White Paper: a Conceptual Model on Women and Girls' Empowerment

Technical Report · March 2017

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A Conceptual Model of
WOMEN AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

March 2017

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Contents

List of acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AWARD	African Women in Agricultural Research and Development
AWSEM	African Women in Science Empowerment Model
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention of Rights of the Child
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
FP	Family Planning
FSP	Financial Services for the Poor
GAP	Girls Achieve Power
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GEAS	Global Early Adolescent Study
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MNCH	Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PST	Program Strategy Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHG	Self-help Group
SHINE	Sanitation Hygiene Infant Nutrition Efficacy
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WGCD	Putting Women and Girls at the Center of Development (Grand Challenge)
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WHO	World Health Organization
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

Acknowledgements

1. Why this White Paper?

1.1 Gender Intentional Planning

"The development field needs to be more serious about gender inequities and women's empowerment. By ignoring gender inequities, many development projects fail to achieve their objective. And when development organizations do not focus on women's empowerment, they neglect the fact that empowered women have the potential to transform their societies" (Gates, 2014, p. 1273).

This was the key message of Melinda Gates' Commentary in Science in 2014. She argued, "No society can achieve its potential with half of its population marginalized and disempowered." And that by not intentionally putting women and girls at the centre of global development, we have "lost opportunities to maximize our impact across all of the arenas in which we work" (p. 1273).

Women and girls' empowerment is gaining a more prominent place in the work of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In addition to exciting and innovative work across the Program Strategy Teams (PSTs), the foundation in 2014 launched a Grand Challenge, Putting Women and Girls at the Center of Development (WGCD). This calls for transformative and innovate ideas that can sustainably change the lives and futures of women and girls.[1]

Empowerment of women and girls is also firmly embedded in the international development agenda, and in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As Sarah Hendriks, Director of Gender Equality at the foundation, argues in her Medium blog, 'Yes, the World Really Can Eliminate Gender Inequality', *"We now have before us the ideal confluence of momentum, interest and leadership, with a spotlight on the deep structural causes of inequality and exclusion as never before."*

Across the foundation, different threads of work on empowerment of women and girls have been emerging and taking shape over the past 15 years. This work is based on three related motivations: investing in empowerment of women and girls as a goal in itself; as a means to better development and health outcomes; and to reduce unintended negative outcomes.

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1. The Grand Challenge call for proposals yielded 1,742 Letters of Interest from 128 countries across the world—the highest recorded response for a Grand Challenge to date. Nineteen proposals, working across a range of programme areas in the foundation, were selected, totalling $24 million in funding.

"For the very first time, governments across the world have agreed that in order to reduce global poverty we must empower women and girls and remove one of the biggest barriers to progress: gender inequality. Furthermore, they've agreed to do so by 2030. By signing on to support the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, governments committed to not only tackle the symptoms of gender inequality but also to drive a stake through the root causes. I call this the 'tough stuff' of development work: addressing the complex power dynamics and harmful social norms, including gender-based discrimination and violence, which have kept women and girls 'in their place' for far too long.

"Over the past 15 years, we have seen gains for women and girls in some important, albeit limited, areas, showing what can be accomplished when governments and citizens lean in. Progress remains slow because the deeper context that underpins how women and girls are valued in society has remained firmly intact. Today, 20 years after the Beijing Platform for Action, women and girls still earn less, learn less, and have far fewer assets, and even less economic agency, than their male counterparts. They face unique constraints to accessing health services, owning a bank account or finding decent work. The work of gender equality remains unfinished and urgently necessary" (Hendriks, 2016).

1.2 What is the problem?

Women and girls' empowerment is of critical relevance, because women and girls in today's world lack control over their lives and futures in many ways. Acknowledgement of and concern for the gender inequities, exclusion and marginalisation they face are reflected in the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. Women's equality and empowerment is reflected in targets across the recently agreed SDGs, including those on poverty, health and education. SDG5 is the stand-alone goal for achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

While there has been some progress on gender equality since 1995, it has been slow and uneven. Women and girls' health is at risk, and they often experience gender-based violence (GBV). Women and girls are less likely to enrol in and complete schooling. Their work is often not recognised (e.g. care and household work), not equitably paid (e.g. it is unpaid or there is a gender pay gap) or carried out under vulnerable conditions. Women and girls also own less property and resources. They face inequalities in the law, and their rights are jeopardised by weak enforcement and implementation. Despite their participation in economic and political arenas, they are underrepresented in decision-making positions and bodies. Inequalities are persistent in all sectors and domains, although considerable differences exist between and within countries. These disadvantages and inequalities in women and girls' lives arise as a result of unequal gender relations. They call for empowerment of women and girls, and the transformation of patriarchal power hierarchies. (Clinton Foundation, 2015)

1.3 Why this White Paper?

This whitepaper responds to the growing interest in gender equality by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and takes existing initiatives a step further by articulating what empowerment of women and girls means for the foundation. It presents a conceptual model for empowerment of women and girls that is informed by existing empowerment frameworks and approaches and tailored to foundation policies and practices.

The aims of the White Paper are:

- To provide conceptual clarity on what empowerment of women and girls means for the foundation;
- To provide a common language for the foundation, its staff and its grantees for use in their work on empowerment of women and girls; and
- To stimulate ownership and buy-in of foundation staff at different levels

This conceptual model builds on the case made for gender-intentional planning in the *Science* commentary in which Melinda Gates differentiates between development and health outcomes on the one hand and gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes on the other (see figure below, from Taukobong et al. 2016). The two can be linked but only by applying a gender lens to explicitly identify and intentionally engage with gender inequalities. If this is done well, then it will be possible to achieve both positive sector and gender equality outcomes.
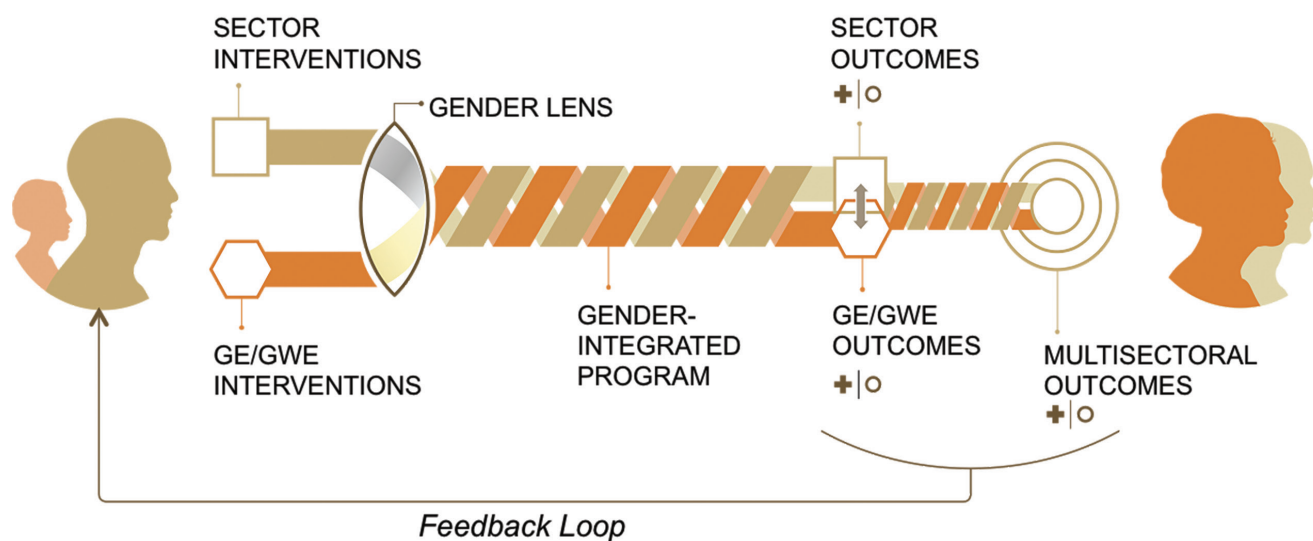
GE/GWE: Gender Equality and Girls' and Women's Empowerment   **+** | 0 Benefit / Neutral

"Empowerment is one of the best examples of the distortion of good ideas and innovative practices as they are lifted out of the political and historical context in which they evolved and rendered into formulas that are 'mainstreamed'. This usually involves divesting the idea of its cultural specificity, its political content, and generalizing it into a series of rituals and steps that simulate its original elements, but lacking the transformative power of the real thing. Thus good ideas – evolved to address the specific development challenges – are altered into universally applicable panaceas" (Batliwala, 2007, p. 80).

The conceptual model in this White Paper offers a lens to help better unpack the outcomes and processes of women and girls' empowerment, and their feedback loops with other development outcomes. It is a lens to understand what change is needed and how it takes place. The model can be used to analyse contexts and to intentionally design interventions and approaches that can meaningfully facilitate and contribute to women and girls' empowerment. It can also be used to inform monitoring and measurement, so interventions can flexibly adapt to setbacks and changing circumstances and push forward the process of empowerment.

This model builds on the long history of theory and practice in women and girls' empowerment, existing operational frameworks and critical reflections on how these frameworks have been operationalised over the past 20 years and what can be learnt from this wealth of experience.

This White Paper is part of a larger project with the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), that seeks to improve how the empowerment of women and girls is measured within the work of the foundation. This project was launched after the publication of Melinda Gates' *Science* commentary and the WGCD Grand Challenge call for proposals. The model developed and presented in this White Paper will also be published in a shorter Brief (forthcoming). A Methods Note on measuring women and girls' empowerment is also being developed. An Annotated Bibliography of resources and a Directory of Experts on empowerment frameworks, concepts and models will accompany all of these.

1.4 Review Methodology

The conceptual model of women and girls' empowerment presented in this White Paper is based on insights from an extensive review of frameworks, thinking and practice on the topic. This review covers over 115 resources from development agencies, knowledge and research institutes, women's rights organisations, development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and multi and bilateral donors. These were identified in three steps:

- Step 1: Identification of existing efforts on the empowerment of women and girls at the foundation;
- Step 2: Search of operational frameworks from over 55 purposively selected organisations (hand search of websites) that are key actors in the field, cross-referenced against foundation partners and grantees identified in the internal mapping; and
- Step 3: Selective search of most influential publications and overviews/reviews of empowerment frameworks and concepts.

These steps produced a long list of conceptual frameworks and models on women and girls' empowerment, which was narrowed down to the final sample. This sampling took place in consultation with foundation representatives, and was based on relevance for the development of a conceptual model for the foundation and connection with PST themes and sectors. The sampled materials were coded, using Atlas.ti software, to enable the comprehensive and systematic analysis of key concepts and elements to be considered for the conceptual model.

In addition to the analysis of the sampled written resources, this White Paper is informed by conversations with foundation staff (October–December 2015) and a set of webinars (February 2016) sharing key ideas on empowerment, as presented in the Building Blocks document (see summary in Annex I). The conceptual framework has also highly benefitted from a convening held in Seattle (June 2016) and the insightful feedback from and discussions with foundation staff and external partners and experts.

1.5 Outline of the White Paper

This White Paper starts in Chapter 2 with a concise presentation of the conceptual model. Chapter 3 follows this with a more in-depth definition of empowerment, and its qualification in terms of choice, voice and power. The subsequent chapters present the core elements of the conceptual model in more detail: expressions of agency (Chapter 4), institutional structures (Chapter 5) and different types of resources (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 highlights the importance of intersectionality and of engaging men and boys. The final chapter addresses interactions between agency, resources and institutional structures, and qualifies the empowerment of women and girls as a process of transformative change.

Each chapter starts with definitions of selected key concepts. The chapters also contain selected quotes from key organisations or thinkers that provide important insights into the conversation about women and girls' empowerment. Boxes provide illustrative examples drawn from the foundation's existing grants and efforts. Some show how foundation investments apply aspects of the model. Others show how aspects of the model are measured. A third type of box illustrates how other organisations are addressing aspects of empowerment.

Empowerment of women and girls is the expansion of choice and strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations, so women and girls have more control over their lives and futures. It is both a process and an outcome.

The expansion of **choice** concerns the ability of women and girls to make and influence choices that affect their lives and futures. This entails:

- An expanding repertoire of options and opportunities to choose from;
- Imagining possible choices that were previously unimaginable; and
- Transforming choices into actions and outcomes.

The strengthening of women and girls' **voice** concerns the capacity of women and girls to speak up and be heard, and to shape and share in discussions and decisions—in public and private domains—that affect their lives and futures. This entails:

- Establishing a presence and participating in, negotiating with and influencing decision-making processes in household, community, market and state arenas; and
- Enabling women and girls to voice their demand for change, through leadership and collective organising, to pursue the interests and needs of women and girls.

Expanding women and girls' choice and voice engages directly with how **power** operates as a force in their lives. This action seeks to challenge and transform the constraints to women and girls' control over their lives. **Disempowerment** and gender inequality manifest themselves in unequal distribution of resources and women and girls' lack of control over their bodies and low self-esteem, combined with biased laws and policies and discriminatory gender norms and practices. Women and girls' lack of control over their lives arises as a result of gender relations of power that are based in patriarchal hierarchies and gender ideologies of male dominance and privilege. Gender ideologies point to gender and sex as organising principles in societies. Patriarchy is one specific form of male domination, and hence one form of gender ideology (also see Rubin, 1975). The term 'ideologies' is of specific value to underline that gendered power operates not only materially but ideationally—that is, via identities, norms, values and beliefs. Empowerment challenges disempowerment, and entails a transformation of power relations. It tackles systemic constraints on women and girls' choice and voice because, for empowerment to be sustainable and significant, a transformation of power relations is needed.

2.1 Elements of Empowerment
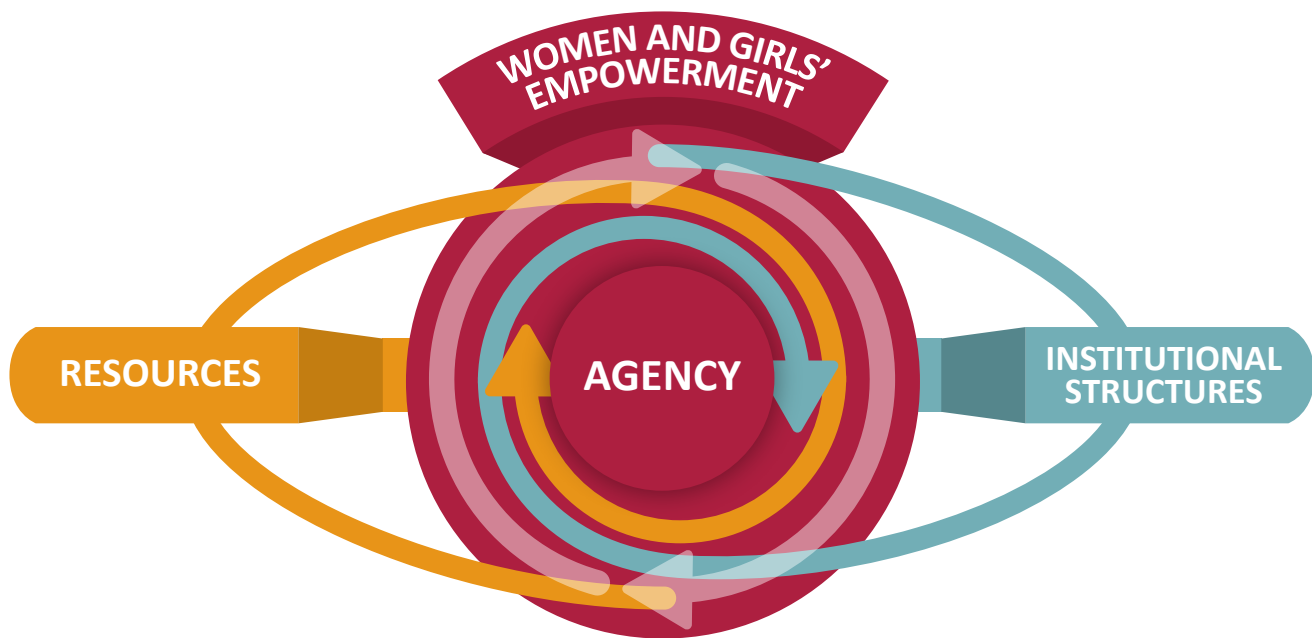
Empowerment is contingent on the interaction between three key elements: agency, institutional structures and resources[2]:

- **Agency** is the capacity for purposive action, the ability to pursue goals, express voice and influence and make decisions free from violence and retribution.

  It is at the heart of empowerment.

  The model highlights three specific expressions of agency: *decision-making, leadership and collective action.*

- **Institutional structures** are the social arrangements of formal and informal rules and practices. They shape and influence the expressions of agency as well as women and girls' control over resources.

  Institutional structures can be found in the arenas of the family, community, market and state.

They comprise *formal laws* and *policies*, the *norms* that underpin them, and the ways these are practiced in the context of human *relations*.

- **Resources** are tangible and intangible capital and sources of power that women and girls have, own or use individually or collectively in the exercise of agency.

  Resources include women and girls' critical consciousness[3], bodily integrity (health; safety and security) and assets (financial and productive assets; knowledge and skills; time; social capital).

Empowerment of women and girls is a dynamic and transformative process of change. Transformation of power relations occurs through women and girls exercising agency and taking action, through the redistribution of resources towards women and girls and through shifting the institutional structures that shape women and girls' choice and voice, and ultimately their lives and futures.

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2. The three elements of the proposed model—agency, assets and institutional structures—are inspired by Naila Kabeer's conceptualisation of empowerment in terms of resources, agency and achievement (Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996; Martinez & Wu, 2009), the Empowerment in Practice framework of the World Bank (Alsop, Bertelsen, & Holland, 2006) and the CARE Empowerment framework highlighting agency, structures and relations.
3. Critical consciousness is women and girls identifying and questioning how inequality in power operates in their lives and asserting and affirming their sense of self and their entitlements. This concept is further explored in Chapter 6.

2.2 Intersectionality, and engaging men and boys

Women and girls experience gender (in)equality and (dis)empowerment differently depending on their social background and context. This relates to the way gender relations **intersect** with class, ethnicity, caste, religion, sexual orientation, race and other social markers.

Strengthening the voice and choice of women and girls requires challenging gender inequalities as well as other power inequalities that intersect with gender relations. Specific attention to the compounding constraints facing marginalised women and girls is needed.

Age is a critical factor that shapes how women and girls experience gender inequalities. A life-cycle approach takes into account how the intersection of age with gender shapes the expansion of choice and strengthening of voice of women and girls. It is therefore important to acknowledge:

- That the extent to which women and girls can express their voice and choice varies across stages of their lives;
- That adolescence is a critical life stage in which the opportunities and constraints girls face are shaped for their present and also for their future lives as adult women;
- The importance of intergenerational linkages: the empowerment of women and girls not only benefits them directly but also affects the well-being of others in their lives, such as their children and relatives.

Additionally, advancing gender equality and women and girls' empowerment calls for the active engagement of **men and boys**. They can make critical contributions to expanding the choice and voice of women and girls, and are present in the lives of women and girls across all institutional arenas.

Dominant forms of masculinities not only benefits men but also restricts them in terms of supporting gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. Innovative interventions emphasise how men and boys can be empowered to speak out and act to confront gender inequality and disempowerment. Men and boys can positively contribute to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment through their position as peers, partners, role models, and mentors, and also in positions of authority.

WOMEN AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

Collective action

Decision-making

Leadership

RESOURCES

AGENCY

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

Bodily Integrity

Critical Consciousness

Assets

relations

norms

laws & policies

Family

Community

Market

State
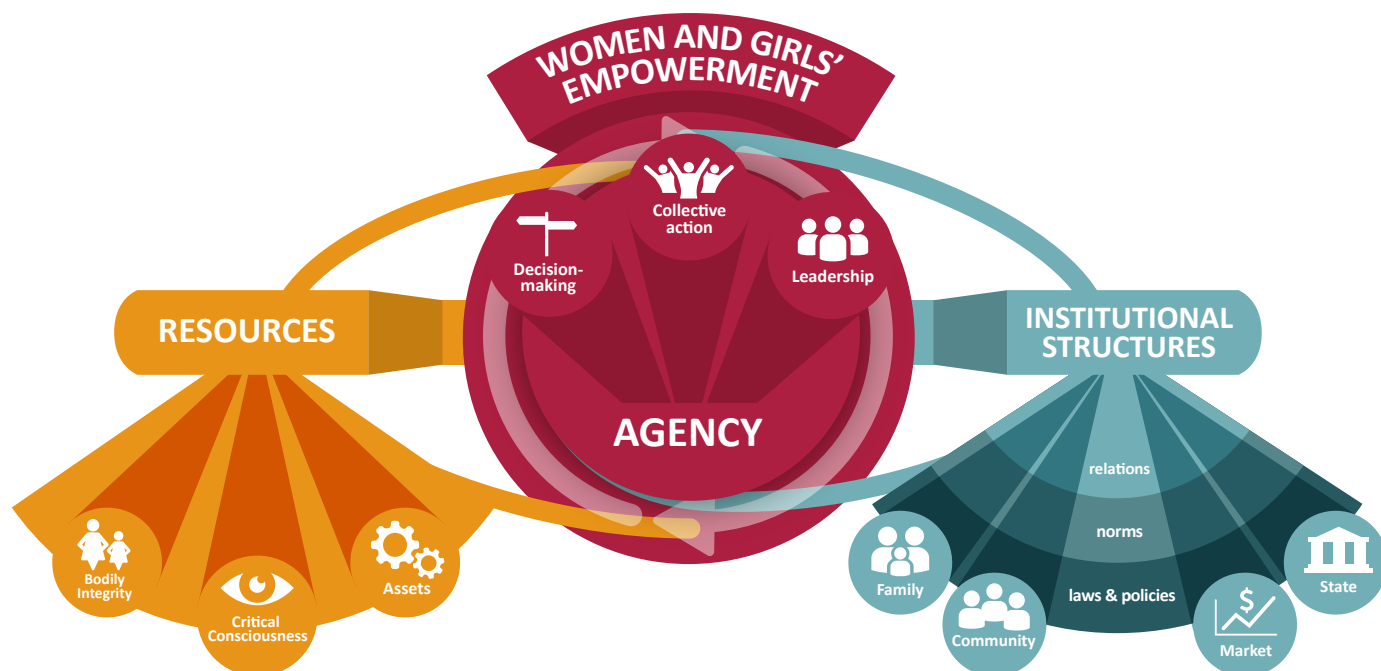
2.3 Dynamics of transformative change

Empowerment is a **transformative** process of change, multilevel and multidimensional, that connects inner, individual change with systemic, structural change. Enhancing choice and voice entails change in access to and control over a range of resources, across different arenas, and explicitly engages with structural barriers. Women and girls' agency is at the heart of these transformative processes.

Empowerment is contingent on the interaction between resources, agency and institutional structures. The dynamism between these elements can be mutually reinforcing, and as such, when engaged with explicitly and intentionally, offers entry points for interventions. However, how the elements interact is context-specific, and cannot be assumed or easily predicted. Empowerment is a **bottom-up** process grounded in women and girls' own experiences and agendas.

Therefore, interventions can facilitate and contribute to empowerment as long as they do so in a facilitative and **non-prescriptive** manner. Participation of and accountability to women and girls are key.

There are no blueprints for empowerment, and pathways towards it can have different entry points, using different types of resources, engaging with different expressions of agency or challenging different aspects or arenas of institutional structures. Pathways are iterative and non-linear and often involve setbacks and reversals. Interventions therefore require flexibility in their design to allow for adaptations, as well as continuous monitoring and a long-term engagement.

Empowerment	The expansion of choice and the strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations, so women and girls have more control over their lives and futures
Choice	The ability of women and girls to make and influence choices that affect their lives and futures
Voice	The capacity of women and girls to speak up and be heard and to shape and share in discussions and decisions—in public and private domains—that affect their lives
Power	• Power can enable and constrain action and agency • Power operates in visible, invisible and hidden terms
Expressions of power	• Power can be expressed as 'power-over', but can also be a positive and generative force • Power-to (a woman or girl's ability to act and to shape her life) • Power-within (a woman or girl's sense of self-worth, self-knowledge and self-confidence) • Power-with (collaborative power)
Transformation of power relations	Empowerment is transformative when it challenges systemic constraints to the agency of women and girls in multilevel and multidimensional processes of change in social relations (not just individual change)

3.1 Process and Outcome

Empowerment of women and girls is the expansion of choice and the strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations so women and girls have more control over their lives and futures. It refers to both an outcome and a process. As an **outcome**, it concerns the degree of freedom women and girls have to control and influence their lives and futures. As a **process**, it highlights the change that is required for empowerment to be a reality. It is through experiencing, undertaking and directing empowerment processes that women and girls expand their aspirations, strengthen their voice, exercise more choice and take more control over their lives and futures.

Empowerment as an on-going process, rather than a final goal, is a defining feature, and is therefore valuable in and of itself. Empowerment processes are dialectical, and can be like a dance, with the actors involved taking two steps forward and three steps back. And it is not only women and girls who change during this process, but also the people around them, as well as the environments and institutional structures that shape their lives and futures. Empowerment as a process is also about the critical significance of participation in decision-making processes, in the arenas of households, communities, markets, states and beyond (DAW, 2001; Kabeer, 1999b; Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002; Mosedale, 2005; Narayan, 2002; Oxaal & Baden, 1997; Pereznieto & Taylor, 2014; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

WOMEN AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

CHOICE VOICE

POWER
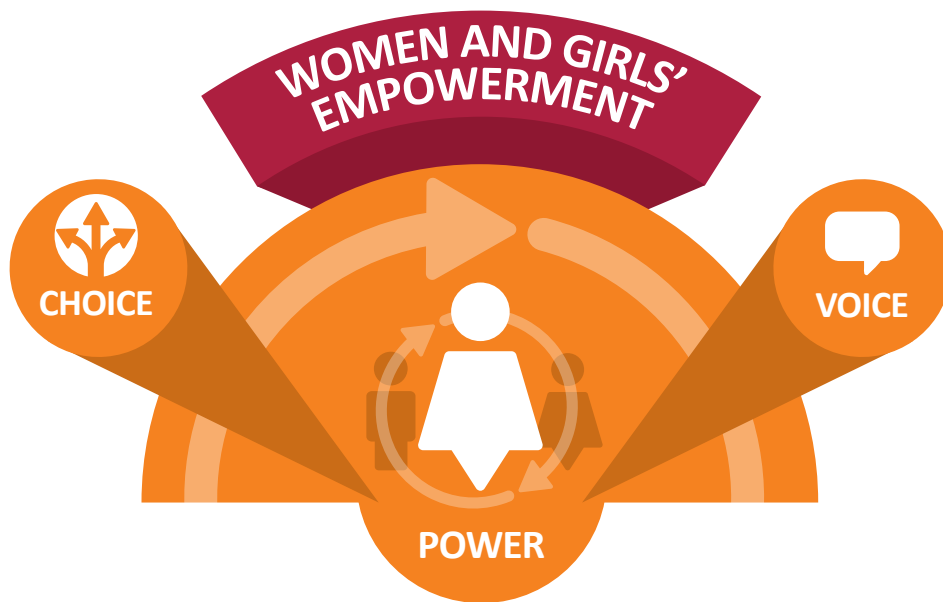
Two steps forward …

"When you work for women's interests, it's two steps forward – if you're really smart and very lucky! – and at least one step back. In fact, it's often two or three steps back! And those steps back are, ironically, often evidence of your effectiveness; because they represent [how] power structures attempt to push you back" (Sheela Patel).[4]

3.2 Choice and Voice

Expansion of **choice** is prominent in many mainstream development approaches to women and girls' empowerment. This is especially true where change at the individual level is emphasised, for example through entrepreneurship. Though not explicitly articulated in many mainstream development approaches, the strengthening of **voice** also merits a central place in defining empowerment. It captures the collective and social change that is part and parcel of processes of women and girls' empowerment (Goetz & Musembi, 2008; Oxaal & Baden, 1997). In addition, voice captures the importance of women and girls articulating and defining their interests and needs, and underlines the bottom-up essence of empowerment (Oxaal & Baden, 1997). Both choice and voice therefore feature prominently in the definition of empowerment in this model.

Consciousness, choice and voice

"Women's empowerment happens when individuals and organised groups are able to imagine their world differently and to realise that vision by changing the relations of power that have kept them in poverty, restricted their voice and deprived them of their autonomy" (Eyben, 2011, p. 2).

4. Cited in Batliwala & Pittman, 2010, p. 7

Qualifying Choice

The expansion of choice concerns the ability of women and girls to make and influence choices that affect their lives and futures. This can entail the capacity of both individuals and collective groups to make and influence choices (Alsop et al., 2006, p. 10). Empowerment refers to the processes by means of which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability (Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b).

For choice to be empowering, several points need to be taken into consideration:

1. Having freedom to choose is central in expanding choice. Thus, empowerment is about an array of opportunities from which women and girls can choose: an expanded repertoire of choice. It is also about women and girls discovering new options and possibilities (Batliwala, 1993, 2013; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b). For example, with respect to contraceptive use, empowerment refers to the ability of women and girls to make voluntary and informed choices, from a range of options. The conditions of choosing are critical for the freedom to choose.

2. Not all choices are of equal value. The interest is to expand the strategic life choices of women and girls. These include choices about if, when and whom to marry, whether and how many children to have, freedom of movement, and friends or livelihood (Kabeer, 1999a, pp. 3, 10).[5]

3. Expansion of choice is closely linked to imagining what was previously unimaginable. It is about women and girls redefining what it is possible to be and to do, and envisaging new horizons (Batliwala, 1993; Cornwall, 2014, p. 20; Kabeer, 1999b; Mosedale, 2005; Rowlands, 1997).

4. Empowerment is concerned with choices that challenge social inequalities, not those that reproduce them (Kabeer, 1999b). Development of critical consciousness is especially important for expanding choice when women and girls have internalised their lower social status and make choices that reinforce this.[6]

5. For empowerment to happen, choices need to be transformed into actions and outcomes. A distinction can be made between:
   - Existence of choice: whether an opportunity to make a choice exists;
   - Use of choice: whether a person or group actually uses the opportunity to choose;
   - Achievement of choice: whether the choice brings about the desired result.

For example, with respect to women's political participation, this entails, first, whether elections are being held; second, whether women attempt to vote; and third, whether women actually vote (Alsop et al., 2006, p. 17; Batliwala, 1993; Mosedale, 2005; Rowlands, 1997)

Qualifying Voice

Voice is a shorthand for people expressing their interests and articulating their opinions. Voice concerns the capacity of women and girls to speak up and be heard and to shape and share in discussions and decisions that affect their lives and futures, in both the public and the private domain. Amplifying the voice of women and girls to demand the realisation of their rights and social change is a core feature of empowerment (Goetz & Musembi, 2008; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Klugman et al., 2014, p. xv; Narayan, 2002; Pillsbury, Maynard-Tucker, & Nguyen, 2000; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).[7]

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5. "First order choices are those strategic life choices - choice of livelihood, where to live, who to marry, whether to marry, whether to have children, how many children to have, who has rights over children, freedom of movement and choice of friends - that are critical for people to live the lives they want. These strategic life choices help to frame other, less consequential choices that may be important for the quality of one's life but do not constitute its defining parameters" (Kabeer, 1999a, p. 3)

6. "Women's acceptance of their secondary claims on household resources, their acquiescence to violence at the hands of their husbands, their willingness to bear children to the detriment of their own health and survival to satisfy their own or their husbands preference for sons, are all examples of behaviour by women which undermine their own well-being" (Kabeer, 1999a, pp. 440-441). In a similar vein, women can accept their higher workload or lack of influence on decision-making as just, because they have internalised their subordinate status.

7. For this reason, voice features prominently in frameworks of empowerment that emphasise social change, decision-making and accountability. The World Bank publication Measuring Empowerment: Cross-disciplinary Perspective presents an empowerment framework towards poverty reduction and development in which empowerment is defined as "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives" (Narayan, 2005, p. 5).

Power relations often constrain women and girls' voice. Women's capacities to express their interests are constrained by formal rules and informal norms concerning their participation and their mobility (within and beyond the family), and this limits the spheres of life they are 'allowed' to have a say in. Be it in parliaments, in board rooms, at work, at home, in the street, in school, at the police or with a doctor, in many contexts women and girls may be expected not to speak loudly, or not to attract attention to themselves, their experiences or their concerns (Goetz & Musembi, 2008, p. 10; Mukhopadhyay, Hunter, Quintero, & Milward, 2013).

Women and girls can voice their interest and opinions individually as well as collectively. Their numerical presence in decision-making is one aspect of voice; substantive representation of their practical and strategic interests is equally important. The bargaining, influencing and negotiating that are inherent in decision-making and accountability are expressions of voice. Voice goes beyond capacity to speak; it must be listened to and acted upon. (Gammage, Kabeer, & van der Meulen Rodgers, 2016, p. 7; Narayan, 2002).

Voice is important as part of empowerment processes in at least four ways:

1. In the participation and representation of women and girls in political and economic decision-making institutions and platforms, in terms of both numerical and substantive representation. This can be in national parliaments, agricultural cooperatives, school boards, patient associations, community groups and many other decision-making spaces.

2. In the ability to organise collectively in favour of gender equality and justice and women and girls' empowerment. This can manifest itself in savings and credit associations at the community level or in social movement organisations that seek justice in cases of violence against women, child marriage or other issues critical for women and girls. It may also relate to the strengthening of self-help groups (SHGs), associations of women entrepreneurs or other platforms of collectivisation and mobilisation.

3. In the strengthening of women's and girls' leadership, both individually and collectively, to pursue their interests and needs. This entails women in leadership positions in political arenas, private companies, the police and legal courts, schools, hospitals, civil society, universities and so on.

4. In demanding change and holding institutions accountable, as part of processes to influence policies and services, in order to ensure they are implemented in a responsive and just way.

Understanding voice and empowerment

"'Voice' is a metaphor for powerful speech, and this is most often associated with acts or arguments that influence public decisions. [...] Voice is thought to help determine whether women can attain a range of empowerment-linked outcomes, such as policy and services to support women's economic activity, to guarantee their physical integrity and reproductive rights, to improve their and their children's access to education, health care, and social protection, among other benefits" (Goetz & Musembi, 2008, p. 4).

3.3 Power

Expanding women and girls' choice and voice engages directly with how power operates in their lives. It is not possible to talk about empowerment without talking about power. Power relations shape disempowerment and disadvantage of women and girls, as well as their opportunities and well-being. The transformation of power relations is, therefore, the third core feature of empowerment. Empowerment requires the transformation of unequal power relations between individuals, groups, sexes, classes, races, ethnic groups or nations, so that women and girls gain more control over their lives and futures (Alsop et al., 2006; Batliwala, 2007; Kabeer, 1999a, p. 2; Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009; Mosedale, 2005; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

CARE: Fulfilling our vision

"The valuable contributions that our projects make to women's lives – the health, security, economic or political gains that we help women to achieve – may be wiped away without deeper changes in the rules and power relations that define how a society allocates resources among citizens. CARE must seize the opportunity to turn valuable short-term gains into long-term change by helping communities build more equitable structures and relationships" (Wu, 2009, p. 1).

Gender as relations of power

Unequal gender relations are the root causes of the disempowerment of women and girls; these gender relations are relations of power. Where the term 'sex' refers to biological differences between women and men, the concept of 'gender' points to socially constructed differences.[8] Women and girls' empowerment is concerned with **gender as a social relation**. The systemic disadvantage women face in exercising choice and voice is located in these gender relations. Gender as a social relation steps away from considering women and men as isolated categories and looks at how unequal social relations are produced and reproduced (Mosedale, 2005; Whitehead, 2006).

This calls for a notion of gender relations as power structures—in Sarah Hendriks' words "the tough stuff" of development work (see section 1.1). Unequal gender relations are grounded in patriarchal societies. **Patriarchy** is a social system in which men hold primary power, in political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property (US Department of State & USAID, 2016). In its earlier use, patriarchy refers to the rule and authority of the male head of the family over his wife, children and property. Later use expanded the notion of male domination and privilege to the private and public arenas, to include a variety of economic, political and social domains. In patriarchal hierarchies, women and girls face subordination, marginalisation and discrimination. Their choices and voices are constrained in the arenas of the family, community, market and state. Patriarchal hierarchies manifest themselves in women and girls' lack of control over their bodies, unequal distribution of material resources and knowledge, unequal and biased laws and policies and discriminatory or exclusionary practices.

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8. The concept of gender emphasises that differences in the position of women and men are the result of the social relations between them. These gender relations are not derived from biology but rather are socially constituted. Gender identities, aspects of masculinity and femininity and the relations between women and men are social products rather than biological facts (e.g. Whitehead, 2006).

Patriarchal inequalities are based on and maintained by gender ideologies that portray gender hierarchies and differences as natural and normal.[9] Socialisation, indoctrination, moral policing, penalties and violence are mechanisms through which ideologies sustain power inequalities. Gender ideologies justify hierarchies and male privilege and normalise the disempowerment of women and girls. Gender ideologies and patriarchy do not operate in isolation but intersect with caste, class, hetero-normativity, age, poverty and religious doctrine (Risman, 2004; Risman & Davis, 2013; Rubin, 1975; Walby, 1990; Whitehead, 2006).

Transformations of power relations

Empowerment needs to address these root causes of the marginalisation and disempowerment of women and girls. For outcomes to be sustainable, deeper changes in economic, political and social relations at the levels of households, community, the market and the state are required. **Transformation of power relations** occurs when women and girls exercise agency and take action, through the redistribution of resources towards women and girls and by shifting the institutional structures that shape their choice and voice and ultimately their lives and futures (Alsop et al., 2006; Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002; Wu, 2009).

Empowerment is transformative when it challenges constraints to agency and tackles systemic constraints to women and girls' ability to exercise choice and voice. It is a social rather than an individual process of change, seeking to establish and sustain more desirable social arrangements in the family, community, market and state arenas. Transformation implies the redistribution of resources, combined with recognition of women and girls as entitled to choice and voice. Both recognition and redistribution are gained in the interplay between shifts in laws, policies,

norms and relations with men and boys, as well as within and between women gaining self-consciousness and expressing agency. These deeper changes are key to sustainably and significantly enhancing women's choice and voice. Men and boys, who are also affected by patriarchal masculinity, can be important allies in the transformation of power relations and the empowerment of women and girls (Alkire, 2005, p. 2; Alsop et al., 2006, p. 15; Cornwall, 2014; Fraser, 2010; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Kantor & Apgar, 2013; Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, & Zwi, 2002; Morgan, 2014; Mosedale, 2005, pp. 252-255; Samman & Santos, 2009, p. 10; Wu, 2009).

Empowerment is transformative in at least three ways:

1. Transforming power relations to strengthen the choice and voice of women and girls; this entails a redistribution of resources and a shift in institutional structures;

2. Transforming the ways in which women and girls express power; this entails the strengthening of agency in expanded choice and voice;

3. Transforming the way we think about social change. Empowerment is not about replacing one form of power or domination with another. Strengthening the choice and voice of women and girls should not restrict the rights of others or reproduce hierarchies and inequalities (Batliwala, 1993, 2013; Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009).

In order to capture a transformation in which women and girls express power, and in power relations, the three main elements of the model of empowerment proposed in this White Paper are agency, institutional structures and resources. For empowerment to happen, shifts need to occur within and across these three elements. The next sub-section articulates the conceptualisation of power on which the model is based.

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9. Patriarchy and gender ideologies are conceptually different terms. Gender ideologies point to gender and sex as organising principles in societies. Patriarchy is one specific form of male domination, and hence one form of gender ideology (also see Rubin, 1975). The term 'ideologies' is of specific value to underline that gendered power operates not only materially but ideationally—that is, via identities, norms, values and beliefs.

How Power works

Power works as both an enabling and a constraining force. This means there is a need to understand power as being exercised, rather than as a resource that can be possessed. Power is by definition not a finite resource, and women and girls can gain power without other people necessarily losing it. Power can be oppressive but also a positive and generative force. This is conveyed in liberating and alternative expressions of power, such as 'power-to', 'power-within' and 'power-with' (see Box 2).

This paper's model on the empowerment of women and girls emphasises how women and girls express power by placing **agency** at its heart. Three expressions of agency are highlighted: collective action, decision-making and leadership. All three encompass, and often combine, women and girls expressing power-to, power-within and power-with.

The exercise of power arises from the control of individuals and groups over **resources**. These resources can be tangible and intangible, and include money,

land, labour, knowledge, information, networks and so on. Power also arises from inner resources: from a woman or girl's sense of self-respect, dignity, self-confidence and self-awareness. This also includes her critical consciousness, and the capacity to see as well as challenge the constraints, inequalities and hierarchies that emerge from ideologies. The paper's model of empowerment identifies resources as a core element in women and girls' empowerment and their expression of agency. It distinguishes three main sets of resources: the body (health; safety and security), critical consciousness and assets (including financial and productive assets; knowledge and skills; time; social capital).

Finally, there is a need to understand how power enables and constrains women's choice and voice. Both expressions of agency and control over resources are affected by how power operates in women and girls' lives in direct but also subtle ways. Power can work in visible, hidden and invisible ways (see Box 3) (Gaventa, 2006; Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009; Oxaal & Baden, 1997; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002; Wu, 2009).

Box 1. Expressions of power in empowerment

- **Power-to** is a woman or girl's ability to act and to shape her life and world (VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002). It entails a realisation that she can "shape [her] circumstances to achieve a situation that is more favourable to [her] interests [...and...] to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and the decisions made within it" (Alsop et al., 2006, p. 232). It can also refer to the ability to change existing hierarchies, either individually or collectively (Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009, p. 6).

- **Power-within** concerns a woman or girl's sense of self-worth, self-knowledge and increased individual consciousness of potential (Rowlands, 1997). This entails a process where women "perceive themselves as able and entitled to

occupy [...] decision-making space [... and] come to see themselves as having the capacity and the right to act and have influence" (Rowlands, 1997, p. 87 cited in Cornwall, 2014, p. 2).

- **Power-with** is collaborative power (VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002) recognising that "more can be achieved by a group acting together than by individuals alone" (Mosedale, 2005, p. 250). It is often derived from collective action, and comes with social mobilisation, building alliances and coalitions (Oxaal & Baden, 1997). Power-with requires people to become conscious of the unfair and oppressive aspects of their lives and their own and collective interests. Accordingly, power-with can benefit the power-within and power-to of individual women (Pathways, 2011).

Box 2. Power at work as constraining or enabling factor

- **Visible** power is expressed in observable decision-making, be it in households, formal politics, community meetings, economic negotiations, company budgets or employment regulations. This form of power can be seen in rules and procedures in formal authorities and institutions. This can be in election laws, health policies, employment regulations and land rights, as well as in decision-making spaces and positions.
- **Hidden** power refers to how vested interests set the agenda and shape arenas so that issues do not even come up, or how some actors are excluded from deliberations and decision-making. It is a form of 'backstage' power, and can occur in families (when health care needs of certain family members cannot be addressed), in communities (where members of a certain age, sex or social status cannot speak in public meetings) or the state (when domestic violence and rape within marriage does not make it onto the legal agenda).
- **Invisible** power goes even further, and is expressed in how ideologies, values and norms shape choices and voices. This is power that is taken for granted and makes the way things are appear normal and natural. Invisible power can make inequalities appear unchangeable and dominance remain unquestioned. It enforces compliance when individuals avoid transgression to avoid repercussions. It operates through engineered consensus, where women and girls have internalised a subordinate position and make choices in compliance with it (Alsop et al., 2006; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Malhotra et al., 2002). This is a type of silent power that hides issues and inequalities not only from the table (as hidden power) but also from the minds and consciousness of the people.

The three forms of power in Box 2 are expressions of **power-over**. They are about dependence and control, and can imply conflict and confrontation. Power-over is not by definition negative and constraining, and can also work to enable women and girls' choice and voice. Power-over, however, also risks being an expression of power at the expense of others: power as domination and subordination. This is most explicit in acts or threats of violence, intimidation or coercion.

In order to capture the visible, hidden and invisible ways power operates in the lives of women and girls, one of the model's key elements relates to **institutional structures**. These institutional structures encompass both formal laws and policies (visible power) and norms and attitudes (invisible power). Also, institutional structures are considered in how they are practised (hidden power), as are the key actors involved.

Empowerment of women and girls occurs when women and girls exercise agency and have more control over resources and when institutional structures are more enabling to their choice and voice, and ultimately their lives and futures. Transformation of power relations is not by definition a harmonious process. Social change in the deeper roots of inequality and empowerment does not always advance progressively or in linear way; it is prone to setbacks and can meet resistance. If empowerment is indeed 'two steps forward one step back', then reversals, discomfort and backlash are unavoidable parts of the process. Hard-won gains need to be defended. In fact, resistance and setbacks may be signs that power relations are indeed being challenged, and that the process is working—because it is generating a response. For instance, it has been observed that male earners in the household may take more control over women's incomes and that some women report more violence (Batliwala & Pittman, 2010, pp. 12-13; Rai, 2003; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

4. Agency

Agency	Women and girls pursuing goals, expressing voice and influencing and making decisions free from violence and retribution
Decision-making	Women and girls influencing and making decisions, and establishing and acting on goals
Leadership	Women and girls leading, inspiring social change and effectively participating in governance
Collective action	Women and girls gaining solidarity and taking action collectively on their interests, to enhance their position and expand the realm of what is possible

The next three chapters describe the three main elements of the model of empowerment of women and girls: agency, institutional structures and resources. In this chapter, we look at agency. Agency is at the heart of empowerment processes and is hence the first element of the model. Agency is the ability to pursue goals, express voice and influence and make decisions free from violence and retribution. It captures observable action as well as the meaning, motivations and purpose individuals bring to their actions (Gammage et al., 2016, p. 6; Klugman, 2014, p. 1; Kabeer, 1999b, p. 438). The model highlights three expressions of agency: decision-making, leadership and collective action. All three are defined in more detail and illustrated with examples. For each, the rationale for including them in the model is also explained, with reference to both the importance attached to it in empowerment thinking and practice and its relevance to the foundation's work.

Decision-making, leadership and collective action are not ingredients for agency: they are constitutive of the process and their absence can be considered a lack of agency. Which expressions of agency are most critical will differ across settings and times, with more emphasis on decision-making or leadership in some instances and collective action more vital in others (Malhotra et al., 2002; Mosedale, 2005). Decision-making, leadership and collective action influence each other. Enhanced decision-making can inspire collective action and lead to enhanced collective decision-making. Leadership can lead to enhanced decision-making in, for instance, public spheres, and can also contribute to collective action. The interplays between the three widen processes of change and make transformations more significant and sustainable. Expression of agency occurs in the interplay with resources and institutional structures.

WOMEN AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

Collective action

Decision-making

Leadership

RESOURCES

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES
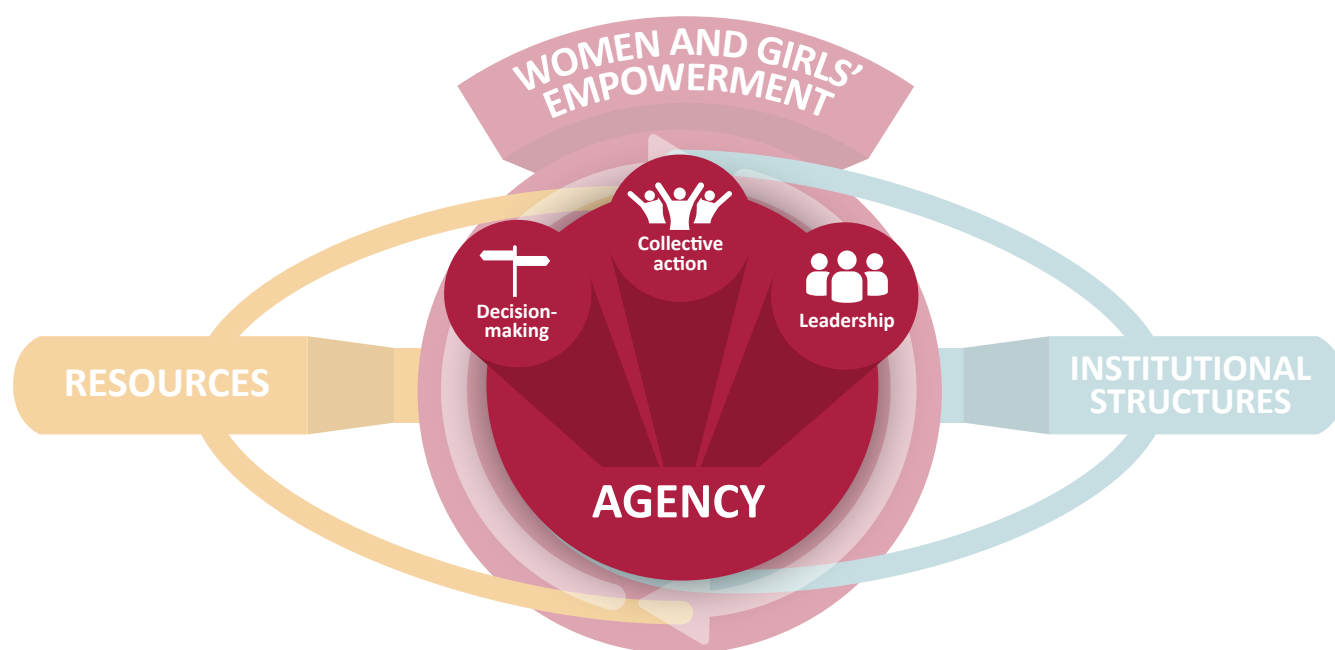
AGENCY

4.1 Decision-Making

What?

Decision-making encompasses influencing and making decisions, and also being able to act on them. It is an expression of agency as it is the determined use of resources in and through decisions, rather than mere access to them. Decision-making takes place in public and private spheres and can be at the individual level, in relationships or collectively in the state, markets or community. It entails choice, as well as women and girls voicing their interests and concerns. And yet it is not just about exercising choice, but also entails making informed decisions. Informed decisions imply information, and also awareness in the sense of imagining the previously unimaginable (FHI 360, 2012; Fortune-Greeley et al., 2014; Gammage et al., 2016; Girl Effect, 2012; Mosedale, 2005; Narayan, 2002).

Why?

Decision-making epitomises women and girls' expression of agency and embodies the act of assuming control over one's life and future. Moreover, it features across the work of the foundation. In Agriculture, this concerns decisions on what crops are grown, what land is used for food or cash crops, how money from sales is used or who can access which agricultural inputs. *Financial Services for the Poor (FSP)* looks at women's decision-making on the use of financial resources, and is interested in how

this benefits the family. *Family Planning (FP)*, *Nutrition and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH)* are concerned with decisions on women and girls' bodies and reproductive health (for example, see Box 3), and this is also prominent in the cross-cutting work on adolescent health and development. These include decisions on use of contraceptives, desired number of children and pregnancies, birth spacing and delaying of pregnancies, timing and frequency of sex and when and how to feed one's children. For younger women and girls, personal decisions on what to wear or eat and whether to go out with a friend, go to school or participate in a sport or youth association may be key. Major decisions for younger women and girls entail whether and whom to marry, when and with whom to have sex and how to protect oneself from unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases. All these types of decisions are strongly affected by gender and age, often in intersections with other social markers such as socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race or caste.

Empowered decision-making can be approached from two angles: exercising autonomy over different parts of one's life (UNFPA, 2007) and negotiating, influencing and bargaining in decision-making processes (Gammage et al., 2016).

Box 3. Family Planning theory of change

Empowered decision-making takes an important place in the Gates Foundation FP theory of change. This places empowered decision-making as the critical connection between an enabling environment, encompassing national and community-level factors, and women and girls' intent to use modern contraception. Actual contraceptive use is further mediated by quality and accessible commodities, services and counselling:

Notes: Indicators in italics are a selected subset of FP2020 core indicators.
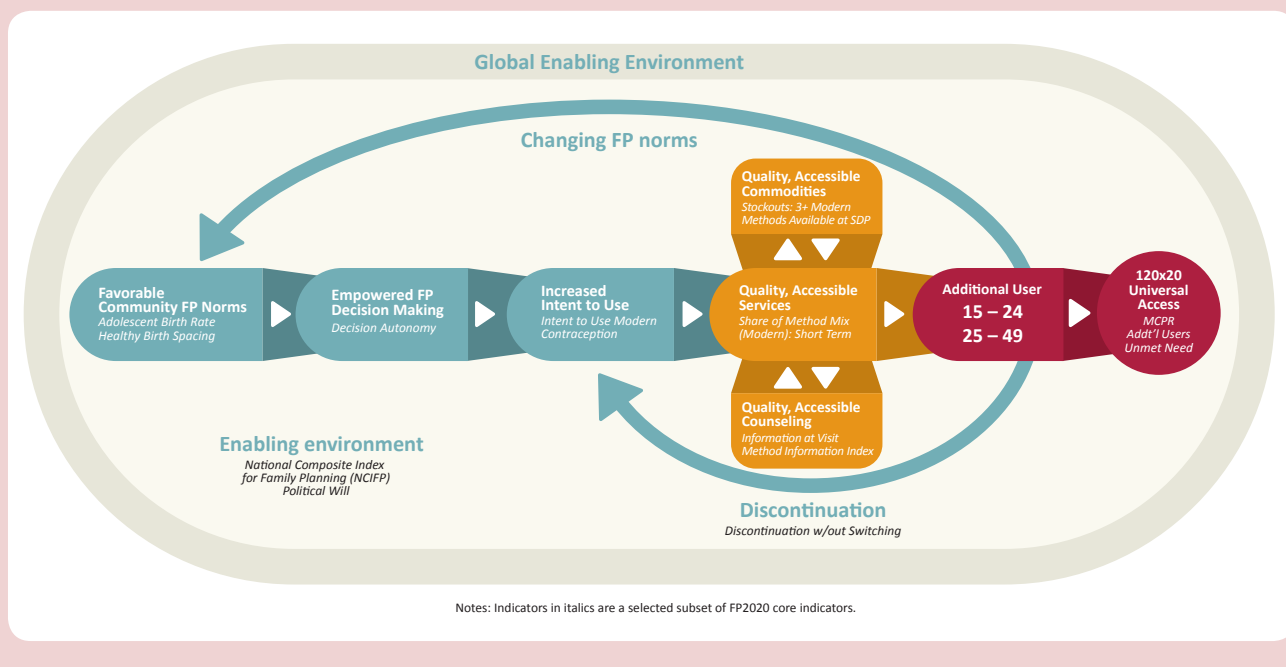
Autonomy

Autonomy in decision-making refers to the level of **self-determination** of an individual. Autonomous decisions are motivated by the values and interests of a woman or girl rather than influenced by external pressure, social approval, punishment or guilt (Alkire, 2005, pp. 16-17).[10]

Autonomy is a key concern in **bodily integrity** and features prominently in work on family planning, HIV, sexual and reproductive health and rights and GBV. Relative autonomy in decision-making is an indication of power-to, and points to making decisions free of discrimination, coercion and violence (Pillsbury et al., 2000; UNFPA,

2007). In the health sector, it also concerns who can touch your body, either as a sexual or marital partner or as a health care professional. In the agricultural field, the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) refers to autonomy in production, which it has introduced as an indicator next to joint or individual decision-making, to capture the extent to which decisions reflect a woman's values and interests (Alkire et al., 2013, p. 74). Women's autonomy also features in the foundation's *MNCH* work, in particular in the framework of the Sanitation Hygiene Infant Nutrition Efficacy (SHINE) project, as Box 4 illustrates.

10. Autonomy can exist in both individualistic and more collective settings. It thus does not equal individualism. When a person acts within rules set by law, social norms or, for instance, parents, and that person endorses those rules, one can speak of autonomy and agency. Alternatively, one could be acting in the same way but feeling utterly coerced and oppressed by the parent, the social group or the law. In this second instance, autonomy is compromised (Alkire, 2005, p. 16).

Bargaining power and joint decision-making

Decisions are often carried out between two or more people. Agency is expressed not only in the actual decisions but also in resistance, bargaining, negotiation and reflection. Participating, influencing and making final decisions are interrelated but distinct parts of decision-making. Yet simply participating in decision-making processes is different from controlling them (Longwe, 1991; van den Bold, Quisumbing R, & Gillespie, 2013, p. 4). Decision-making is thus concerned with bargaining power, and entails:

- Power-to: her ability to make decisions and act, particularly in shaping her life and world, and possibly affecting that of others
- Power-within: making choices and taking action with self-confidence and on her own behalf.

Joint decision-making recognises that women and men in households can both share and disagree on their interests. The household is a unit of 'cooperative conflict', where resources and benefits are both pooled and divided. Members of the household contribute differently to household assets, and have different control and decision-making power over, for instance, income or care work. Bargaining power is affected by the extent to women and girls' interests as well as their contributions to the household are recognised (by relatives and themselves), and also by their circumstances in case the relationship breaks down (e.g. divorce) (Gammage et al., 2016; Jackson, 2013; Sen & Grown, 1987). This means critical consciousness, norms as well as formal laws, women's social capital and the relations in different institutional arenas shape bargaining power.

Bargaining may not be explicit, however. Silence or apparent consent may indicate low voice and bargaining power but also a strategic decision, given the perceived 'costs of protest' (Gammage et al., 2016, p. 3).

Box 4. Autonomy in the Sanitation Hygiene Infant Nutrition Efficacy study

Women's decision-making autonomy is one of the constructs of 'caregiver capabilities' in the framework of the SHINE study. SHINE hypothesises that the caregiver capabilities of women who are mothers affect the health outcomes of their children. The primary goals are to reduce stunting and anaemia in children up to 18 months.

Caregiver capabilities are "the skills and attributes of a caregiver that determine their ability to care for a young child in ways that produce positive nutrition, health and development outcomes" (Matare, Mbuya, Pelto, Dickin, & Stoltzfus, 2015, p. 746). One of the seven elements is decision-making autonomy, which emphasises a woman's "capacity to manipulate one's environment through control over resources and information, so that she can make decisions that reflect her own concerns or those of her children or relatives" (Matare et al., 2015, p. 747).

Caution is needed in determining whether joint or sole decision-making on a given decision indicates empowerment, as this also depends on her situation and aspirations.[11] Decision-making and bargaining are strongly represented in the WEAI (Box 5). This index considers indicators of decision-making and autonomy at 'adequate' levels when an individual has had at least some input or participation in decisions (Alkire et al., 2013, pp. 73-74)

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11. If a woman or girl wants to be part of a particular decision, then joint may be better; a woman or girl can also be empowered if she prefers not to be involved in a given decision.

Box 5. Decision-making and autonomy in the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index

The WEAI covers five domains of empowerment: production, resources, income, leadership and time. Decision-making is considered in relation to agricultural production, credit and income. The WEAI makes "no judgement on whether sole or joint decision-making better reflects greater empowerment" (Alkire et al., 2013, p. 73).

The following indicators on decision-making and bargaining are included:

- Decision-making on agricultural production: whether the woman or man has sole or joint input into decisions about food crop farming, cash crop farming, livestock raising and fish culture;

- Autonomy in agricultural production: whether the woman or man can make her or his own decisions regarding agricultural production, which inputs to buy, which types of crops to grow for agricultural production, when to take or who would take crops to the market and whether to engage in livestock raising;

- Decisions about land and productive assets: who participates, or can participate, in the decision to buy, sell or transfer an asset that is owned by the household;

- Decisions about credit: whether a woman or a man participated in a decision about obtaining or using credit (can be from various resources); and

- Control over use of income: the input a woman or man has into decisions about the use of income from productive and income-generating activities; and the extent to which a woman or man feels she or he can make her or his own decisions regarding wage or salary employment.

4.2 Leadership

What?

Women and girls' leadership concerns their ability to lead and inspire social change and to effectively participate in governance. Leadership is closely related to collective organising and mobilising but is also distinct from it. *Formal* leadership is concerned with formal authority, such as women's political participation or representation in leadership and management positions in private companies. Women and girls can also exercise *informal* leadership—that is, the ability to "inspire and guide others in order to bring about change or to address a complex problem" (Debebe, 2007, p. 2). Leadership as an expression of agency can manifest itself in *individual* and *collective* leadership. These can be related, such as in the case of collective action with individual women leading women's organisations.

Women and girls' leadership strengthens their voice through speaking up and being heard, and expands their choice through having interests acted on for the benefit of other women and girls as well as themselves. Understanding leadership as women's voice and choice positions women as change agents and actors, rather than focusing on disadvantages and inequalities. Leadership encompasses power-over, and also facilitates power-within and power-to. In the case of leadership through collective action, it also embodies power-with (Cornwall, 2014; O'Neil & Domingo, 2016).

"Leadership is first and foremost about power – it is about holding power, exercising power, and changing the distribution and relations of power, in multiple forms and settings. Feminist leadership means functioning with a greater consciousness not only of others' but one's own power. [It is about] women with a feminist perspective and vision of social justice, individually and collectively transforming themselves to use their power, resources and skills in non-oppressive, inclusive structures and processes to mobilize others – especially other women – around a shared agenda of social, cultural, economic and political transformation for equality and the realization of human rights for all" (Batliwala, 2011, pp. 33, 29) .

Why?

Women's and girls' leadership has symbolic power and can be transformative, because it "challenges widespread beliefs that men are leaders and women's place is in the home" (O'Neil & Domingo, 2016, p. 11). The WEAI, for instance, incorporates an indicator on speaking up in public as an expression of leadership.[12] While women leaders can and do advance women's interests more generally, for instance through legal and policy reform, this is not automatically because they are women. "Feminine presence" does not necessarily translate to "feminist activism in politics" (Goetz, 2002, p. 5). Feminist leadership captures not only that women and girls hold leadership positions and power but also how they do it in an empowering and transformative way (for example, see Box 6). This underlines how women and girls' leadership is both an expression of voice and choice and a means to enable empowerment and larger control of women and girls over their lives.

Women and girls are challenged by double standards on leadership qualities. Women leaders often face a double bind of not being assertive enough (not leader enough), and not being feminine enough. When they exhibit similar leadership qualities to men, such as being vocal, they face resistance and backlash. Accordingly, cultivating women and girls' leadership requires enabling them to overcome barriers that limit their effectiveness (Debebe, 2007). Common elements of strengthening women's leadership include strengthening 'hard' and 'soft' skills, networking and mentoring.[13] With mainstream organisations, strategic alliances with men as gatekeepers as well as among women themselves are needed. Youth leadership also merits specific attention, and young women in particular face specific challenges in leadership, given how being a woman and being young intersect. Youth leadership has been emphasised as important for adolescent health and well-being.[14]

12. This indicator in the WEAI uncovers whether an individual (woman or man) is comfortable and at ease speaking up in public on at least one of the following issues: decisions on construction of infrastructure (roads, small wells), in ensuring payment of wages for public work or programmes and to protest the misbehaviour of authorities (Alkire et al., 2013, p. 74).

13. Women also gain leadership capacity from working with social movements and in professional life. Women and girl leaders can benefit from being brought up in a politically active family or having supportive partners and relatives. The political and social environment can open up opportunities for girls and women to lead, and political transitions, post-conflict peace processes and constitutional reforms can be critical moments for women to renegotiate space (O'Neil & Domingo, 2016, p. 11).

14. The Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing recognises the importance of adolescent leadership and engagement. "Adolescents and youth should be supported and empowered to contribute to designing, implementing and assessing policies, programs and systems that contribute to their health and wellbeing" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 2462). The presumption that adults always know best needs to shift towards becoming an understanding of engagement as youth working in partnership with adults. This requires the promotion of youth participation and leadership, and training of adults' responses. For this partnership to be effective, youth need resources (e.g. training, mentorship, financial) and platforms, which are not always available. The socio-cultural, economic and political contexts shape and can limit the opportunities for youth leadership and how it is supported. Generally speaking, the more control and decision-making power youth have, the greater the effectiveness of the engagement in relation to personal and peer health outcomes.

Box 6. Leadership and career development in the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development programme

Leadership and career development of African women agricultural scientists is at the core of the AWARD programme. AWARD is determined to empower individual fellows in multiple ways, cultivating a growing pool of top women scientists across sub-Saharan Africa. AWARD seeks to "help close the gender gap in agriculture by preparing more women to compete for influential positions in agricultural research institutions and organizations in sub-Saharan Africa" (AWARD, 2015, p. 3). These African women scientists are "technically competent to generate innovations needed by rural smallholders, most of whom are women", and they contribute to making these organisations and their work "responsive to gender issues in the service of women, without excluding men" (Ibid.).

The AWARD programme consists of three complementary components: fostering mentoring partnerships between fellows and respected senior scientists in their field; building science skills through a range of courses and conferences; and developing leadership capacity, combining leadership courses with role modelling events.

AWARD's African Women in Science Empowerment Model (its acronym AWSEM is pronounced 'awesome') recognises five expressions of power, linked to '5 Cs' critical to the leadership and empowerment of African women scientists:

Power 'from within' (*change*): increasing her inner strength to contribute, excel, lead and inspire others

Power 'to do' (*choice*): increasing her capability to contribute, excel, lead and inspire others

Power 'over' (*control*): generating opportunities to overcome underlying resource and power constraints in order to contribute, excel, lead and inspire others

Power 'with' (*community*): generating collaboration, crossing boundaries and joining forces with others for better contributions to science and society

Power 'to empower' (*champion*): generating numbers and initiatives, going beyond being motivated to actually inspiring and igniting others and sharing forward, multiplying opportunities for the next generations of women and girls

4.3 Collective Action

What?
Collective action concerns women and girls gaining solidarity and taking action collectively on their interests, to enhance their position and expand the realm of what is possible. It mobilises and strengthens women and girls' **collective power.** Coming together around common goals and interests can enable women and girls to have more influence than when they act individually and in isolation. It manifests itself in women's organisations, cooperatives or SHGs; around themes such as agriculture or marketing or water management; when mobilising against GBV or in favour of women's rights to land and inheritance; or when demanding legal change (Alkire et al., 2013; Gammage et al., 2016; Mosedale, 2005).

Women's deliberate organising and collective action takes place on many levels, vis-à-vis the market as well as the state. It can entail group formation and action at community level, as in SHGs, women's groups or savings and credit groups. At national and also the international level, women and girl activists and organisations act collectively to promote women's empowerment, advocate for change and hold institutions accountable. Collective action can take place formally or informally, and can be induced from the outside or emerge and evolve from below (Evans & Nambiar, 2013).

Collective action develops power-with: women and girls gain **solidarity, mutual support** and a shared sense of identity and confidence from working together. Enhanced voice contributes to individual and collective influence on decision-making processes (choice), both within the group and as part of the group's action (Klugman et al., 2014; Markel & Jones, 2014; UNFPA, 2007). Collective action is also inextricably linked to power-within, in the sense of women and girls coming together and changing their perceptions of power inequalities and their sense of self, and power-to, by amplifying voice and exercising choice in decision-making processes. Power-with and power-within can be of specific significance to marginalised groups of women, such as LGBT women, female sex workers, women with disabilities, low-

"Individual women can, and do, act against the norm, but their impact on the situation of women in general is likely to be limited and they may have to pay a high price for their autonomy. The project of women's empowerment is dependent on collective solidarity in the public arena as well as individual assertiveness in the private" *(Kabeer, 1999b, p. 457).*

caste women or indigenous women. Men and boys can contribute to or be part of women and girls' collective action, as supportive allies and by being part of the shifts in institutional structures that are required.

Why?
Women's deliberate organising and collective action has a long history in the women's movement. It is indispensable to **social transformation** and fundamental to women and girls' empowerment. Individual women and girls alone cannot address the structural inequalities underlying the disempowerment and marginalisation of women and girls. Women and girls' collective power, mobilised through and in collective organising and action, is critical to "creating the conditions for change and in reducing the costs for the individual" (Kabeer, 1999b, p. 457). Collective action hence entails a process in which women and girls come together and can mobilise a broad constituency to challenge power relations and hierarchies that lead to disempowerment, not only theirs but also that of other marginalised groups, as well as men and boys.

Collective organising and action entails finding a collective voice and expressing that voice and being heard. It has instrumental value—as a means to expand and enhance women's decision-making power and challenge unequal and disempowering institutional

structures, or in enabling women and girls access to and control over resources otherwise not attainable. The mobilising and associating of collectivisation also has intrinsic value (Evans & Nambiar, 2013). Collectivisation is empowering as a process of sharing experiences, collective learning and developing a shared sense of identity and confidence. Group formation among women and girls can build their social capital and strengthen solidarity, social cohesion and resilience. For collective action to be empowering, group formation needs to go beyond a single focus only (e.g. credit) and engage with women's voice and challenge inequalities.

Campaigning and activism at national and international levels seeks to challenge violations of women's rights and restrictive gender norms. It demands legal and policy change and accountability of governments, companies and religious leaders to women and girls.

Women's movements have organised and acted on a myriad of issues, including violence against women, restrictions on women's mobility, unequal pay and indecent work and working conditions, rights to land and natural resources and the entitlement to speak and be heard in community meetings or formal policy processes in the government arena. Women's organisations and mobilisations have proven to be key factors in transforming institutional structures, for instance in the adoption of comprehensive policies against GBV (Htun & Weldon, 2012).[15] Apart from collectivisation among women, building alliances with critical others is also key to advancing change (Batliwala, 2013; Cornwall & Edwards, 2014; Edwards, 2015; Gammage et al., 2016; Goetz & Musembi, 2008; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Malhotra et al., 2002; Mosedale, 2005). See boxes 7 and 8 for examples from the foundation.

Box 7. Self Help Groups (Gates Foundation India Country Office)

Self Help Groups are "small voluntary groups that are formed by people related by an affinity for a specific purpose who provide support for each other." (Brody et al., 2015, p.9). The groups can vary in terms of access to external capital (e.g. bank accounts, commercial credit lines), heterogeneity of composition, nature of formation (externally or community-facilitated) and so on.

SHGs in India have known a long history, and have been formed by both civil society and the government. They aim at a range of objectives, including "poverty reduction through improving women's credit access (largely government), promoting livelihoods, economic and social security, access to entitlements, women's empowerment".

SHGs contribute to:
- Greater participation and influence of women in decision-making, especially in the household and on production and use of income;
- Greater participation of women in local governance, and women voicing their public and personal interests; and
- Improved group cohesion and solidarity, through strengthened cooperation and trust among group members.

For SHGs to be effective vehicles of empowerment in a transformative way, key principles include starting with women's immediate needs, supporting women to consider long-term goals, mobilising at a pace that matches women's realities and linking women with networks and associations with shared goals (Agrawal, 2001; Brody et al., 2015; Kabeer, 2011; Markel & Jones, 2014; Samman & Santos, 2009).

15. Government action in response to GBV has been uneven, with some countries adopting comprehensive policies and others responding slowly. Htun & Weldon (2012) have analysed an original dataset of social movements and GBV policies in 70 countries over four decades, and show "that feminist mobilization in civil society—not intra-legislative political phenomena such as leftist parties or women in government or economic factors like national wealth—accounts for variation in policy development" (p. 548). The impact on GBV policy of these autonomous movements also endures through the institutionalisation of feminist ideas in international norms.

Box 8. The Avahan initiative in India

The Avahan initiative was a community mobilisation programme that aimed to address HIV/AIDS prevention for high-risk populations in six Indian states. The populations specifically targeted included female sex workers, high-risk men who have sex with men, transgender people and injecting drug users. Three stages of community mobilization processes were identified in Avahan:

Stage 1: Identification with others. Creating a safe space (both physical and social) for sex workers contributes to increasing self-confidence as they identify with a larger community of sex workers.

Stage 2: Collectivisation. The recognition of shared identities contributes to identifying shared needs. Sex workers were supported to collaborate and identify issues they could address together as a group, influencing the larger community.

Stage 3: Ownership. Support was provided to formalise community groups and networks owned by sex workers themselves. Ownership is crucial in increasing the influence sex workers have in mobilising and engaging communities towards HIV prevention.

The approach led to the identification of barriers to condom use and health care services, including violence, self-confidence and debt. As a consequence, structural interventions were included in the programmes, including crisis response, legal literacy and sensitising the police force. The community mobilisation approach allowed for sustainable change on a large scale.

Characteristic of the Avahan initiative was the flexible management of the programme, allowing for micro-planning, structural interventions and community organisational development. The Common Minimum Programme was a living document that offered a baseline of effective activities, with updates and adaptations based on successful practices in implementation. The flexibility made the programme adaptable to the local context and the variety of communities (Galavotti et al., 2012; Wheeler et al., 2012).

Institutional structures	The social arrangements of formal and informal rules and practices that enable and constrain the agency of women and girls, and govern the distribution of resources
Formal laws and Policies	Formally recognised rules of conduct or procedures established by nation states, international treaties and conventions, or local governance authorities, that govern the rights and entitlements of women and girls
Norms	Collectively held expectations and beliefs of how women, men, girls and boys should behave and interact in specific social settings and during different stage of their lives
Relations	The interactions and relations with key actors that women and girls experience in their daily lives

This chapter presents the second element of the empowerment model: the institutional structures that enable and constrain women and girls' agency. Women, girls, men and boys pursue their interests and live their lives in the context of **institutional structures**—that is, the social arrangements of formal and informal rules and practices that govern behaviour and expressions of agency, as well as distribution and control of resources (Alkire, 2005; Alsop et al., 2006; Samman & Santos, 2009). Institutional structures matter because the "roots of individual inequalities of power" are structural (Kabeer, 1999a, p. 10). Change in the lives of women and girls "is not possible without changing the underlying structures of constraint" (Edwards, 2015, p. 5).

"Discriminatory social institutions are formal and informal laws, social norms and practices that restrict or exclude women and consequently curtail their access to rights, resources and empowerment opportunities."

"Reducing and eliminating the gender gaps in social institutions is critical for establishing an environment that enables women and girls to fully benefit from social and economic empowerment opportunities. Gender gaps in social institutions translate into gender gaps in development outcomes" (OECD, 2014b, p. 6).

WOMEN AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

RESOURCES

AGENCY

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

relations

norms

laws & policies

Family

Community

Market

State
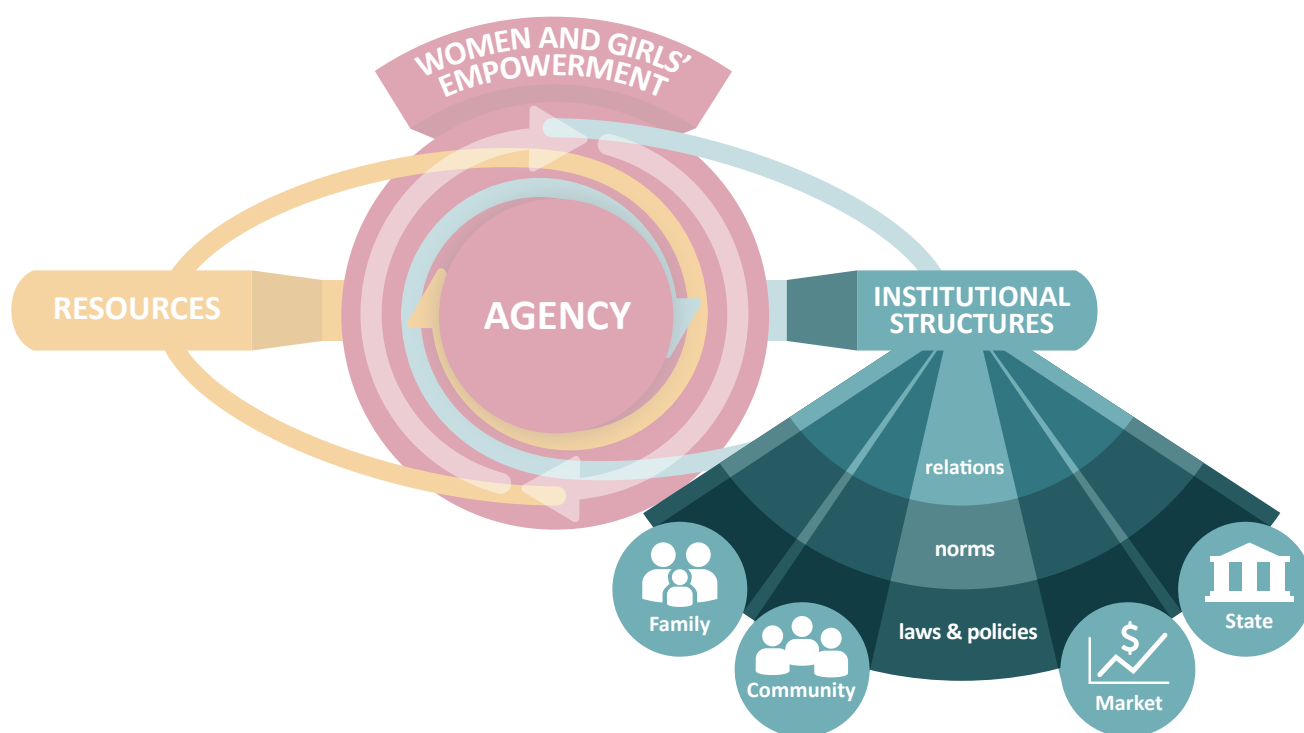
Institutional structures can both enable and constrain women and girls' choice and voice, through the working of visible, hidden and invisible power (Alkire, 2005; Alsop et al., 2006; Samman & Santos, 2009). A woman or girl's control over her life is strongly shaped by how institutional structures affect her freedom to choose; these especially govern what options and choices are available to women and girls, and the conditions *under which* they make choices. Institutional structures are also key factors constraining or strengthening women and girls' voice, and strongly affect whether they can speak and be heard.

Institutional structures enable and constrain women and girls' agency, in decision-making, leadership and collective action. This happens directly, for instance through laws or norms that govern women's political or economic leadership or shape women's decision-making power in the household or the market. It also works indirectly, because institutional structures govern how resources are distributed and which resources women and girls can access, control and use in the exercise of their agency. Because of this, empowerment is a multilevel process of change.

In turn, women's decision-making, leadership and collective action can challenge institutional structures; this can lead to a redistribution of resources and recognition of women and girls' entitlements and set in motion transformational change. Hence, there is a potentially mutually reinforcing interrelationship between changes in agency, resources and institutional structures. Empowerment at one level, however, does not mean change at others or to the same degree. The links can also vary from context to context. Moreover, empowering conditions may exist in one institutional arena, for example the household, but not another, such as the market or the state (Alsop et al., 2006; DAW, 2001).

Institutions are considered here in terms of four arenas and three sub-elements (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996; Klugman et al., 2014; Markel & Jones, 2014; Scott, 2008):

1. Institutions can be located in four arenas: state, market, community and family.
2. Institutional structures are made up of three key elements: formal laws and policies, norms and relations.

5.1 Arenas

Institutions are social arrangements that operate in different arenas (Alsop et al., 2006, pp. 19-21; Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996, p. 17). Four major arenas relevant to empowerment of women and girls are:

- **Family** comprises both the household and wider kinship relations, such as extended families and lineage groupings. Institutional arrangements in this arena include marriage and divorce, the relationships between parents and children (both at a young age and as adults) and relationships with in-laws or extended family relatives. Rules related to families comprise formal elements, such as marriage or inheritance law, and informal dimensions, including social obligations between spouses or between parents and children. In patriarchal societies, women's and girls' relationships with the father, husband or brothers are critical, as these men are assigned authority and privilege vis-à-vis women and girls. Other important family relations can be with children, sisters, in-laws, grandparents, co-wives, aunts or uncles.

- **Community** consists of supra-family arrangements in the village, neighbourhood, town or city in which women and girls live. It includes the array of social groups and organisations in civil society, such as NGOs, community-based organisations, religious institutions (mosques, churches, etc.), political parties and women's rights organisations. Important rules in the community are customary laws regarding marriage, land ownership or community decision-making. Informal rules can relate to women and girls' mobility, or religious principles and beliefs that shape their lives. The community can also offer important relationships with women leaders from women's rights organisations or community-based organisations, or linkages with political parties.

- The **state** is the legal, administrative and military centre of a country. It is the political organisation of a centralised government with a bureaucratic administration, which also includes regional and local governance bodies. Important sub-arenas are political governance and decision-making, justice and rule of law and public service delivery. The state sets rules with respect to political representation of women in parliaments or city councils, or legal frameworks for inheritance, citizenship or GBV. The state is also key for the empowerment of women and girls as a provider of formal education and health care, and includes publicly funded research institutes.

- The **market** is the economic arena, incorporating firms, businesses and corporations and sites of production, exchange, trade and related activities. Important sub-arenas include the labour market, goods markets and trade (value chains), financial markets, private service delivery and privately funded research institutes. The market is important for women and girls, for example for its financial and banking rules and mechanisms, how inclusive value chains and markets are and the job opportunities it provides (formally or informally) and under what conditions (decent work and pay).

Each of these arenas has its own rules and practices and its own mechanisms and actors. Women and girls' choice and voice is at stake in each. Their empowerment is not confined to community and the family, but also relates to modern institutions including the state and the market. Each arena, in its own way, affects women and girls' decision-making power, leadership or collective action, and their control over resources.

The arenas co-exist and are often linked to each other. State laws and policies affecting the functioning of markets, as well as family and marriage relations; religious institutions have an effect on state policies as well as family relations. Depending on the context, the arenas and their sub-arenas might be further refined, or new ones added when relevant. Ethnic groups or caste may be relevant sub-arenas for the community in certain countries; the military, the police or local governance bodies, can be important sub-arenas of the state.

The arenas are not to be understood as only 'local contexts'; they operate across different scales. National, regional and international factors are at play in most of them and strongly shape the control women and girls, and men and boys for that matter, have over their lives. Global economic, political and cultural processes play out at most local levels, affecting the distribution of resources—for instance ownership of land, access to clean water, tax revenues of national governments and access to education or health care. International and global forces intersect with local contexts to shape economic opportunities, markets and labour and the political arena. Included in this are democratic spaces where women and girls can express their voices and demand an end to violence against women and girls, control over resources, decent work and equal pay or access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Empowerment of women and girls requires changes in institutional structures at multiple levels, ranging from the local to the national and international.

Each of the four arenas is shaped by three sub-elements, presented in more detail below. Visible power is at play in formal laws and policies, and hidden and invisible power in norms and in the relationships among people.

5.2 Formal Laws and Policies

What?
Formal laws and policies are established by the nation state but can also come from international treaties and conventions or local governance authorities. Laws are formally recognised rules of conduct or procedures that are binding and enforced by a controlling legal authority. Policies outline the goals of a ministry and the methods, principles and planned activities to achieve these. Policies might require a legal framework to be put in place to achieve their aims (Markel & Jones, 2014, p. 4). Laws and policies are important for women and girls' empowerment in terms of what is put on paper, but it is also necessary to look at what happens in practice. To what extent and how are they implemented and reinforced? And what factors affect weak implementation and reinforcement: lack of political will and recognition? Capacity shortages or weaknesses in the public sector? Lack of sufficient resources allocated to implementation?

Relevant laws for gender equality include a national constitution; family law (including marriage and divorce law); property and inheritance law; laws on violence against women or domestic violence; and citizenship, governance or election laws. Policies with clear gender implications are employment policies, tax regulations, educational policies, health and reproductive health policies and agricultural policies. In some countries plural legal systems exist—for instance when national legislation recognises customary law.

Why?
Many laws and policies affect who has access to which resources and opportunities, and under what conditions. They define who can get married to whom, and under what conditions a marriage can be ended. Laws define what constitutes violence between spouses, and also who can own or inherit property. They outline rights to health and education, as well as labour rights or political rights such as the right to convene, vote or protest. Laws and policies are often articulated at different levels. Rights enshrined in a national constitution may not always be translated into national laws, or into more concrete policies and regulations.

States have also signed and ratified international treaties and conventions. Their domestication and implementation can be uneven or lag behind. "Legal guarantees of gender equality have expanded over the last two decades—but rights on paper too often go unenforced in practice" (Clinton Foundation, 2015, p. 5). Important international conventions, treaties and agreements that offer universally accepted benchmarks for gender equality and women and girls' empowerment include:

• The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1979);

• The Convention of Rights of the Child (CRC 1990);

• The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993);

• The Beijing Platform of Action (1995, Fourth World Conference on Women);

• The Cairo Programme for Action (1994, International Conference on Population and Development); and

• Several UN Security Council Resolutions (1325 and later resolutions on women, peace and security).

At regional level, treaties and protocols have also been adopted, such as the Maputo Protocol on the rights of women in Africa.

To make it possible to grasp the effect of institutional structures on the empowerment of women and girls, these need to be understood as dynamic arrangements of rules. Legal, policy and normative systems are most often plural rather than single. Multiple legal systems and laws can exist in specific countries and contexts.

Plural legal systems can include statutory, customary or religious law, and legal systems of indigenous people. Moreover, legal systems are pluralistic when dual ideologies of law are operating, especially when formal written law exists alongside informal use of the law in practice. The dynamic and possibly plural nature of legal, policy and normative systems means it is necessary to take into account how laws, policies and regulations align but can also be inconsistent with each other.

Formal rules can also be reinforced or contradicted by gender norms (Brikci, 2013; Clinton Foundation, 2015). With respect to women and men's work, for example, expectations that women will engage in care and household work are examples of gender norms in numerous societies. These can be reinforced by tax policies and regulations that define the man as the household head and breadwinner, or national health policies that require the permission of a male partner when a woman seeks to use a contraceptive method (Langer et al., 2015, p. 9). Contradictions between different types of rules occur, for instance, when a country's legal framework provides land titles to couples or women to inherit property but community-level norms prioritise men's ownership of land or inheritance. Tensions can also occur between laws that ban violence against women and policy and law enforcement agencies that do not implement these legal provisions properly. They can be at odds with attitudes and values of men, as well as women, that normalise wife-beating or rape within marriage as acceptable conduct. Norms are discussed in the next section.

5.3 Norms

What?

Norms refer to those expectations and beliefs as to how women, men, girls and boys should behave and interact in specific social settings and during different stages of their lives (Edström, Hassink, Shahrokh, & Stern, 2015). Gender norms and attitudes are key aspects of institutional structures that shape the empowerment of women and girls. They are a specific set of social norms that constitute gender relations and patriarchal hierarchies. In their simplest form, norms are collectively (rather than individually) held definitions of socially approved behaviour. They are more informal, implicit and decentralised than formal rules, and deeply engrained in our identities and sense of self. Norms can refer to "values, attitudes, preferences, conventions, assumptions, ideologies, traditions, customs, culture, rules, laws, beliefs or even rights" (Gammage et al., 2016, p. 5). They are present in all segments of social life: in modern organisations including the state, the market and private companies, as well as in traditions, customs and religion and in families and communities (Pearse & Connell, 2016).

Why?

Norms influence women and girls' empowerment in complex ways. They shape behaviour through enforcement and compliance. This can occur explicitly, through sanctions, coercion or violence, or implicitly, in routinized and repetitive behaviour, when compliance is internalised and social obligations are taken for granted. Norms in general, and gender norms in particular, are expressions of power. Gender norms are manifestations of gender ideologies, and are reproduced through socialisation, social penalties, moral policing and violence. In patriarchal societies, gender ideologies and norms maintain and justify male privilege, gender inequalities and the disempowerment of women and

girls. Other social norms related to ethnicity, race, caste, class, sexual orientation and disability affect women and girls in their intersections with gender norms. When norms are taken for granted, they operate as invisible and silent forms of power[16] (Pearse & Connell, 2016; Scott, 2008).

In order to avoid simplified understandings, it is important to acknowledge that people are not passive recipients of norms. Rather, they are selective in their perceptions and uptake of social prescriptions and obligations (Pearse & Connell, 2016; Scott, 2008). Norms commonly attract the attention of development agencies as constraints on the agency of women and girls (Fleming, Barker, McCleary-Sills, & Morton, 2013; Klugman et al., 2014; Mackie, Moneti, Denny, & Shakya, 2012). Yet norms also enable behaviour and women and girls' exercise of choice and voice. In addition, gender norms affect not only women and girls, but also men and boys. Rigid masculinity norms in many settings require men to be tough, brave, aggressive, invulnerable and sexually active. Most times, men are expected to be heterosexual, and to provide for and protect their family (Greene & Levack, 2010; Men Engage Alliance, 2014).

Norms exist in the **plural**. Whereas they convey a message on what is socially acceptable behaviour, there is hardly ever one single idea of what this means. Social consensus around gender norms is easily assumed but this denies that norms are contested. Contestation and negotiation of gender norms can be both overt and covert. Norms are dynamic: they are constantly reproduced and contested at the same time. Change in gender norms can come from both internal and external forces. Norms can be resistant to change, and in this sense also provide stability and order (Pearse & Connell, 2016).

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16. In order to understand how the power of norms works, norms should not be conflated with and reduced to gender roles. "The policy documents that often use a concept of gender norms generally invoke the idea of custom or stereotype, a fixed and discriminatory pattern that needs to be changed" (Pearse & Connell, 2016, p. 5). Moreover, gender norms are more than social norms, and more than peer group expectations or pressure.

Assuming social consensus around gender norms

"Social consensus was simply assumed. But that assumption is dangerous – both empirically and conceptually. Empirically, because in a given society there may be little agreement about gender prescriptions or even open disagreement. [...] Norms acting as hindrance to gender equality are not the only kind of gender norms that exist; there are also norms that support gender equality. Different, even contradictory, norms can exist in the same society. Indeed, this is usually the case in contemporary societies. Conceptually, the appearance of consensus may reflect not real social agreement in the symbolic domain, but the operation of power and the achievement of hegemony" (Pearse & Connell, 2016, p. 35).

Examples of the foundation's work on gender norms are the Family Planning programme interest to shift community norms around adolescent girls' decision-making on pregnancy. By providing women with choices and enabling them to make choices, this is seen as a way to shift community norms over time. Also, the foundation's work on new-born care addresses norms of caretaking and challenges preferential treatment of sick boys over sick girls. Another example is the WGCD grant to the Helen Keller International project in Cambodia, focused on food and nutrition security of poor households with limited access to land. The project's 'Nurturing Connections' is a gender-transformative approach that engages all decision-makers in a household to challenge discriminatory nutrition practices and gender norms, through a set of participatory activities, including story-telling and games. Box 10 presents another WGCD grant that explicitly engages with gender norms, in this case in relation to digital financial services.

Box 10. Explicitly working with norms in household decision-making in Uganda

In a digital financial products project in Uganda, CARE employs a gender-transformative approach to engage with inequitable gender norms at the household level. This is done to strengthen the positive and empowering impacts of the financial innovations and mitigate the potential negative consequences of financially oriented interventions. In some cases, women with easier access to their money through ATM cards experience more pressure from their husband to share this money with them. The rationale of the transformative approach is that financial inclusion interventions need to take gender norms into account in order to be effective.

The approach addresses gender norms by engaging all family members (women, husbands, but also in-laws, uncles, aunts and other siblings) in financial decision-making. Through a series of participatory sessions family members are invited to the individual and collective setting of goals, and to challenge inequalities in how resources, opportunities and benefits are distributed. The approach includes conflict resolution aspects, and stimulates alignment of needs and visions and translates these into a household financial plan that reflects the priorities of all members.

5.4 Relations

What?

Institutional structures are not just abstract rules, whether formal or informal. They exist through human conduct in social practice (Scott, 2008). Formal and informal rules come to live in the relations and interactions women and girls have with others in their lives. Important relations of women and girls across the different institutional arenas include:

1. Spouses, partners, and other sexual relationships;

2. Parents, in-laws and grandparents;

3. Siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and other relatives;

4. Friends and peers;

5. Service providers (either public or private sector): teachers, medical doctors, nurses and health assistants, police officers, judges, military staff;

6. Business (wo)men, traders, wholesalers, employers, bank officials, insurance agents;

7. State representatives as government bureaucrats or politicians; and

8. Local authorities, such as community leaders, religious leaders.

Formal and informal laws, rules and norms are conveyed in the relations of women and girls with these actors.

Why?

Because empowerment of women and girls is not an individual affair, it matters what relations women and girls have in and across institutional arenas. With whom are they related and interacting? What do their connections and networks look like? And what is the quality of these relations? The type and nature of women and girls' connections and relations can constrain or strengthen their choice and voice. Changes in relations are needed to address their lack of access to and control over resources or lack of influence on decision-making. Empowerment and control over life opportunities and decisions need to be negotiated in these relations. A stronger network—among women in similar situations, between women of different social groups and ages or among women and supportive men—can strengthen social capital (see also Chapter 6, Resources).

It is not only relationships in the family that are important; connections and interactions in the community, market or state arena also matter—for example with health officials, police officers or traders who respect women's and girls' voice and entitlements or community or religious leaders who speak out against violence and marginalisation of women and girls and respect their claims to access to material assets or justice. In all four institutional arenas, women and girls' relations can enhance or block their empowerment.

The actors with whom women and girls connect and interact can be **change agents** who deviate from the status quo and enhance their empowerment but also can function as **gatekeepers** of the status quo and constrain women and girls' choice and voice. Health service providers can support girls to make informed and voluntary choices on sexuality and reproduction but can also deny unmarried women and girls access to reproductive health or family planning services. Employers can provide decent work and equal pay and support women's leadership but may also be the ones who take advantage of women's labour and offer low wages and insecure working conditions.

It is not only power relations between women and men, but also those between and among women and girls, that merit consideration. Women can have significant roles vis-à-vis other women and girls, in all four arenas. Class, caste, age and marital status are factors that can intersect with gender and generate privilege for certain women over others. Women can open up or constrain space as mothers, daughters, sisters or mothers-in-law in the family arena; or as teachers, doctors, police officers, members of parliament, government ministers or presidents in the arena of the state. Women and girls can make a difference for others as business women, employers or taxi drivers in the market arena; or as inspirational leaders and activists or religious or spiritual leaders in the community.

6. Resources

Resources	The tangible and intangible capital and sources of power that women and girls have, own or use, individually or collectively, in the exercise of agency
Critical consciousness	Women and girls identifying and questioning how inequalities in power operate in their lives, and asserting and affirming their sense of self and their entitlements ('power-within')
Bodily Integrity	Women and girls' security and control over their bodies, and physical and mental well-being
Health	Women and girls' complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity
Safety and security	Women and girls' freedom from acts or threats of violence, coercion or force
Assets	Women and girls' control over tangible or intangible economic, social or productive resources that include (1) financial and productive assets, (2) knowledge and skills, (3) time and (4) social capital
Financial and productive assets	Women and girls' control over economic resources such as income, credit or savings, as well as long-term stocks of value like land, equipment, housing or livestock that can be owned, controlled or used by a person
Knowledge and skills	Women and girls' knowledge and skills (including life skills), and their abilities to apply knowledge to situations, obtained through high-quality formal or informal education, training or information
Time	Women and girls' control over their time and labour, which is key to time poverty and work burden
Social capital	Women and girls' relations and social networks that provide tangible and intangible value and support
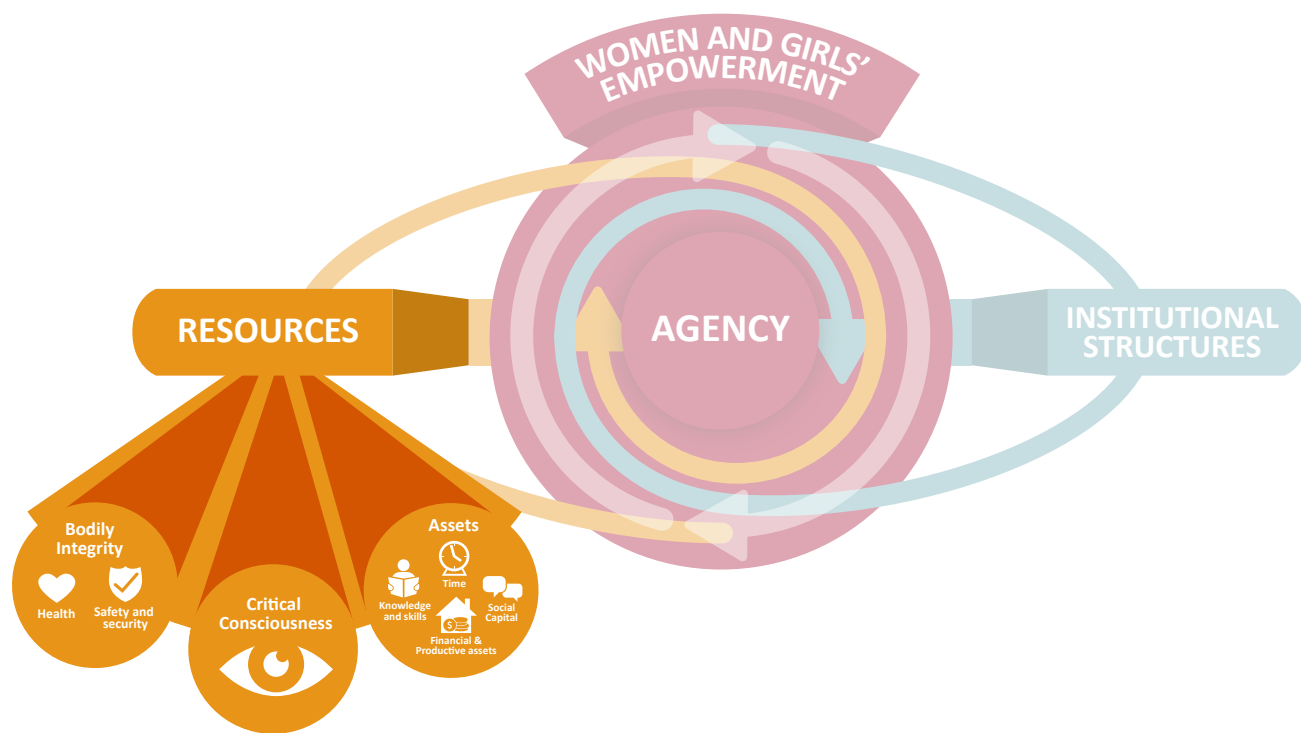
This chapter describes the third element in the model of empowerment of women and girls: resources. These are the tangible and intangible capital and sources of power that women and girls have, own or use individually or collectively. Resources are the sources of power, and access to and control over them are key determining factors for the expression of agency. For women and girls' empowerment, a wide range of tangible and intangible resources are relevant. This model considers three main types of resources as imperative to the empowerment of women and girls:

1. **Critical consciousness**;
2. **Bodily integrity,** including both health and safety and security;
3. **Assets,** including social capital; knowledge and skills; time; and financial and productive assets.

Women and girls' use of resources is fundamental to exercising choice and voice through decision-making, leadership and collective action. Yet access to or control over resources alone does not necessarily indicate that a woman is empowered. For example, micro-credit itself does not imply economic empowerment (Alsop et al., 2006; Kabeer, 1999b; Mosedale, 2005; Njuki, Baltenweck, Mutua, Korir, & Muindi, 2014).

Resources interact with each other, and can be mutually dependent and reinforcing. Control over one resource can affect the benefit of others for both individuals and groups. Strong social networks can strengthen a woman or girl's self-awareness and sense of self. A woman's access to and control over savings or income can be a contributing factor in her daughter accessing school, life skills training or health care. Safety and security affect women and girls' health and also their mobility and social capital. Employment can offer the opportunity to network with others outside family networks. Control over a combination of assets can contribute to empowerment and have positive impacts in terms of well-being, especially when resources accumulate. Conversely, lack of control over a combination of resources marks disempowerment and marginalisation. The dynamic and reinforcing relations between assets can have a multiplier, catalytic effect (Alsop et al., 2006; DAW, 2001; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Meinzen-Dick et al., 2011).

Having or gaining access to or control over resources often implies a transformation of power structures, because they are shaped by institutional structures. Laws and policies, as well as norms, affect women's ownership of land, whether girls can attend school or access health care and whether women and girls can safely go into the street and are not exposed to GBV. Gender norms and attitudes affect self-awareness and aspirations as well as the time women and girls spend on household work, paid labour, enjoying and building social capital or leisure and relaxation. Women and girls' control over resources is mediated through relations in institutional arenas: fathers, brothers and in-laws in the family arena; religious or community leaders in the community; employers, traders and bank officials in the market; and teachers, medical staff, police officers, judges and politicians in the state. Unequal gender relations constrain the resources and benefits women and girls can derive. Empowerment processes become transformative when a **redistribution** of resources takes place and is combined with a shift in **recognition** of women and girls as entitled to resources (Alsop et al., 2006; IFPRI, 2012; Meinzen-Dick et al., 2011; Mosedale, 2005; Njuki et al., 2014).

6.1 Critical Consciousness

What?
Critical consciousness refers to women and girls identifying and questioning how inequalities in power operate in their lives, and asserting and affirming their sense of self and their entitlements. Feminist and popular education methodologies and approaches enhance critical consciousness by engaging "people in making sense of their worlds, their relations, their assumptions, beliefs, practices and values – and in questioning that which they have come to take for granted, with potentially transformatory effects" (Cornwall & Edwards, 2014, p. 6).

Gaining a critical consciousness is fundamental to women and girls expanding their choice and strengthening their voice. Critical consciousness develops when women and girls:

- Gain understanding of, and perspective on, seemingly 'natural' and 'normal' power inequalities;
- Uncover how these are socially constructed—that is, located and reproduced in society;
- Uncover how these are experienced by others, and move beyond individual problems and self-improvement to generating unity, empathy and solidarity as a basis for collective transformative change; and
- Liberate themselves from self-perceptions of inferiority, weakness and unworthiness, and gain a sense of liberating agency that expands the horizons of what they can be and do.

Critical consciousness means women and girls start seeing everything differently: themselves, their relations, their context and their future. This is foundational to women and girls exercising collective and individual agency, because it affects their sense of entitlement to be in control of decisions that impact their lives. It is the 'power-within', and encompasses a range of capabilities that include a woman or girl's self-

awareness, confidence and self-esteem, aspirations, self-expression and self-efficacy (Alsop et al., 2006; Cornwall, 2014; Mosedale, 2005; Van der Gaag, 2014). Critical consciousness is necessary for women and girls:

- Valuing themselves and believing in their ability to reach a goal;
- Believing they can act to improve their conditions and realising they can be an agent of change in their own lives, at both an individual and a social level;
- Having a sense of entitlement and understanding their rights; and
- Making choices based on personal aspirations that are influenced by the opportunities they see as possible.

Why?
Critical consciousness has been a fundamental element of empowerment since its earliest expressions and conceptualisations. Women's organising from the grassroots levels to national and international advocacy, in all parts of the world and across history, is grounded in their gaining critical consciousness and liberating themselves from the constraints of patriarchal ideologies. Central in empowerment as a process is women and girls strengthening capacities to recognise and challenge social rules and the distribution of power and privilege, and, as part of that, changing their understandings of themselves and their rights. Women and girls' critical consciousness is a necessary prerequisite to challenging existing power relations and hierarchies, and to demanding and bringing about structural change in favour of gender equality. Without it, women and girls cannot gain control over their lives and futures (Batliwala, 1993; Cornwall & Edwards, 2014; Kabeer, 1994).

The centrality of gender ideologies in gender inequality and women and girls' disempowerment makes critical consciousness key to their choice and voice and a fundamental base for exercising agency, either in decision-making, leadership or collective action. Women and girls' access to and control over material resources needs to be accompanied by shifts in consciousness towards an understanding that women and girls can act for change, not only for their individual benefit but also for other women and girls.

Critical consciousness is especially important when women and girls have been socialised to accept their lower social status and lack of power and perceive women's subordination as 'normal' and 'natural' (Alsop et al., 2006; Fraser, 2010; Malhotra et al., 2002; Mosedale, 2005; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

Critical consciousness is inextricably linked to building the collective power of women and girls to effect change. There are strong reciprocal relationships between the two: collective power brings women together to question and interrogate how power operates in their lives to undermine their choices and voices. The critical consciousness they develop then fuels collective demand and action for transformative change. This makes critical consciousness much more collective than individual. It is not just about self-reliant and self-sustaining individuals or individual achievements or self efficacy, but also about a shared and collective consciousness that inspires to challenge constraints on conditions of choice and voice in the lives of women and girls.

"Empowerment strategies for women must build on 'the power within' as a necessary adjunct to improving their ability to control resources, to determine agendas and make decisions" (Kabeer, 1994, p. 229).

Critical consciousness features in the work of the foundation with the AWARD programme (Box 6) and the Avahan programme (Box 8). Aspects like self-efficacy or aspirations are also noteworthy in other pieces of the foundation's work. The WEAI, for instance, has 'confidence in speaking in public' as one of its indicators. In the SHINE framework, self-efficacy is one of the constructs of caregiver capabilities, and refers to "the degree to which parents perceive themselves as capable and effective in the parenting role" (Matare et al., 2015, p. 747). The Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS) also takes self-efficacy into account in its framework (Box 11).

Box 11. The Global Early Adolescent Study

The GEAS framework seeks to understand young people's sexual health risks and what factors constrain or contribute to healthy sexuality and improved sexual and reproductive health outcomes. The Health and Sexuality instrument is one of a set of research tools and instruments being applied in 15 countries. It contains seven domains, including an empowerment domain. This contains questions regarding behavioural control, relation self-efficacy and voice.

Self-efficacy is about the ability of a girl to negotiate social situations she finds herself in, and to successfully navigate these interactions. It can be made more specific to refer to relational self-efficacy, which looks at "the perceived ability to resist, negotiate or solicit experiences".

6.2 Bodily Integrity

A healthy and safe body is a necessary basis for women and girls' participation in society and social life, and is fundamental to human dignity and freedom. Without it, women and girls cannot obtain control over their lives and futures. That makes **bodily integrity** a necessary resource in the empowerment of women and girls. Bodily integrity is the principle of security and control over one's body. It is the fundamental human right to life, to being healthy in the broadest sense and to being secure from physical harm and assault by others. It implies that women and girls are not alienated from their sexual and reproductive capacity, that the integrity of their physical person is respected and that they can procreate and enjoy their sexuality[17] (Correa & Petchesky, 2013). Apart from the inviolability of the body, and women and girls' personal autonomy and self-determination that come with this, bodily integrity also emphasises the wholeness and intactness of the body. Two aspects of bodily integrity are stressed here as resources for the empowerment, choice and voice of women and girls: health; and safety and security from violence.

Health
What?
Health speaks to having a healthy body and mind. It is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1946). It encompasses multiple aspects:

- Nutrition and being well fed, and being free from nutritional deficiencies and malnutrition and being underweight (as well as overweight);
- Physical well-being, and being free from diseases (communicable and non-communicable) or injury;
- Mental well-being, and being free from stress, depression or mental illnesses (see Box 12).

All these health aspects have gender dimensions. Biological and social factors affect identification of and responses to the health needs of women and girls across their life cycles. Patriarchal values and societies can confine and undermine women and girls' health and restrict their control over their bodies. Women and girls can be at a higher risk of poor health; they can also have a lower status in the health system, both as consumers and as providers of health care (Langer et al., 2015).

Why?
A healthy body and mind lie at the basis of life and having control over one's life and future. They are also key to productive and reproductive work, and to being able to

17. Violations of bodily integrity include coerced sex or marriage, genital mutilation, denial of access to birth control, sterilisation without informed consent, prohibitions on homosexuality, sexual violence, false imprisonment in the home, unsafe contraceptive methods, unwanted or coerced pregnancies and childbearing and unwanted medical interventions (Correa & Petchesky, 2013).

"A virtuous cycle exists: health contributes to economic growth and wellbeing, which results in improved health and leads to increased resources for better, widespread health care. The health-care roles of women—both within and outside the paid health labour force—are core to improvement of the quality and availability of health care" (Langer et al., 2015, p. 19).

adapt to new circumstances (World Economic Forum, 2013). The Lancet Commission on Women and Health argues that "improvement of the status, and fulfilment of the potential, of women and girls by elimination of gender discrimination at all levels of society are moral and sustainable development imperatives", and claims that "healthy, educated, and empowered women are well positioned for the many roles they have as mothers, caregivers, workers, volunteers, and leaders, affecting the structure of societies and advancing sustainable development" (Langer et al., 2015, p. 5). Health, and in particular the health of women and girls, has for long been an explicit and core focus of the foundation's work through the FP, MNCH and Nutrition PSTs.

Mental health of adolescents is attracting increasing attention, as many disorders tend to emerge during these years, with potential consequences for mental health across the life course. Depression, alcohol abuse, mental disorder, antisocial behaviour and suicide may be critical factors during adolescence and early adulthood. Family discord, unsupportive parents, living apart from parents or depression and suicidal behaviour in the family can strongly affect adolescent mental health. Mental health can be a particular challenge for girls, especially among the socially marginalised, who are confronted with the intersections of gender and age with class, ethnicity, race, caste and so on (see box 12 for examples). Better mental health, including better parent–adolescent relationships, is linked to higher self-esteem and self-worth and better social functioning (Patton et al., 2016).

Box 12. Mental health and stress

Mental health and well-being are important for women and girls. They also affect their ability to carry out productive and reproductive work. Within the foundation's work, maternal stress has emerged as an important factor affecting women's ability to look after their children.

The SHINE study identifies the mental health of the mother as an important determinant of the child's health. Mental health and stress are included as two of nine indicators of the construct of 'caregiver capabilities'. Mental health is defined as the "state of wellbeing in which an individual can realize their abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make contribution to the community". Mental stress refers to "emotional experience triggered by events or other stimuli and accompanied by specific biochemical,

physiological and behaviour changes" (Matare et al., 2015, p. 747).

Psychosocial influences also feature in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Benefits study. This measures the benefits of water quality, sanitation, handwashing and nutritional interventions in terms of improving health and development. It includes research objectives on the associations between psychosocial influences—specifically intimate partner violence, maternal depression and maternal stress—and underweight, wasting, stunting and impaired development in children. Intimate partner violence features prominently as a source of stress that affects pregnant women and/or women with young children. The study looks at how a woman's exposure to intimate partner violence affects child growth and development, in particular nutrition and health outcomes.[18]

18. The WASH Benefits study draws on validated measures of stress and depression: Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale with mothers and fathers, which includes questions regarding stressful life experiences in the past month; and the Centre for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale, which looks at impact of various maternal and paternal psychological stresses on child growth and development (e.g. height-for-age z scores, better gut function, child stress, allostatic load, inflammation and telomere attrition).

"Violence against women is the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights violation in the world. It also is a profound health problem, sapping women's energy, compromising their physical health, and eroding their self-esteem. In addition to causing injury, violence increases women's long-term risk of a number of other health problems, including chronic pain, physical disability, drug and alcohol abuse and depression. Women with a history of physical or sexual abuse are also at increased risk for unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and adverse pregnancy outcomes" (Heise et al., 2002, p. s5).

Safety and Security

What?

Safety and security enable women and girls to move, speak and act free from acts or threats of violence, force and coercion. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is of critical concern in this regard and concerns harmful behaviours directed at women and girls because of gender-based power imbalances. It includes "any act of verbal or physical force, coercion or life-threatening deprivation, directed at an individual woman or girl that causes physical or psychological harm, humiliation or arbitrary deprivation of liberty and that perpetuates female subordination" (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottmoeller, 2002, p. s6). It can take many forms (emotional, psychological, physical) and occur in different circumstances (at home, in the workplace, in the community, through media, during conflict and war). Intimate partner violence includes physical aggression as well as forced sex (including marital rape), psychological abuse, intimidation and humiliation, and also controlling behaviours that isolate the person from friends or family or restrict mobility or access to services or information (Krug et al., 2002, p. 16).

Why?

Intimate partner violence, sexual violence and trafficking and forced prostitution are of key concern in relation to women and girls' safety and security and can violate their bodily integrity. Moreover, they undermine their dignity and constrain their choices and voices. Sexual and intimate partner violence "occurs in all countries, cultures and at every level of society without exception"(Krug et al., 2002, p. 15). The risk of being assaulted, or the threat of exposure to violence, undermines decision-making as well as leadership and collective action. Violence that women and girls experience embodies unequal power relations, and VAWG is a manifestation of the social and subordinated position of women and girls relative to men and boys. This violence, or the threat of violence, is also used as a way to maintain control over women and girls, and hence perpetuate disempowerment and inequalities.

Safety and security strongly interrelate with other resources. For instance, violence affects women and girls' mobility and hence their social capital. It also affects individuals' health and places a burden on health facilities. It can have profound impacts on both physical and mental health for women and girls, directly through injuries or more indirectly and even years after the assault (Krug et al., 2002, pp. 17-18, see Box 13).[19]

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19. "Sexual violence encompasses a wide range of acts, including coerced sex in marriage and dating relationships, rape by strangers, systematic rape during armed conflict, sexual harassment (including demands for sexual favours in return for jobs or school grades), sexual abuse of children, forced prostitution and sexual trafficking, child marriage, and violent acts against the sexual integrity of women, including female genital mutilation and obligatory inspections for virginity. Women and men may also be raped when in police custody or in prison." (Krug et al., 2002, p. 17).

6.3 Assets

Assets are the third set of resources, and refer to tangible and intangible economic, social or productive resources. The model features four types of assets:

1. Financial and productive assets;
2. Knowledge and skills;
3. Time; and
4. Social capital.

Assets feature prominently in economic empowerment but should be considered with caution. First, these assets should not only be conceived of as material assets. Money, land, equipment, credit and savings are important assets, but immaterial assets such as knowledge, skills and networks are at least equally important.

Whereas these assets clearly have economic use, their value goes far beyond that. Knowledge and skills matter not only for making a livelihood but also for voicing demands, exercising freedom of choice and for leadership and collective action. Time is about control over labour. The value of social capital stretches far beyond the economic realm, into the political and community arena, and is critical to women and girls building collective power and engaging in collective action.

Financial and Productive Assets
What?
Financial assets are economic resources such as income, savings and credit. These have for long featured fairly prominently in approaches to empower women and girls, for instance through microfinance, women's income-generating projects and entrepreneurship and, more recently, digital financial services. Productive assets are resources a person can own, such as land, a house, equipment and livestock. In many contexts, men tend to own land, equipment or livestock; in others these assets may be owned jointly.

Ownership arrangements need to be considered with nuance, because they vary on a spectrum from use to control to ownership. It is important to consider who can use a productive asset. Who makes decisions on its use? Who decides whether to sell the asset or not? Who decides who can use it, or who can sell it or the benefits derived from it (Behrman, Karelina, Peterman, Roy, & Goh, 2014; Johnson, Kovarik, Meinzen-Dick, Njuki, & Quisumbing, 2015).

Box 13. Violence and health

Addressing Barriers to Healthy Lives (India Country Office, Integrated Delivery and MNCH)
This 36-month project stems from recognition that intimate partner violence affects maternal health and newborn outcomes. The project seeks to address gender inequality and intimate partner violence as barriers to the healthy lives of women and children. The focus is on Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in India, where high prevalence of intimate partner violence has been found to be associated with negative health outcomes. The project seeks to improve the ability to measure violence and its determinants, as a basis to learn more about how to explore these as an entry point for the foundation's programming on gender and caste inequities, violence and health.

Why?

Access to and control over financial assets can be key to supporting and enabling women and girls to generate their own income, which in turn can be an important basis for their decision-making autonomy and bargaining power. Yet access to credit, savings or income is not enough. It is crucial that women and girls also control these financial assets (UNFPA, 2007). Women or girls' control of income and/or savings can be influenced by the relationship they have with their partners or family members and the gendered division of labour (and time) within the household (Alsop et al., 2006; UNFPA, 2007).

Growing attention to women and girls' control over productive assets stems from the recognition that "increasing control and ownership of assets helps to create successful pathways out of poverty in comparison to intervention aimed at increasing income or consumption alone" (Behrman et al., 2014, p. 7). Productive assets are long-term stores of value, can be invested and accumulated and are more resilient to fluctuations than income and consumption. "Assets are a stock, income is a flow derived from those assets" (p. 7). Assets are critical in enduring

'shocks', and men and women may use their assets differently in those circumstances (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2011). Moreover, some shocks specifically affect women and their control over assets. For example, in contexts where a woman's right to property is not protected, the divorce or death of a husband can lead to loss of land, equipment or housing.

For women and girls, productive assets are of particular importance (see for example Box 14). Owning productive assets such as property can increase status and bargaining power within the household and the community. Female-headed households tend to suffer greater poverty as they often do not have equal access to basic resources (such as water) because they lack control over productive assets (such as land). Women who do own or control economic assets are more capable of overcoming poverty and prevailing over crises and transitions. However, national policy implementation often does not give sufficient consideration to augmenting women's access to productive assets (DAW, 2001; ICRW, 2006; Klugman et al., 2014; UN Water, 2006).

Box 14. Productive and financial assets in the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index

The WEAI identifies productive assets (called 'resources') as one of its five key domains and financial assets as another. The two domains cover four indicators:

1. Resources: Ownership of assets, Purchase, sale or transfer of assets, Access and decisions on credit;
2. Income: Control over use of income.

The resources concern both land (agricultural and non-agricultural) and other assets such as livestock,

fish ponds, farm equipment, house, house durables, cell phone and means of transportation. Ownership of these can be sole or joint.

The indicators differentiate between ownership and decision-making on purchase, sale and transfer. This takes into account that use, control and ownership rights vary in many contexts. Women may not own an asset but may be able to access it, or decide on its sale or transfer.

Knowledge and Skills

What?

Education and training provide women and girls with important knowledge and skills in all spheres and stages of life. Gaining knowledge and learning basic skills, and practising them in daily life, are fundamental to exercising voice and choice (Girl Effect, 2012; Warner, Malhotra, & McGonagle, 2012). Knowledge and skills can be obtained through formal education and schooling, as well as training, informal education or on-the-job learning. Life skills are "knowledge, attitudes and the ability for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the challenges of everyday life".[20] They are of particular significance, and include communication and interpersonal skills, decision-making and critical thinking and coping and self-management. For all types of education, training and information, it is not only access that is critical for knowledge and skills to be empowering for girls and women but also, especially, quality.

Why?

Education and knowledge have an intrinsic value for women and girls' control over their lives. They can be closely linked to critical consciousness, especially when reflection and critical interrogation and thinking take a prominent place. Education, knowledge and life skills have also been found to be related to positive health and development outcomes for women and girls. They correlate with a delay in marriage, better life expectancy for women (which in turn benefits their children), freedom of movement, more decision-making power in the household and increased opportunities for employment. Going to school for a longer period of time also correlates with postponed childbearing and reduced risk of HIV infection and GBV. As an adolescent girl becomes empowered through education now, she will be an empowered and healthy adult in the future (DAW, 2001; FHI 360, 2012; Fortune-Greeley et al., 2014; Klugman et al., 2014; Krug et al., 2002; Langer et al., 2015; Nguyen & Wodon, 2012; Pillsbury et al., 2000; Van der Gaag, 2014; Warner et al., 2012).

In addition to providing economic advantages, vocational training or mentorship can also help adolescent girls make informed decisions that are more beneficial for themselves and for their future (Armstrong et al., 2015; Girl Effect, 2012; Glennerster & Takavarsha, 2010; Klugman et al., 2014; Pillsbury et al., 2000; Van der Gaag, 2014; Warner et al., 2012). A longer educational path can also open the door to employment opportunities and economic growth. (Armstrong et al., 2015; FHI 360, 2012; Langer et al., 2015; Pillsbury et al., 2000; UN Women, 2015; UNFPA, 2007; Warner et al., 2012).

Time

What?

Time can be understood as an asset that men and women can have access to and control over, particularly in relation to labour. Time as an asset concerns how much time to allocate to work (paid and unpaid), education, health care, social networks, leisure, rest and so on.

Why?

Many women and girls experience time poverty, which is closely linked to how paid and unpaid work is distributed between women, men, girls and boys. Unequal constraints on women and girls' time are a significant dimension of their disempowerment. Women and girls have less control over their labour, and hence their time, than their male counterparts. They also have less access to the labour of relatives. In turn, lack of control over time and labour undermines the control women and girls have over their own lives. Moreover, child care and household work, often done by women and girls, is mostly unpaid and hence invisible economically. This undermines bargaining power. Women who carry out paid work often have to bear the burden of unpaid work as well, which reinforces gender inequalities both at home and in the workplace. The gender wage gap also makes it clear that, even in paid work, women's time is valued less than men's (Men Engage Alliance, 2014; Pillsbury et al., 2000; UNFPA, 2007).

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20. http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_7308.html

The **time poverty** of women and girls limits the time they can allocate to developing skills that enable them to take part in decision-making processes and exercise control over assets. Gender intersects here with age, with adolescent girls often taken out of school to assist women with unpaid work and called on to care for sick and dying family members. Intersections between gender and socioeconomic status are also critical: the time poverty of poorer women is affected by a combination of limited control over their time, lack of resources to outsource domestic care work and weak infrastructure. Accessing better infrastructures (e.g. running water and electricity) can reduce the time women and girls spend on domestic chores and free it up for other purposes. Shifts in critical consciousness are also critical, though, otherwise their time may be allocated to other labour-intensive activities (Men Engage Alliance, 2014; Nguyen & Wodon, 2012; UNFPA, 2007).

Box 15. Time poverty in Melinda Gates' Annual Letter [21]

"Compared to men, women globally spend about twice as much time on unpaid work—labour done for no pay, including cooking, cleaning and caring for children and the elderly. That's an average about 4.5 hours a day, with the gap between genders ranging from 45 minutes in Scandinavia to five hours in India. In the U.S., where the gap is 90 minutes, if we could put a value on women's annual unpaid work, it would total about $1.5 trillion.

"We all have 24 hours a day. It's kind of funny to me that we're in 2016, and who decided that women should be the ones to do all this unpaid work? We don't even call what's happening at home 'work.' Unpaid work is work."

Melinda Gates highlights closing the time gap by (1) recognising there is a problem, (2) reducing it with innovation and (3) redistributing the work.

Women and girls' time features most explicitly in the work of the Agriculture, Nutrition, FP and MNCH teams.

- Nutrition, for instance, takes into account how women and girls' workloads affect their care practices and the quality of care. It also looks at how workloads affect women who are pregnant or lactating, and the effects on child feeding practices; and

- The SHINE framework considers time use and time stress as constructs of caregivers capabilities. Time use refers to time allocations to different activities. Perceived time stress considers how caregivers perceive "the adequacy of the time they have to attend to their different roles" (Matare et al., 2015, p.747).

- The WEAI takes time into account in two of its indicators. The first concerns workload and the time allocated to productive and domestic tasks. The second is satisfaction with the time available for leisure (visiting neighbours, listening to the radio, doing sports and so on) (Alkire et al., 2013, pp. 74-75).

- The cross-PST project 'Addressing Women's Time Poverty' responds to a recognition that women and men face different expectations and constraints in 1) how they use their time and 2) the choices they have over how they allocate their labour to activities throughout the day. Time constraints impact on agriculture and the health outcomes of women and their children, and on the overall benefits they can accrue from development interventions. The project compiles further evidence on why measuring and monitoring time use is critical.

21. http://time.com/4233689/bill-and-melinda-gates-annual-letter-2016/

Social Capital

What?

Social capital refers to women and girls' connections, relations and social networks that provide tangible and intangible value and support. Social capital can facilitate access to information, services or benefits. It can function as a resource in household decision-making or in the individual leadership of women and girls. Social capital can entail family relations as well as friends and peers, but also, for example, supportive teachers or mentors, or business networks in the market arena.

Strong networks among women and girls provide **solidarity**, and can contribute to strengthening critical consciousness and self-awareness. Membership in a group can build social capital, which is a key component of collective action. Social capital among women and girls offers a safe space in which they can gain critical consciousness, find recognition and unity and build collective power to challenge constraints to their choice and voice. Networks of women and men often differ in size, composition, function and value.

Why?

Women and girls' social capital has fundamental value in the context of disempowerment and gender inequalities. Strong networks and relations among women are fundamental to them building collective power to challenge the way power operates to undermine the control they have over their lives and futures. Social capital as building collective power is closely linked to gaining critical consciousness. Combined, they form a prerequisite for collective action that transforms power relations and patriarchal hierarchies and ideologies.

Social connections also have a more instrumental value in women and girls' well-being and empowerment. This includes the connections and networks they have with supportive men and boys. For example, the SHINE framework acknowledges how support from a woman's partner and relatives during the postnatal period is essential for the well-being of both the mother and the child.[22] Social capital also facilitates the realisation of other resources, both in the present and with respect to future claims. For example, women's informal networks with other women in undertaking daily household activities, such as water collection generate a form of social cohesion and collectiveness as well as access to information and knowledge. Strong networks with (often male but also female) political leaders, agricultural input suppliers, financial institutions, health service providers and so on can be key to accessing information, assets, benefits and decision-making processes.

Women and girls' **mobility** is key in creating and maintaining social networks and participating in community life. Mobility can be physical (a woman or girl's physical ability to move freely outside the household), virtual (the connections and networks she can access and mobility via media, especially internet and social media) and social and economic (her ability to move across social and economic spheres). Virtual mobility is increasingly important for younger women especially, who can use mobile phones to access information, connect or voice their concerns and mobilise for action. Social capital can be of particular importance for women and girls from marginalised groups, who face overlapping disadvantages and may experience social isolation owing to intersections between gender and disability, caste, ethnicity, race, class or sexual orientation. Factors that can restrict women and girls' mobility are social and cultural norms, laws and lack of transport and/or unsafe spaces (Klugman et al., 2014).[23] Both social capital and mobility feature in the instruments of the GEAS, as Box 16 illustrates.

22. Social support in the SHINE framework can be informational, instrumental, emotional and companionship. It can contribute to coping, esteem, belonging and competence (Matare et al., 2015, p. 747).
23. Highly educated and wealthier women report having greater freedom of movement. In some countries women need the consent of a husband to work outside the household and are restricted in terms of the types of jobs they can have, transport and/or safe spaces– women may risk sexual harassment and other forms of GBV.

Box 16. Connectedness and freedom of movement in the Global Early Adolescent Study

Connectedness and freedom of movement are two aspects covered in the instruments of the GEAS, which explores connectedness in the context of boys' and girls' relationships within the school and their neighbourhood under its Health and Sexuality instrument.

- Within the school setting, connectedness is explored through questions on perceptions about expectations from teachers, how much support they get from teachers and whether they feel there is an adult in school who cares about them. It also includes questions about how safe students feel within the school.

- With respect to neighbourhood, questions about cohesion focus on young people's relationships with other people in their neighbourhood. These also include whether people in the neighbourhood look out for and help their neighbours, can be trusted and know who they are.

The GEAS Health and Sexuality instrument includes a section on freedom of movement. This asks girls and boys how often they are allowed to do the following activities without an adult present: go to after school activities; go to a party with boys and girls; meet with friends after school; go to a community centre/the movies/a youth centre; go to a church, mosque or religious centre; and visit a friend of the opposite sex.

7. Intersectionality and engaging Men and Boys

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Intersectionality	• Refers to how women and girls experience inequality differently as a result of gender intersecting with other social markers, such as age, race, class, caste, religion, ability or sexual orientation • As a result, different women and girls face diverse constraints but also have unique opportunities
Life cycle perspective	Takes into account the life of a person as a whole, instead of focusing on specific life stages or experiences on their own
Men and boys	Empowerment of women and girls can benefit from effective engagement with men and boys as agents of change in their position as relatives, peers, in authority positions or as mentors and role models

The conceptual model has so far emphasised how gender relations operate for or against empowerment of women and girls. This chapter expands the model by looking at the two cross-cutting issues of intersectionality and the engagement of men and boys. First, intersectionality is introduced to capture how age, class, caste and other social differences intersect in the disempowerment women and girls face. Second, the chapter makes explicit where men and boys feature in the empowerment of women and girls. Taking these two issues into account is needed for a nuanced understanding of how power works and change can come about. Indeed, connections have been drawn throughout the White Paper with intersectionality and engagement with men and boys.

7.1 Intersectionality

Women and girls are not a homogeneous group, and gender is not the only basis on which their disempowerment occurs and is experienced. Other critical social markers intersect with gender and affect the choice and voice of women and girls, as well as men and boys. Inequalities and marginalisation are mostly not experienced in isolation; many women and girls are exposed to multiple deprivations and face constraints in different areas of their lives simultaneously (Batliwala, 1993; Malhotra et al., 2002, p. 5; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2013, pp. 10-16; Sen & Grown, 1987).

Ethnicity, race, class, caste, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and location affect the lives and futures of women and girls. Strengthening women's agency, choice and voice hence requires addressing other markers of disadvantage. Intersectionality also allows for better understanding of the intersecting inequalities experienced by those groups of women and girls who are particularly marginalised (Klugman et al., 2014, p. 15; Mosedale, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006).
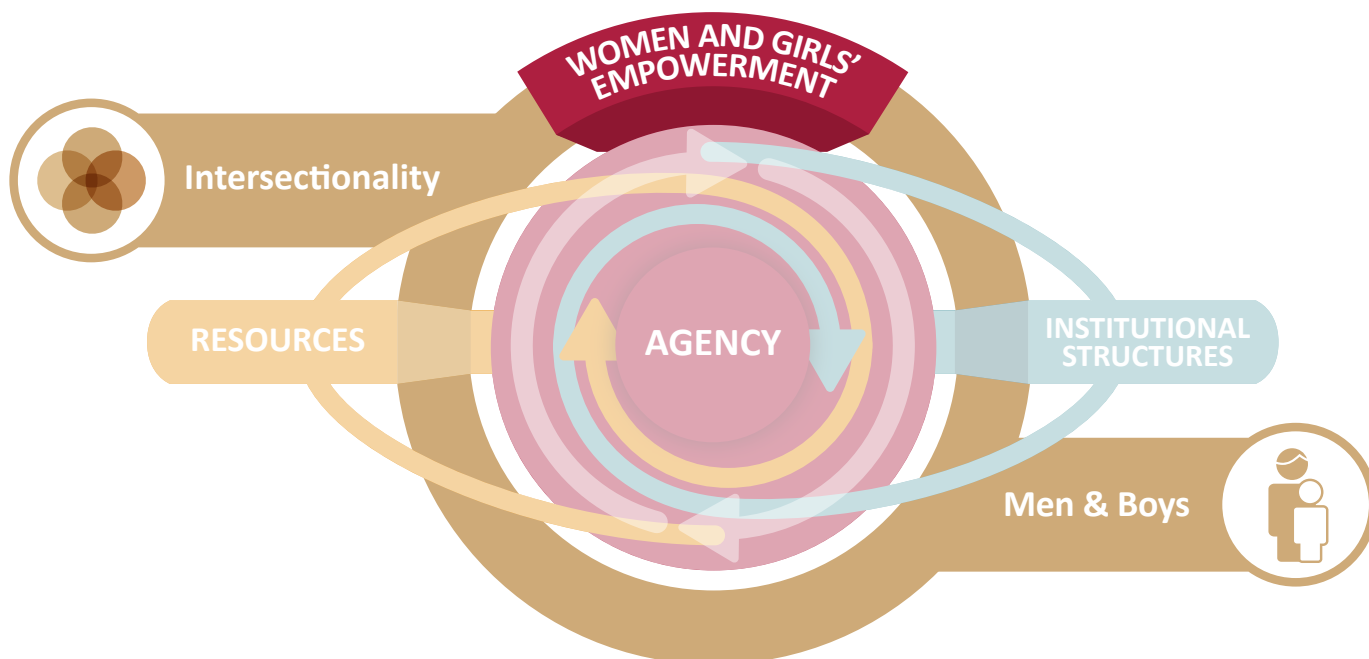
Gender and intersectionality

"Gender is of course not the only axis along which disempowerment occurs - disempowerment may be a function of age, class, ethnicity, religion and many other factors – and these particular factors as well as the intersections among them should be taken into account" (Samman & Santos, 2009, p. 10).

Intersectionality points to women's disempowerment as stemming from different social markers. This should, however, not be interpreted as 'adding' layers of disadvantage and inequality.[24] Rather, it is about overlapping advantages and disadvantages, and how these interlock to produce disempowerment and marginalisation in women and girls' lives. A low-caste woman is not on the one hand low caste and on the other a woman, but experiences life as 'a low-caste woman'.

Intersectional analysis makes it possible to see the differences among women and among men, by acknowledging how gender relations play out differently when intersecting with other axes of difference (Men Engage Alliance, 2014; Yuval-Davis, 2006). For this reason, all three elements of the model need to be considered from the perspective of how gender and other inequalities intersect in the lives of women and girls. This means understanding and responding to how their expressions of agency, their access to and use of assets and the institutional structures that affect their lives and futures are shaped by gender intersecting with age, class and caste, as well as disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and other markers of difference.

24. An 'add-on' approach risks generating an analysis of each inequality as a separate category and as a homogeneous form of disadvantage.

Life Cycle Perspective

Age is a key social marker that shapes how the causes and effects of gender inequality differ along the stages of women's lives. A life cycle perspective takes into account the life of a person as a whole, instead of focusing on specific stages or experiences on their own. This helps in considering how choice, voice and empowerment take shape over time and understanding larger cycles of discrimination at various stages of women and girls' lives.[25] A life cycle perspective can focus on critical periods in a lifetime and captures intergenerational dimensions of empowerment. It is vital to identify specific gendered restrictions women face and different needs they have throughout their life cycles (DAW, 2001; Langer et al., 2015; Stuckelberger, 2010).

Life stages refer to periods of time during a person's life, including infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, adulthood and old age. Transitions from one life stage to the next depend not only on age but also on the tasks or roles women and girls take on in their families, communities and societies. These tasks depend on social factors such as gender, religion, class, caste, sexuality, disability and ethnicity. The 'age' of a person at a certain stage of life can vary depending on social and cultural norms and the context. In countries where girls undertake family duties earlier in their lives, adolescence may begin earlier as compared with other girls globally (OECD, 2014a).

Compared with men, women face significantly more disadvantages, which are present in early childhood and carry on throughout adolescence and later on in life. Gender-based discrimination can begin even before girls are born, for example through the practice of female foeticide. Entrenched discrimination can persist in early childhood and escalate in adolescent years, affecting the lives of young women. Experiences of abuse, violence and lack of information and services on sexual and reproductive health at an early stage in life can have significant physical and psychological consequences later in life (Armstrong et al., 2015; Stuckelberger, 2010).

A life cycle approach also provides perspective to the particular situation of older women. In many societies, women who are beyond their reproductive years hold more power than they did when they were younger. As grandmothers and mothers-in-law, they have authority within the household. They may, however, experience health problems, especially after menopause, as a result of years of discrimination and adversity. This can be because of limited access to basic health care during earlier life stages or the low quality of health care they received when they were young (Pillsbury et al., 2000).

Critical Life Stage: Adolescence

Adolescence corresponds with the beginning of the sexual and reproductive phase. It is a phase in which girls and boys learn to acquire adult roles and duties and also are more exposed to and affected by gender relations. Adolescence is not about age per se, but about the experiences young girls have and the duties they take on. It is important to differentiate between 'girls', 'adolescents' and 'young women'. These categories are not simply younger versions of adult women, but have life-stage specific needs of their own (Pillsbury et al., 2000; Stuckelberger, 2010; Warner et al., 2012).

Adolescence is considered a critical life stage. Adolescent girls may face inequalities and discrimination such as early and forced marriage and premature parenthood, GBV, child labour, sexual exploitation or trafficking and female genital mutilation. In addition, adolescent girls may have limited possibilities to negotiate for safe sex or to leave abusive relationships. This increases their dependence on men and the risk of HIV infection. These inequalities can contribute to school dropout rates and vice versa (Armstrong et al., 2015; DAW, 2001; Pillsbury et al., 2000; Stuckelberger, 2010; UNFPA, 2007).

Empowerment of adolescent girls can break the cycle of disempowerment and poverty (see box 17 for examples). Poverty is entrenched in gender inequalities that have a disproportionate and negative impact on the lives of adolescent girls. For change to be sustainable, it is not enough to invest in girls: it is necessary to shift the social institutional barriers that limit girls' access to power, in their families, communities and economic and legal institutions (Armstrong et al., 2015; UNFPA, 2009).

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25. The condition of women is often analysed in a 'static way'. A 'snapshot' of their situation at a specific time is matched to that of men in order to evaluate differences. This limits the understanding of how inequality and disempowerment manifest themselves throughout the various stages of a woman's life. Because women's roles and power change throughout their life, taking a snapshot perspective to speak of 'the status of women' risks not capturing the bigger picture (Malhotra et al., 2002; Stuckelberger, 2010).

Box 17. Girls and Assets Framework

It is crucial to consider life stage-specific assets, as girls have access to and control over different assets to adult women. Programmes working with girls frame the importance of accessing assets as related to the reduction of vulnerabilities and increased opportunities and decision-making ability, influencing a girl's process of empowerment. Two examples are presented below.

The Girl Effect and girls' assets

The Girl Effect has published a framework on age-appropriate assets for the economic empowerment of girls. Introducing girls to economic empowerment opportunities, at the right age and with the right programmes, requires 'foundational assets' in order to prepare girls for a safe and productive livelihood. These are grouped into four core categories: human, social, financial and physical assets, and correspond to the resources in this White Paper as follows:

- Critical consciousness (self-esteem, confidence building communication skills and bargaining power);
- Bodily integrity (good health);
- Social capital (friends, social networks, mentors and group membership, relationship of trust, access to wider institutions of society);
- Knowledge and skills (education, literacy, knowledge, legal and economic information, ability to work);
- Financial and productive assets (cash, savings, access to loans and vouchers, identity cards, land, housing, transport, and personal belongings).

Self-esteem, knowledge and support acquired from an early stage of life enable a girl to understand her options and shape her future. She will be equipped to put into practice what she has learned and can then advance to financial assets. The Girl Effect emphasises the importance of asset-building in reducing girls' vulnerabilities and increasing their opportunities and decision-making abilities in later life stages. This contributes to 'breaking the cycle of poverty'.

The 'whole girl' approach in the 'Girls Achieve Power' project

The Wits Reproductive Health & HIV Research Institute in South Africa, in partnership with Grassroot Soccer, Sonke Gender Justice and the Population Council, is working in South African township with the Girls Achieve Power (GAP) Year project. The GAP Year project is one of the WGCD Grand Challenge grants. It aims to increase adolescent girls' continued progress in education and ensure their overall empowerment through asset-building interventions. It builds on a 'whole girl' framework that consists of activities to build social, health, education and economic assets. These assets correspond to:

- Critical consciousness (self-esteem, self-efficacy to enact behaviour, autonomy);
- Bodily integrity (quality of health and ability to access health care services);
- Financial and productive assets (income and savings, land, housing, transport, equipment and tools);
- Social capital (social networks, access to societal institutions);
- Knowledge and skills (Individual skills, knowledge).

GAP Year's theory of change is that asset-building of girls at a young age provides a solid basis on which to construct their educational, health, social and economic assets. This enhances well-being, self-efficacy and decision-making ability. The approach focuses on how different assets interact and affect girls' lives, rather than solely on one specific context. The project also works with adolescent boys and seeks to encourage positive behaviour and a shift in gender attitudes.

Intergenerational effects

Healthy, empowered and educated women affect societal structures through their various roles as mothers, workers or caregivers, boosting sustainable development. In the household setting, such women are also able to have greater decision-making power and control over resources (Brikci, 2013; Langer et al., 2015).

The survival of an infant depends on vital factors related to a mother's education and decision-making power (her age as a mother, the spacing and number of births and care during pregnancy). Education levels of women and their agency are positively related, and this can in turn positively affect children. Even in settings where gender norms are confining, educated women often are more autonomous and able to decide and act for the benefit of their child (e.g. improving child nutrition or education) (Brikci, 2013; Klugman et al., 2014; Kudlová, 2008; Langer et al., 2015; Pillsbury et al., 2000; Warner et al., 2012).

Intergenerational effects also occur in socialisation around norms. Gender norms are passed down the generations through observation and repetition of behaviours, with children learning appropriate behaviours for men and women from their parents. This learning process impacts children's attitudes during the course of their lives (Fleming et al., 2013). In some cases, older women may be 'cultural gatekeepers' in their communities: they can be mentors and help create an environment that allows or encourages younger women to discuss sexuality or GBV and shifts norms and attitudes on gender (UNFPA, 2007).

Box 18. 1,000 days

Several teams across the Gates Foundation have placed specific attention on the 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday. Every year, millions of children die and many more fail to realise their full potential because of malnutrition in these critical 1,000 days. Children who miss out on good nutrition during these 1,000 days never achieve full physical or mental growth, which limits their ability to learn in school and reduces their productivity as adults.

The pre-conception phase is of key importance because:

- Women's nutritional status entering pregnancy affects foetal growth and holds risks of preterm delivery, low birth weight and neonatal mortality;

- Several nutrients are critical in early pregnancy for the growth of the unborn child, including brain development; and

- Reaching women before pregnancy is necessary to ensure healthy first trimester growth. Most mothers in low-income countries do not seek antenatal care until the second or third trimester.

In the 1,000 days' work, the well-being of adolescent girls is of key interest. The younger a girl becomes pregnant, the more risk there is to the unborn child. Reaching adolescent girls to improve their health and nutritional status is hence important. This includes attention to their nutritional status, reduced violence, their sexual and reproductive health status and the delaying of marriage and childbearing (Piwoz, 2013).

7.2 Men & Boys

Advancing gender equality and empowerment for women and girls calls for the active engagement of men and boys. This stems from the recognition that men and boys can make critical contributions to expanding the choice and voice of women and girls. They can act as gatekeepers maintaining the status quo, but can also be important allies in transforming power relations. They are present in the lives of women and girls across all institutional arenas: in the family, as brothers, fathers, husbands or partners; in the community, as peers and friends or as religious, community or civil society leaders; in the market, as traders, bank officials, employers, labour union representatives and so on; and in the state, as politicians, bureaucrats, judges, police officers, doctors and teachers. Across all these arenas, they stand out as key actors who can positively or negatively affect the empowerment of women and girls. Increasingly, strategies are pursued to engage with men and boys, often as part of an ecosystem approach to the empowerment of girls and women (Box 19).

Box 19. Engaging with men and boys for the empowerment of women and girls

Plan It Girls project

The Plan It Girls project of the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) in India engages with men and boys in different roles and positions. It builds the agency, self-efficacy and employability of girls through its Gender Integrated Foundational Skills curriculum. In addition, it targets and involves boys and men in different ways. With this ecosystem approach, the project seeks to shift prevailing norms that hinder the educational and employment success of girls. The project engages:

- Male peers in schools as well as families and communities;
- A network of motivated teachers and school administrators who foster support and a conducive environment for girls;
- With private sectors and especially industry and business leaders, through exposure visits and mentoring.

Umodzi project Malawi

CARE's Umodzi project in Malawi engages with boys and men as part of a strategy to enhance both peer and intergenerational dialogue about sexual and reproductive health and rights. Umodzi is Chichewa for 'oneness' and expresses that gender equality is not achieved at the expense of men and boys but is beneficial for all.

The project works with same-sex Teen Clubs where girls and boys in same-sex dialogue groups reflect on and challenge gender stereotypes. The project also explicitly involves community adults in its strategies: male change agents are linked to boys' groups and female change agents to girls' groups. These intergenerational linkages are considered key to supporting and reinforcing the intentions and the adoption of new and more gender-equitable ideas and behaviours.

Effectively engaging with men and boys requires an understanding of how gender power relations and patriarchy affect them. Compared with women, men hold more power and agency in societies, benefiting from the privilege tied to patriarchal **masculinity.** However, patriarchy does not automatically benefit men, who are often forced into strict definitions of manhood. Commonly expected behaviours of masculinity often include a duty to act as protector and provider for the family. Men are expected to be tough, strong, virile, courageous and aggressive, and are restricted from showing vulnerability, emotions or any need for help. Men can also be marginalised by traditional power structures, especially in low-income and minority group contexts. Poor men face difficulties accessing health care or material resources. How men experience their power or lack thereof has implications for the women in their lives (Edström et al., 2015; Greene & Levack, 2010; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Levtov, Barker, Contreras-Urbina, Heilman, & Verma, 2014; Men Engage Alliance, 2014; Slegh, Barker, Kimonyo, Ndolimana, & Bannerman, 2013; Van der Gaag, 2014).

Positive roles of men and boys as father, brothers, teachers, politicians and the like contribute to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. Men and boys (and women and girls) are often socialised into acceptance of the status quo and silence on gender inequality and the disempowerment of women and girls. When men and boys are socialised into considering inequality and disempowerment as a 'women's issue', they tend to take a passive bystander position. Innovative approaches emphasise how men and boys can be empowered to speak out and act to confront gender inequality and disempowerment, for instance on violence against women.[26] Such approaches show that the way men and boys relate to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment can change, and that they can make critical contributions to transformative change.

Men and boys can be actively engaged in supporting women and girls' empowerment in different positions:

- As **peers**, for instance as classmates in school and peers in a community, mostly in the context of peer education interventions. The Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse, for instance, has designed a curriculum for boys' clubs in schools, to complement the Girls Empowerment Clubs. The boys' clubs focus on male attitudes and perceptions of gender and violence, and are considered a key strategy to prevent violence against girls. In a similar vein, the GAP Year project, which uses sports to empower adolescent girls, also organises an all-boys football league in which male model coaches encourage healthier behaviour and social accountability among teenage boys.

- As **partners** and in couples, with men and boys as boyfriends, sexual partners or husbands. This engages with men and boys' involvement in decisions regarding contraceptive use or maternal health, or shared household decision-making on finances or education. One example is the above-mentioned project in Cambodia, with its Nurturing Connections approach that explicitly involves men, as well as other female relatives, in dialogue and discussions to improve nutrition outcomes. Others are the gender socialisation and couple approach of the Grand Challenge project in Ibadan, Nigeria, and the Couple Power project in Jharkhand, India (both illustrated in Box 20).

- As **community leaders** or in authority positions: 'men in power' can actively speak out to support gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. The Enabling Girls to Advance Gender Equity project in Malawi (of the Girls Empowerment Network, Rise Up and ICRW), for instance, reaches out to traditional and religious leaders, male authority figures and leaders of local civil society organisations. Through networking, institutional strengthening, advocacy capacity-building and technical assistance, these male community leaders are supported to advocate against child marriage and in favour of the implementation of the new national law that prohibits child marriage.

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26. An inspiring example is the Mentors in Violence Prevention model, which centres on the empowered bystander approach, and the Ted Talk "Violence against women—it's a men's issue"

- As **mentors or role models**, with men and boys as actively engaged change agents. As the examples of the couple approach in Box 20 illustrate, men and boys also feature prominently in interventions that support them to challenge norms and promote more equitable practices in their communities. Another WGCD project in India will work with male movie stars and cricketers who speak out strongly against violence against women in short videos broadcast in large public screenings.

What men and boys think and do matters in the family, community, market and state; engaging them hence matters in all institutional arenas. Engagement can be through interventions focused on them alone or in gender-synchronised interventions that work with both girls and boys or women and men at the same time. The latter foster changes among both and improved relations and interactions between them (Brikci, 2013; DAW, 2001; Edström et al., 2015; Koppell & Grown, 2014; Levtov et al., 2014; Men Engage Alliance, 2014; Pillsbury et al., 2000; UN Women, 2015).

Box 20. Engaging with men and boys as partners

Couple approach, Ibadan (Nigeria)

The University of Ibadan College of Medicine recognises that women's ability to exercise agency and choice in their lives is constrained by socioeconomic challenges and limited reproductive freedoms. The project, which offers family planning services, counselling and financial literacy, takes an innovative approach by explicitly engaging with couples. Aiming to create a supportive intra-familial environment for the empowerment of women, the intervention works with both partners of couples, individually and together. The focus is on decisions around family planning use, sex and refusal of sex, child care and financial decisions. In addition to its couple approach, the project seeks to shift community norms by supporting role model couples that act as positive deviants in their community and transfer knowledge and skills to other couples.

Couple Power, India

Young couples are the focus of the Couple Power project of the Child in Need Institute and ICRW in Jharkhand. This seeks to promote equitable decision-making among women (aged 15–24) and their partners on use of appropriate family planning and better maternal health outcomes. The approach identifies 1) supportive relationships of respect and equality; 2) involvement of partners or spouses in family planning decision-making; 3) shared responsibility among sexual partners for maternal health; and 4) disapproval of partner violence as key elements of gender-equitable attitudes favourable to the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls. The approach works with young and recently married women and their partners through training, dialogue and capacity-building to promote more equitable relationships, improved communication and joint decision-making. It also supports role model couples to promote gender-equitable decision-making in couples and challenge gender inequalities and the disempowerment of women and girls in their communities.

8. Dynamics of Transformative Change

WOMEN AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

RESOURCES

AGENCY

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES
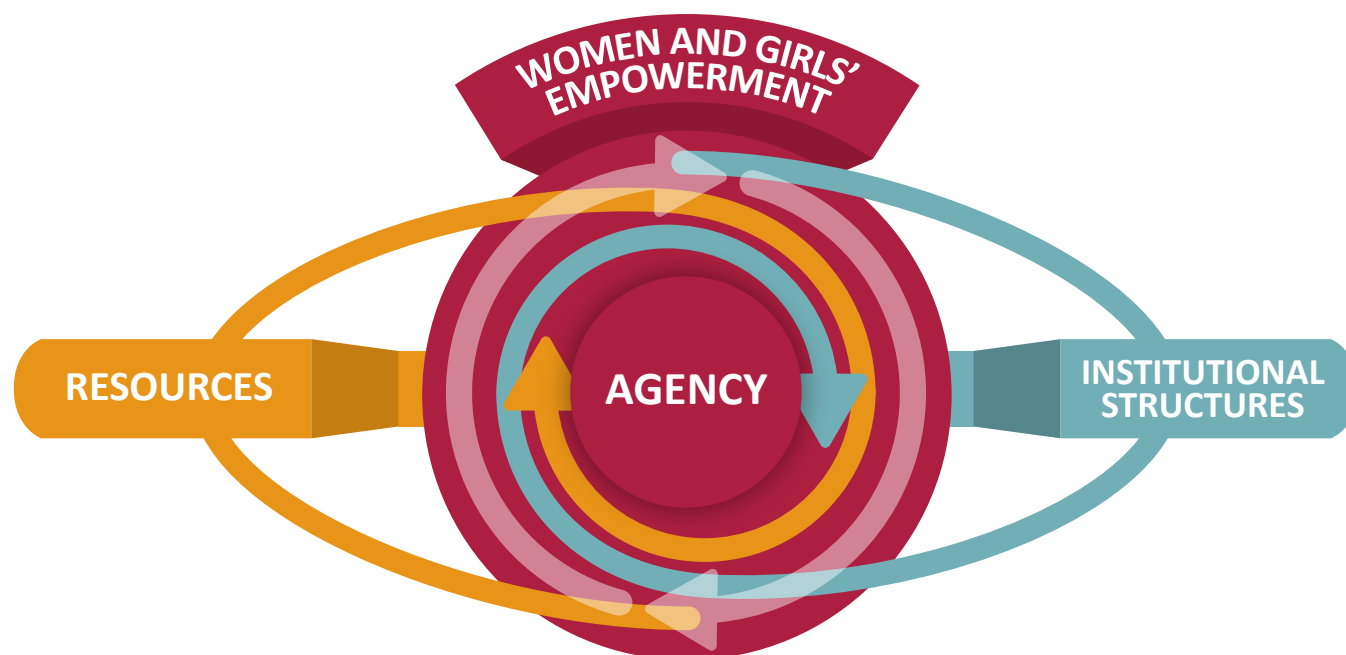
This last chapter of this White Paper highlights how change happens and what this implies for organisations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in working on the empowerment of women and girls. It starts with articulating how the elements of the model come together in a way that makes empowerment a process of transformative change. Next, it qualifies the pathways of change as dynamic and iterative, and hence non-linear and hard to predict. Finally, it points to the bottom-up nature of empowerment processes, and the facilitative and non-prescriptive roles external agents can have in this.

For all three key points, it specifies the implications for interventions. It is in this practical use that the model's value as a lens to analyse contexts and intentionally design interventions is to be realised. This is required to design innovative and transformative approaches to the empowerment of women and girls, and to track their implementation in a way that promotes learning, reflection and adaptations towards actual progress and impact.

Empowerment of women and girls has been defined in this White Paper as the expansion of choice and the strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations, so women and girls have more control over their lives and futures. Empowerment challenges marginalisation and disempowerment, and is a process of transformative social change. This transformative change is about expanding the horizons of what is possible, and challenging and changing structures of constraints that limit women and girls' choice and voice.

8.1 Empowerment as transformative change

Empowerment seeks to tackle the multiple barriers that deny women and girls from making choices and voicing their interests. This entails a rebalance of power and a transformative change in the institutions and power relations that underlie gender inequalities. Empowerment aims at changing systemic forces that marginalise women, girls and other disadvantaged groups. It is a long-term process of change that challenges ideologies of male domination and women's subordination. Because constraints are systemic and institutional, they need to be addressed in explicit and strategic ways (Batliwala, 1993, 2007; Cornwall, 2014; Golla, Malhotra, Nanda, & Mehra, 2011; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Kantor & Apgar, 2013; Samman & Santos, 2009; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

Transformative change means empowerment involves changes in multiple dimensions of the lives of women and girls. Empowerment is about the mutually related links between inner change and systematic structural change. It entails fundamental shifts in the distribution of resources and in institutional structures, and in women and girls expressing agency, both individually and collectively. Women and girls' empowerment happens in the iterative interplay between these shifts in agency, resources and institutional structures. Empowerment processes are multidimensional and work across multiple levels, in particular the individual level and all institutional arenas (family, community, market and state) (Batliwala, 2007; Golla et al., 2011; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b; Kantor & Apgar, 2013; Malhotra et al., 2002; Pereznieto & Taylor, 2014; Rao & Kelleher, 2005; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

The dynamic interactions and relationships between agency, resources and institutional structures can be mutually enforcing and set in motion a spiral of transformative change. Yet such interplays are not automatic and cannot be assumed: change in one does not necessarily effect change in another. The dynamics between agency, resources and institutional structures will also differ over time and by context. Because sources of deprivations and opportunities vary, empowerment is context-specific and needs to be firmly rooted in local contexts (Alsop et al., 2006; Klugman et al., 2014; Martínez & Wu, 2009; Mosedale, 2005).

These qualifications imply that interventions:

- Need to engage explicitly and intentionally with these elements and how they interact, and build on the mutually reinforcing dynamics between them to shift power relations in women and girls' lives;
- Strengthen women and girls' expression of agency in decision-making, leadership and collective action, as key to challenging and transforming structures that constrain and undermine their control over their lives and future;
- Intentionally and explicitly address institutional barriers over the longer term, recognising that this requires investment over time;
- Work across different institutional arenas (state, market, community and family) to leverage significant and sustainable change;
- Address a range of resources, being cognisant of the potential interactions between resources and how these in turn interact with agency and institutional structures;
- Need to identify in specific contexts which elements of agency, institutional structures and resources, and which interactions, are critical to expanding women and girls' choice and voice;
- Link with other (development) actors, when needed in other sectors, to allow for a holistic approach engaging with different elements of empowerment.

8.2 Unpredictable and non-linear pathways to change

Transformative change is by definition dynamic and iterative. Empowerment processes themselves change along the way. This makes such processes also non-linear and the dynamics between agency, resources and institutional structures hard to predict. Moreover, transformative change will challenge existing power relations and therefore encounter push-backs and reversals, as well as unexpected opportunities and spirals of change. Empowerment is hence not necessarily progressive but rather 'two steps forward one step back'. In short, empowerment as a process of social transformation is a journey that takes diverse pathways that are unpredictable and non-linear (Cornwall, 2014; Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009; Mosedale, 2005; Pathways, 2011; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

These qualifications imply that interventions:

- Explicitly and continuously monitor how agency, institutional structures and resources interact and change over time to allow interventions to:

  – respond to emerging opportunities to leverage greater impacts on empowerment;

  – respond to reversals and backlash, as well as unintended negative consequences of interventions, and

  – to explore and address underlying causes;

- Use a set of indicators and methods that can capture dynamics between elements of the model;

- Employ an approach to planning and measurement that not only focuses on measuring attribution of results to a programme but also allows for long-term learning; and

- Ensure flexibility in design, implementation and measurement and allow for adaption along the process.

8.3 Facilitating change in a non-prescriptive way

By definition, empowerment is a bottom-up process that cannot be 'done for' or 'done to' someone. Nor can it be imposed on women and girls in a top-down manner. The process needs to begin with women and girls' own experiences and has to be determined by them as an on-going part of empowerment. In this way, the process is itself empowering. This is why women and girls' expressions of agency in decision-making, leadership and collective action are at the heart of empowerment processes.

Empowerment is about expanding choice and strengthening voice. It is not prescribing the choices women and girls should make, or the concerns they should voice and in what way.[27] Empowerment addresses inequalities in the capacities of women and girls to express their choices and voices but does not have external agents determine what these choices and voices are.[28] Making the distinction between empowerment as an outcome and as a process is pivotal to approaching empowerment in a non-prescriptive manner, by facilitating the process rather than defining the precise outcome. What is valued as empowerment should be based on the experiences and perspectives of women and girls (Batliwala, 2013; Kabeer, 1999a, 1999b).

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27. Empowerment "involves a process whereby women can freely analyse, develop and voice their needs and interests, without them being pre-defined, or imposed from above, by planners or other social actors. The assumption that planners can identify women's needs runs against empowerment objectives which imply that women themselves formulate and decide what these interests are" (Oxaal & Baden, 1997, p. 6).

28. "As far as empowerment is concerned, we are interested in possible inequalities in people's capacities to make choices rather than in differences in the choices they make. An observed lack of uniformity in functioning achievements cannot be automatically interpreted as evidence of inequality because it is highly unlikely that all members of a given society will give equal value to different possible ways of 'being and doing'. Consequently, where gender differentials in functioning achievements exist, we have to disentangle differentials which reflect differences in preferences from those which embody a denial of choice" (Kabeer, 1999b, p. 439).

Understanding the self

"Women's empowerment is a process which embodies 'self' and cannot be attained through the direct interventions of outside agents. It is self-selected and self-driven and is not susceptible to interventions of those wishing to 'empower'" (UNFPA, 2007).

External agents, such as the foundation and its partners, can play a critical role in this process. Because inequalities and disempowerment are deeply ingrained in institutional structures and women and men's consciousness, external agents can play a role in questioning hierarchies and disempowerment and opening up space for new aspirations and transformation of power (Batliwala, 1993, 2013; Cornwall, 2014; Oxaal & Baden, 1997; Pathways, 2011). Yet this role should be treated with caution: external agents need to be committed to expanding the choice and voice of women and girls themselves without imposing their own values and norms.[29] They need to balance on a fine line between facilitating and imposing.

Change in consciousness and external agents

"The process of women's empowerment must begin in the mind [...] It means supporting her to recognize her innate right to self-determination, dignity and justice, and to realize that it is she, along with her sisters, who must assert that right [...] Because of the conditions of ideological conditioning, the process of demanding justice does not necessarily begin spontaneously, or arise automatically from the very conditions of subjugation. [...] The process of empowerment must therefore be induced or stimulated by external agents, more often than not. [...] External agents have an important role to play in the process of empowerment – they encourage others to question the validity and credibility of the established order" (Batliwala, 2013, p. 49).

29. "There is always a danger that when we assess 'choice' from a standpoint other than that of the person making the choice, we will be led back to ourselves and our own norms and values" (Kabeer, 1999a, p. 41).

The implications of approaching women and girls' empowerment in a non-prescriptive and bottom-up way provide clear directions to external agents to:

- Focus on the informed and voluntary choice of women and girls themselves, within an expanded range of options;
- Purposively invite and listen to women and girls' voices to identify their key issues from their perspectives, point to critical barriers and opportunities and define together with them desired outcomes and pathways of change;
- Create opportunities for women and girls to actively participate in setting up accountability mechanisms to set priorities and co-design and inform implementing strategies and tracking systems to measure progress and change;
- Be clear on how interventions contribute to the three motivations to work on women and girls' empowerment: as a goal in itself, as a means to better health and development outcomes and as a way to reduce unintended consequences. Being clear about the motivation to promote women's empowerment supports priority-setting, strategy development, resource allocation, risk assessment and measurement.
- Focus on the facilitating process of women and girls' empowerment, and the interactions between the core elements, with the aim of tackling systemic differences in the ability of women and girls to exercise choice and voice; and
- Ensure indicators and monitoring systems are informed by women and girls' realities and interests and are context- and time-specific and relevant.

Putting women and girls at the centre of development offers a unique opportunity to challenge gender inequalities and advance development and health outcomes. This is a highly needed and critical task but is not necessarily easy. This should not hold us back from engaging with it. In the words of Melinda Gates, "Complexity is not an excuse for inaction."

Complexity is not an excuse for inaction

"At our foundation, we will not use the complexity of resolving gender inequality as an excuse for failing to think and act more intentionally about putting women and girls at the center of what we do."

"We will systematically increase our focus on women's specific needs and preferences and on addressing gender inequalities and empowering women. [...] Part of this focus will involve analyzing many of our grants and strategies through a gender lens, to make sure that gender inequalities are not getting in the way of the results we hope to achieve. Another part will involve greater accountability for how our strategies and grants contribute to women's empowerment over the long term. If we believe that women themselves are agents of development, then we must invest in their agency and evaluate the results" (Gates, 2014, p. 1274).

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These Building Blocks are a first step towards a conceptual model of empowerment of women and girls for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The conceptual model aims for:

- Conceptual clarity on what empowerment of women and girls means for the foundation
- A common language to work on and measure empowerment of women and girls
- Ownership of and buy-in by key foundation stakeholders for this conceptual model of empowerment of women and girls.

1) Empowerment of women and girls within a theory of change

There is general consensus within the Gates Foundation on three related motivations for working on empowerment of women and girls. One considers empowerment of women and girls as a goal in itself, particularly in terms of gender equality outcomes vis-à-vis decision-making power and agency, control over resources, personal safety, mobility and equitable personal relationships. A second motivation is to consider empowerment of women and girls as a means to better development and health outcomes. A third is to reduce unintended negative outcomes for women and girls and avoid worsening of existing gender inequalities that may occur when programs are designed and implemented without an intentional focus on gender.

Being clear about the motivation to promote women's empowerment supports priority setting, strategy development, resource allocation, risk assessment and measurement.

2) Defining empowerment: Theoretical foundation

Below are key ways empowerment is understood in academic and practitioner thinking. They represent fundamental ideas about what empowerment is and about what it will take to achieve it. As such, they are critical to shaping approaches to work on and measure empowerment of women and girls.

Empowerment as the expansion of women's abilities to make and influence choices that affect their lives
Expanding choice comes from realized tangible and intangible resources and women's agency (the ability to define one's goals and act upon them). These translate into outcomes.

Empowerment as a process of transformative changes that are dynamic, iterative, and non-linear
Change occurs at multiple levels and across different dimensions. It is about the link between individual change and systemic change – in norms, attitudes, power relations - of social institutions (state, market, households).

Empowerment is about redistributing power between individuals or groups
Empowerment engages with 'power over' (ability to control others) as well as 'power to' (to do something), 'power within' (self-esteem, dignity, self-respect) and 'power with' (from solidarity, collective action, mutual support).

Empowerment as context-specific and driven by women themselves
This means that women themselves, rather than other people or experts, have a voice in and direct the change they desire and how to get there.

It is about expanding women's choice to live their desired life; not defining what choices they should be making.

3) Dimensions of empowerment: What changes for women and girls

Empowerment entails change, but what is to change? Below are seven key areas of change, emerging from the foundation's work and literature on empowerment. The dimensions point to concrete areas of change that need to be articulated in the conceptual model. This will allow us to better understand what we expect to change and, therefore, how to facilitate and measure it.

Dimension	What changes for women and girls	An example
Decision-making	Her ability to act upon goals she establishes without having her possibilities limited by societal rules and customs (power to, agency)	An adolescent girl exercising choice over her sexual and reproductive health
Control over resources and assets	Her ability to access and exercise choice over resources, both tangible (e.g. income, land, credit) and intangible (e.g. time, networks, education, information)	A woman having access to her household's income and deciding, either autonomously or jointly, how to spend those resources and to what benefit
Self-esteem/Self-efficacy	Her sense of self-worth and the capacity to imagine a different reality and the possibility of a better future (power within)	A woman gaining the confidence to pursue a new business opportunity
Norms	Shared beliefs, values and social expectations of women and girls - within her community and beyond - that influence her decisions, choices and behaviour	An adolescent girl hearing a community leader speak up against early marriage and understanding that she has the support of her family and community to choose if, when, and who she marries
Mobility	Her freedom to move in different spaces of her life (home, work, school, community) without the threat of violence, reprisal or judgement	A woman farmer taking her crops to sell at the market without without facing harrasment or social stigma
Gender-based violence	Living free of violence or threat of violence, experienced because of (and to maintain) her subordinate social position relative to men	An adolescent girl attending school without the risk of coerced sex from her peers or teachers
Collective action	Their solidarity, mutual support and shared sense of identity and confidence from working together (power with)	A women's Self-Help Group holding their local government accountable to deliver quality healthcare services
Leadership	Her capacity to lead, inspire social change and effectively participate in governance	Women being represented and having a voice in local and national government and decisions

4) Cross-cutting considerations

A conceptual model on empowerment of women and girls also requires a consideration of cross-cutting themes. Critical considerations that emerged from the literature and the foundation's work include intersectionality, a life cycle perspective and the engagement of men and boys in promoting gender equality.

Intersectionality

Women and girls experience inequality differently due to how gender **intersects** with other aspects of their lives—age, race, class, caste, religion, ability, sexual orientation, etc. This means that different women and girls face diverse constraints, but also have unique opportunities to pursue in their lives. For example, an educated woman from a majority ethnic group may experience different benefits from collective action and women's organizing than an illiterate woman from an ethnic minority. Or, a high income woman farmer might be better placed to access and use agricultural inputs, or sell or her agricultural products, than an educated woman in a landless family.

A life cycle approach

A **life cycle approach** recognizes that age influences women's and girls' ability to make choices in their lives. Women's (dis)empowerment hence varies at different stages in their lives. These include life stages and events, such as menses, sexual debut, marriage, and childbearing. For example, an unmarried adolescent girl may have the freedom to choose to stay in school and further her education, but may later have that choice restricted if she gets married or becomes pregnant. A life cycle perspective also calls for considering inter-generational effects, for example how the nutrition, education or health of children are related to a woman's control over resources and decision-making.

Engagement with men and boys

Empowerment of women and girls also needs to take into account **engagement with men and boys** in the realization of gender equality. Men and boy's beliefs and behaviours are also informed by gender norms, social identities and power relations with women and with other men. Men and boys have the potential to support or hinder empowerment for women and girls through their different roles such as fathers, brothers, school mates, partners, government officials, etc.

The building blocks presented here have been developed in partnership between the Gates Foundation and the KIT Gender team, as part of a larger process to articulate a conceptual model of empowerment of women and girls and to improve its measurement. The building blocks draw from an initial and selected reading of the literature, along with extensive conversations with over 35 foundation officers and stakeholders and building on the work of the foundation and its partners. They have also benefitted from feedback and discussions during five webinar sessions, which included over 30 foundation staff.

WEAI – Women's empowerment in Agriculture Index

The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) measures the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women, their roles and level of engagement in the agriculture sector. This measurement tool shows to what extent women are empowered and have control over certain aspects of their lives within the household and community. Additionally the tool measures women's empowerment in comparison to men, in order to highlight the degree of inequality between them within the household.

The WEAI is composed of two sub-indexes:
- One measures the five domains of empowerment (5DE): it assesses whether women are empowered in their households and communities.
- The other measures gender parity (GPI): it captures the percentage of women who are as empowered as men in their households.

The five domains of empowerment include ten indicators:
1. **Production:** Sole or joint decision-making over food and cash-crop farming, livestock, and fisheries as well as auton¬omy in agricultural production
   - Input in productive decisions
   - Autonomy in Production
2. **Resources:** Ownership, access to, and decision-making power over productive resources such as land, livestock, agricultural equipment, consumer durables, and credit
   - Ownership of assets
   - Purchase, sale, or transfer of assets
   - Access to and decisions on credit

3. **Income:** Sole or joint control over income and expenditures
   - Control over use of income
4. **Leadership:** Membership in economic or social groups and comfort in speaking in public
   - Group member
   - Speaking in public
5. **Time:** Allocation of time to productive and domestic tasks and satisfaction with the available time for leisure activities
   - Workload
   - Leisure

The WEAI defines the empowerment of women if she has four out of the five domains or a combination of weighed indicators that reflects 80 percent total adequacy. A key aspect of this index is that it can indicate the degree of a women's empowerment within each domain as well as how they are disempowered. The GPI sub-index highlights the gap in empowerment between women and men within their household. This enables programs and interventions to further focus on the increase of women's autonomy and decision-making ability within the five domains.

The WEAI was developed to track the change in women's empowerment levels and be used for performance monitoring and impact evaluations of Feed the Future programs, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative. The Index is a useful tool for tracking the progress toward gender equality as well as seeks to inform efforts to increase women's empowerment (in the agriculture sector), which aligns with the Sustainable Development Goal 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls".

Link: http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index

SHINE - Sanitation Hygiene Infant Nutrition Efficacy

The Sanitation Hygiene Infant Nutrition Efficacy (SHINE) is a community-based trial in rural Zimbabwe recruiting women during the first trimester of their pregnancy. The trial is implementing two packages of interventions with the aim to reduce child stunting and anaemia at 18 months of age, by 1) targeting water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) behaviours, and 2) targeting infant and young child feeding (IYCF). In the context of the SHINE trial, caregiver capabilities due to the fact that all participants enrolled for the study are mothers, are called maternal capabilities.

The Trial has selected a subset of maternal capabilities to asses in order to explore mothers' impact on health and nutrition outcomes of their children:

1. **Perceived physical Health:** Perceptions of one's physical well-being
2. **Mental health:** A state of well-being in which an individual can realize their abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community
3. **Stress:** The emotional experience triggered by events or other stimuli and accompanied by specific biochemical, physiological, and behavioural changes
4. **Perceived social support:** Perceived exchanges of physical and psychosocial resources provided through a process of interaction in relationships, which leads to improved coping, esteem, belonging, and competence
5. **Decision-making autonomy:** The capacity to manipulate one's environment through control over resources and information to make decisions about one's own concerns or about close family members

6. **Gender norm attitudes:** Traditional or egalitarian beliefs about male and female gender norms
7. **Time use:** The allocation of time to different activities
8. Perceived time stress: The caregiver's perceptions of the adequacy of the time they have to attend to their different roles
9. **Mothering Self-efficacy:** The degree to which parents perceive themselves as capable and effective in the parenting role

Maternal capabilities will be evaluated through a survey which has been adapted from various instruments, with the exception of 'time use' and 'perceived time stress' as no appropriate instruments were found in the literature. For 'stress' the data will be collected through tests for levels of cortisol within the participants. The study hypothesize that mothers with strong capabilities and with the ability to use the resources (the two interventions provided) will increase their children's health outcomes. It seeks to reinforce the links between maternal knowledge and WASH and IYCF behaviours.

Links: http://blogs.cornell.edu/centirgroup/focusareas/caregiver-capabilities/

GEAS - Global Early Adolescent Study

The Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS) is a fifteen-country study which aims at understanding young people's sexual health risks and what factors constrain or contribute to healthy sexuality as well as improved sexual and reproductive health outcomes. The study is led by a partnership of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The study intends to explore how youth perceive gender norms and their influences on the interactions between boys and girls. The study will investigate how gender beliefs act as a regulatory mechanism informing behaviours as well as explore the concept of healthy sexuality in early adolescence.

The study conceptualizes sexual risk through the following five issues:

1. Body pride (satisfaction with physical characteristics and appearance)
2. Comfort with emerging sexuality (pubertal development)
3. Self-efficacy in relationships
4. Equitable relationships
5. Sexual behaviours (including sexual risks and sexual satisfaction)

The GEAS study will be conducted in two phases. Phase 1 will last a period of two years and use mixed method approach to develop and test instruments to assess gender norms related to different domains of sexuality by age group. Specifically the four instruments consist of 1) Narrative Interviews with caregivers and adolescents, and the piloting of vignette quantitative instruments on 2) Gender Equitability 3) Gender Norms and 4) Health & Sexuality.

Phase 2 will validate the piloted instruments in order to pursue objectives through a 3 year longitudinal study. The four objectives of the second phase of the GEAS study are to 1) describe gender socialization as an evolving process, 2) investigate parental/caregiver and peer influences on gender socialization, 3) understand how the contexts develops parental/caregiver influences on gender socialization, and 4) grasp how gender socialization is related to sexuality and sexual behaviours of adolescents.

Link: http://www.geastudy.org/

SIGI - Social Institutions and Gender Index

Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) is a measure of discriminatory social institutions, which combines quantitative and qualitative data. This mixed-methods framework was developed by OECD in order to grasp more comprehensively the relationship between gender equality and discriminatory social norms. The SIGI is composed of five sub-indices and made up of 33 indicators in order to capture information on legal, cultural and traditional practices that discriminate women and girls.

The SIGI and its sub-indices is composed of three stages; 1) constructing the database and updating 160 country profiles, 2) using the Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) comprised of 33 indicators on gender discrimination in social institutions, and 3) the index classifies countries into five categories and ranks them according to their level of discrimination in social institutions.

1. Discriminatory family code: Restriction on women's decision-making power and status in the household and the family
   - Legal age of marriage (GID-DB)
   - Early marriage (GID-DB)
   - Parental authority (GID-DB)
   - Inheritance (GID-DB)
2. Restricted physical integrity: Restrictions on women's control over their bodies including physical integrity and reproductive autonomy
   - Violence against women (GID-DB)
   - Female genital mutilation (GID-DB)
   - Reproductive autonomy (GID-DB)
3. Son bias: Unequal intra-household investments in the care, nature and resources allocated to sons and daughters leading to the devaluation of daughter
   - Missing women (GID-DB)
   - Fertility preference (GID-DB)
4. Restricted resources and assets: restricted on women's secure access to, control over and ownership of resources
   - Secure access to land (GID-DB)
   - Secure access to non-land assets (GID-DB)
   - Access to financial services (GID-DB)
5. Restricted civil liberties: Restrictions on women's access to participation and voice in the public and social spheres
   - Access to public space (GID-DB)
   - Political voice (GID-DB)

Link: http://www.genderindex.org/

Care Empowerment Framework

At CARE, women's empowerment is viewed through the lens of poor women's struggles to achieve their full and equal human rights. In these struggles, women strive to balance practical, daily, individual achievements with strategic, collective, long-term work to challenge biased social rules and institutions. Therefore, CARE defines women's empowerment as the sum total of changes needed for a woman to realize her full human rights – the interplay of changes lie in:

Agency: her own aspirations and capabilities,

Structure: the environment that surrounds and conditions her choices,

Relations: the power relations through which she negotiates her path.
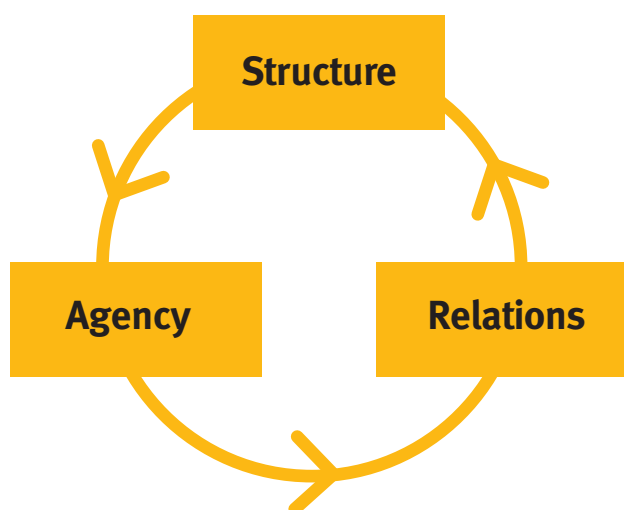
Why is women's empowerment essential for CARE programs?

"CARE's vision is not simply to ameliorate poverty and social injustice, but to end it – something that cannot exist without gender equality and the empowerment of women. The valuable contributions that our projects make to women's lives – the health, security, economic or political gains that we help women to achieve – are quickly wiped away without deeper changes in the structures, rules and power relations that define how a society allocates resources among citizens. The lessons of three years of impact research are clear: no individual measure of change can be sustained if it is not grounded in all three dimensions of women's empowerment: agency, structure, and relations."

How can CARE programs measure women's empowerment?

Women's empowerment differs from culture to culture and context to context. In order to be accountable for our impact on women's empowerment, CARE's global framework links women's own definitions and priorities for empowerment to 23 key dimensions of social change which have been shown to be widely relevant to women's empowerment across many studies and contexts. The global framework offers a way of organizing the diversity of women's realities into a shared framework, and reminds us that our impact measurement in any given dimension must use indicators of changes in agency, structures, and relations.

Agency	Structure	Relations
1. Self-Image; self-esteem 2. Legal and rights awareness 3. Information and skills 4. Education 5. Employment/control of own labour 6. Mobility in public space 7. Decision influence in household 8. Group membership and activism 9. Material assets owned 10. Body health and bodily integrity	11. Marriage and kinship rules, norms, processes 12. Laws and practices of citizenship. 13. Information and access to services 14. Access to justice, enforceability of rights 15. Market accessibility 16. Political representation 17. State budgeting practices 18. Civil society representation	19. Consciousness of self and others as inter-dependent 20. Negotiation , accommodation habits 21. Alliance and coalition habits 22. Pursuit, acceptance of accountability 23. New social forms: altered relationships and behaviours

How can CARE programs promote women's empowerment?
"Women's empowerment is complex -- non-linear, stop and start, and involves progression and regression across many dimensions of women's lives. It therefore challenges the development industry's classic approach, via narrowly focused projects that promise concrete results in short-term timeframes. To achieve meaningful impact entails a new approach – one that starts with a solid hypothesis about what will bring about holistic empowerment, but can adapt as it is tested, through monitored interventions and real-time learning within a dynamic process of social change. This requires long-term commitments to populations we serve through evolutionary programs and alliances as we navigate shifting pathways of social change."

CARE Pathways to Empowerment (Pathways) is a program that builds on CARE's expertise in smallholder agriculture, together with financial inclusion, nutrition and market engagement. Pathways programs are currently being implemented in Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Malawi, Bangladesh and India, with the goal is to increase productivity and empowerment of poor women smallholder farmers.

The design of Pathways drew from the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture framework focusing on three dimensions of empowerment; Agency, Structure, and Relations. Pathways seeks to effect change at multiple levels, guided by CARE's 'Theory of Change' focused on five change levers: 1) Capacity, 2) Access, 3) Productivity, 4) Household influence and 5) Enabling environment.

Link: http://www.carepathwaystoempowerment.org/about/