. The training encouraged women to work toward being more assertive both at work and in their personal lives. The participants acknowledge that this will be a continual transition but one they are willing to commit to. One employee reflected, "through the training, I found myself. It helped me to set a goal, see the opportunities, problems, and how to solve them...This is not only being in CARE but everywhere I go and in my future life." CARE Ethiopia employees feel the Self Discovery Program is immensely beneficial and have suggested that new staff receive the training in the future.

Special point of interest:

WE'RE TRYING OUT A NEW LOOK! LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK BY DROPPING US A LINE AT

KFRAZIER-ARCHILA@CARE.ORG

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Are you thinking about doing a gender analysis? Interested in CARE's framework for doing gender analysis? Looking for tools and resource people who can help? Look no further, check out CARE's Gender Analysis toolkit online. To utilize this great resource please visit <http://pqdl.care.org/gendertoolkit>.

Making It Real

Healthy Unions: Early Marriage Update *by Assefa Amenu and Erin Kennedy*

CARE works with families, communities and local organizations to both reduce the prevalence and mitigate the many harmful impacts of child marriage through educational and behavior-change programs. One terrific example of this work is CARE Ethiopia's project "Healthy Unions: Community Engagement and Behavioral Change to Eliminate Bride Price, Bride Abduction, and Early Marriage in Ethiopia". The Healthy Unions (HU) project was funded by USAID and sought to stop harmful traditional practices (HTPs) which jeopardize the rights and dignity of the girls forced to participate. HU was a 3 year comprehensive project implemented in the Oromia Region, which involved multiple stakeholders including community leaders, community-based organizations (CBOs), government officials and CARE staff.

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The HU project is seen as a success in the community based on interviews with the target population, staff of CBOs, zonal level government officials, and traditional leaders. Evaluation findings showed changes in practice trends, and promising progress in the attitudes and future intentions to prevent child marriages by community members, which supports the project's overall performance. The HU project attained its strategic objectives to change community norms underlying HTPs of bride price, bride abduction and early marriage. The project also increased the capacity and political will of CBOs, formal and informal leaders, women and girls, and men and boys to take collective actions against HTPs, as well as advocate for the enforcement of laws that reduce HTPs.

In addition to the programmatic work in country offices such as HU, CARE USA has prioritized child marriage advocacy in order to influence supportive policy environments at the global level and within the context of U.S. Government. CARE has been a key partner of The Elders for the last few years as they prioritized this issue and engaged in efforts with the US Congress and US Administration to support policies and programming towards the prevention of child marriage. Brought together in 2007, The Elders is an independent group of global leaders who offer their collective influence and experience to support peace building, and promote the shared interests of humanity.

Most recently, The Elders announced the launch of a new global effort called "Girls Not Brides" during the 2011 Clinton Global Initiative. The *Girls Not Brides* partnership brings together a wide range of organizations across the globe who are working to address the issue of child marriage. CARE is an important strategic member of *Girls Not Brides*.

Political Empowerment of Women at the Grassroots: Emerging Optimism Amidst Existing Challenges *by Julia Ahmed*

A sense of optimism of the political empowerment of women at the grassroots level is spreading across CARE Bangladesh sites. Renuka, Arshadul, and Manik are all newly elected members to the Union Parishad; they are also active participants of CARE's Cost of Violence Against Women (COVAW) project's gender transformative behavior change sessions.

Women's representation within the political structure of Bangladesh is an important step. This election is a historic turning point in COVAW's work as it reflects the growth from individual empowerment to collective empowerment. We also know that it is not only about female representation, but also about getting the political agenda of gender equality on the table. In this sense, the election is also a strategic advancement in that COVAW seeks to influence national plans and policies in the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act 2010. The Union Parishad is the lowest tier of local governance institutions and also the government mechanism for responding to gender-based violence cases. COVAW have been part of strengthening this mechanism through its activities, and now has direct advocates inside the Union Parishad. Renuka, Arshadul, and Manik will support us in effectively delivering the gender equality agenda within the political mindset of people's institutions.

While our experience says female-elected members have better information about families – contraceptives, health care, school for kids, prevention of domestic violence and safety nets for entitlements - we know the road ahead is not smooth. In the COVAW context analysis study on local government institutions, we learned about challenges faced by some female-elected members. One elected member noted that she attends *shalish* (a community adjudication system for petty disputes) less frequently than male members because she is often not informed or asked to attend. She also expressed her disappointment about her inability to assert her views and 'be listened to'. Experiences like this show the type of support and changes needed at the political institutional level so that elected officials can fully exercise her rights and duties as an elected official, and allow her constituents to fully benefit from her knowledge.

Financial Analysis of Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Pamodzi

by Dawn Wadlow

Many of you have heard of Pamodzi, the new financial and grants management system that will be implemented in 2012, which will provide staff around the world timely, accurate information on global operations. One could argue that an organization that stands for Women/Girls' Empowerment and Gender Equality will be more credible if it can describe how it spends its money in terms of gender. Pamodzi has been designed so that it will yield financial evidence to measure program performance, including how effectively our programs are contributing to the empowerment of women and girls, and to gender equality. Our Pamodzi development process reflected on how to build ways to answer the following questions:

- How much of CARE's resources (funds) are benefiting women/girls and men/boys (i.e. data disaggregated by gender)?
- How much of CARE's resources are addressing gender inequities (i.e. what percentage of our budgets promote gender equality)?

We have designed our new Pamodzi system to answer these questions, where we can "tag" expenditures to a project activity or objective (i.e. promoting gender-responsive governance systems) and produce a report showing what we spent on the activity. The Pamodzi team is really excited about the opportunity this presents for CARE, and what it will mean for the people with whom we work. To use the Irish idiom, we will know if we are "putting our money where our mouth is" and, if not, where changes are needed. For more information on gender indicators in Pamodzi please visit, <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/Pamodzi.pdf>

Learning from Gender Programming

reflection by Reginald McRae

In September and October 2011, 14 Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity and Diversity volunteers took a look at the Program Quality Assessment Tools (PQAT) received from 60 programs in 24 countries. Through a Women's and Gender Empowerment lens the volunteers reviewed this important source of information for clues about the effectiveness of CARE's gender work worldwide. Below one volunteer reflects on their involvement in the gender equity and diversity (GED) PQAT review this year...

We are all impacted by GED. When first signing up for the project, I asked myself... "Why am I adding more work to what I already have with my day-to-day job?" However, stepping away from my human resources role that I serve currently within CARE and viewing things in a different context can be refreshing and is much needed.

The GED PQAT experience has given me time to reflect on some country offices that are being proactive in the movement of GED. When reviewing the assessment tool, I noticed that some country offices were more detailed and clear in the responses than others which gave a much better picture on what is going

on. While reading, I started learning more about what is happening in some of the CARE offices around gender-based violence and gender equity and diversity. What was enlightening is to see the measurements of the programs within the country office and how they are addressing GED.

Even though there are some country offices that may not be strong within this initiative I do realize that some are working through partners and local communities, which tells me that building partnerships could have a stronger impact. I would like to see this tool used more broadly throughout the organization because I do think it could have more of an accountability framework on what we are doing around our programs and our work.

The GED initiative has to be taken seriously in order for the organization to maintain and/or become more credible in the communities in which we serve. Also, I think it can be so much more impactful if the organization understands this work and why it is being done! By partaking in this review, it has become clear to me why this is needed.

Thank you for the opportunity!

Using Data from a Gender Analysis for Improving Interventions

by Eugene Rusanganwa

CARE Rwanda has implemented the Nkundabana Model for orphans and vulnerable children/youth (OVCs) in Rwanda for eight years, an innovative community-based model for supporting OVCs. In February 2011, CARE staff initiated a qualitative gender analysis in order to subsequently integrate gender-specific strategies to the Nkundabana model and in future initiatives. The gender analysis explored differential realities and challenges experienced by male and female OVCs. The methodology included focus groups among in-school and out-of-school aged boys and girls from 6 to 18 years of age. Additional focus groups were held with parents of both boys and girls belonging to Early Child Development Centers, with Nkundabana mentors and OVC team members.

Following the gender analysis, some strategies to respond to gender issues were integrated in the Project such as training Nkundabana, OVC and Local Authorities on gender equality and equity and on men and boys engagement in ending gender-based violence. Other strategies need to be included in the Nkundabana Model, including promoting equal participation from both boys and girls, addressing discriminatory gender attitudes of OVCs through joint and separate meetings. Gender equitable attitudes, behaviors of the adult Nkundabana and community members will also be addressed, including involving spouses of the Nkundabana so that participants can feel comfortable in sharing sensitive issues with an Nkundabana of the same sex. Project plans also address the unmet needs of girls that could lead to school absenteeism and emotional problems, including improving knowledge of puberty and reproductive health, addressing key menstruation resources to reduce absenteeism from school during menstruation, and improving self-esteem. Other strategies will address the involvement of family members to incorporate activities focused on girls' financial literacy and income generating activities for specific ages.

For further information about this analysis please visit, <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/Sexual+Abuse+and+Exploitation>

Gender, Equity and Diversity Work in West Africa

by Maimouna Toliver and Allison Burden

CARE recognizes that promoting gender equity and diversity (GED) within the organization contributes to its strength and effectiveness. Little change, however, has been observed in terms of women's representation in country offices (COs) in general, and in West Africa in particular. In 2011, a regional survey was completed to identify progress and challenges related to the promotion of GED. The resulting analysis is organized into the following themes:

Women's Representation. Interviews with staff link the underrepresentation of women in COs to CARE working closely with communities at the field level. As a result, staff are required to frequently travel to or be based in the field. This is particularly challenging for female staff who are required to spend a lot of time away from their families. Women who want to work for CARE are, therefore, often compelled to make differential sacrifices from men by limiting time spent on their socially ascribed reproductive roles and endure the resulting criticism and stigma from their family, partners and community.

Recruitment, Retention, and Working Conditions. Women face difficulties in trying to balance their productive and reproductive roles and this is not sufficiently acknowledged by CARE in our policies. Specific challenges include: difficulty for women to travel with their nannies and infants; long working hours; frequent travel to the field; and predominance of national positions based in the field. Although some COs have policies in place to facilitate frequent staff contact and communication with their families, the assessment indicates weaknesses in the consistent implementation of these measures.

Socio-Cultural Barriers. Women's underrepresentation is also linked to limited skills and qualifications of women, resulting from social and cultural barriers to women's professional and educational development. Analysis points to the internal reproduction of the same gendered division of labor that CARE challenges externally through its programs; indeed, female staff in CARE overwhelmingly occupy traditionally 'female positions' (e.g. secretarial posts). This is related both to women's limited qualifications and to their decision to be based in the city so as to fulfill their socially and culturally mandated reproductive roles. The assessment also highlights the price some female staff pay to fulfill their professional aspirations in a context in which women's professional success appears to reduce their 'marriageability'.

Staff Capacity. The main issue uncovered with respect to staff capacity relates to the limited amount of time allocated by COs for continuous staff reflection on gender equity, power and diversity as a part of their personal and professional lives. Staff knowledge of existing GED policies is also limited.

Confidence and relationships. Female and male staff in the region generally agreed that both sexes treat each other with mutual respect and trust. Both sexes felt that salary differences were based on position rather than on the gender of the person occupying the post. An exception to this perception was noted in the assessment: in half of the countries surveyed, women thought that they had more benefits than men, that they are more favored than men, and that too much effort is focused on their professional advancement. Nevertheless, female staff felt that this focus on women was only fair and that their male colleagues "are not too frustrated."

Summary of key recommendations:

Give preference to women during recruitments; post vacancy notices in spaces that are accessible to women; include in vacancy notices a detailed description of the benefits that COs offer to female employees; focus employment offers on skills, rather than on qualifications; create safe and open spaces for staff to regularly explore and challenge social norms; confront CARE policies currently in force to the living conditions of women to determine actions to be taken; leadership fosters a work culture in which 'normal' work hours are not only acceptable but encouraged; analyze salaries and ensure that men and women are paid equally for the same work; link accountability measures for GED to a reward system; systematically include sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse prevention and reporting procedures in the staff orientation policy.

Supporting Equitable Gender Rights Over Land Access in Rwanda

by Giuseppe Daconto

Rwanda is undergoing a major reform of its land tenure system, which pursues sweeping changes vis-à-vis customary practices. Among others, a more equitable system of rights to land has been introduced, which can positively affect the rights of many women and children. The reform is being rolled out very rapidly by the Government with ambitious targets in terms of providing land titles to citizens. The new system, although generally seen in positive terms by most observers, does present challenges if we consider the customs and reality of the population; for example, there are some concerns about the rights of certain categories of women, such as those in polygamous marriages, which are common in certain regions of Rwanda and are outside the law.

Most attention in the sector in Rwanda is now on land registration targets: but needs and implications run much further. The impact and long-term sustainability of this structural reform process will depend on the quality of the process; its inclusiveness; the building of a meaningful understanding among the population; implementation flexibility and further adaptation of the legal framework to bridge the formal tenure system with customs.

CARE has engaged in this process to address equity and gender challenges. We have partnered with the government, civil society actors and local government to develop and test a pilot model of grassroots capacity building and public dialogue. We, in partnership with Landesa, carried out a rigorous assessment of the impact of this work on the capacity of rural Rwandans to understand and participate in land tenure reform; and to assess how rural households allocate land across gender lines, in response to the reform process. Specifically, we are testing the level of participation and response of different categories of women. We are assessing how they receive information, how they respond to processes, their perception of opportunities provided to them to improve understanding of their rights, their reaction to formal land titling individually and as members of different types of households. We expect that the results of this work and of the assessment will help improve strategies and policies for civic participation in the reform process; and to strengthen the capacity of the reformed tenure system to meet the needs of the most vulnerable segments of the population. Further information about this work and reports are available via www.virunga.net

I had the opportunity to attend the African Women's Land Rights Conference last June in Nairobi. The event, organized by Oxfam, Acord, and ActionAid, brought together a large number of women's and land rights activists and organizations including farmer associations, pastoralist groups, women survivor groups, lawyers, parliamentarians and academics from across the continent. This was a truly energizing forum open to Africa-wide experiences on the struggle for women's land rights and access to justice and reparation. We also explored the implications that land access rights have over food security and social justice in Africa and the web of connections that often tie together land rights with access to justice and reparations related to conflicts and sexual gender-based violence. For more information on the event please visit the conference website at <http://landforafricanwomen.org/conference>.