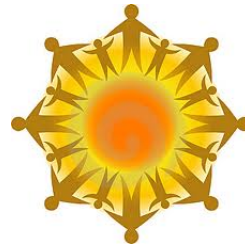


AGENCY AND EMPOWERMENT



Agency for
Community Empowerment



Letter from Editorial Board

For development programs, empowerment has become a familiar term which has been used as an indicator for success and sustainability of the program. This concept is not new in Vietnam, however, there is much controversy concerning the analysis, interpretation and use of language associated with it. A number of terms in Vietnamese has been used to describe the concept such as "nang quyen", "trao quyen", "nang cao vi the". To help readers better understand this concept and to make empowerment a reality, the Resource Centre on Gender, Sexuality and Health would devote Newsletter No.4 on discussions related to the concept and measurement of empowerment, and introduction of potential interventions in Vietnam which help empower disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

To help readers understand empowerment properly, two closely related concepts will also be introduced which are "agency" and social context. "Agency" -the ability to make meaningful decisions - can not be separated with empowerment. We can identify empowerment only through the expression of "agency" of individuals or groups. Meanwhile, social context – a constantly changed factor—is the basis for determining whether a performance is empowerment or not. empowerment does not exist independently and has no absolute value. It can only be identified and make sense in specific context.

The two World Bank books in Book

review section will provide information on empowerment concepts that have been used and their measured indicators. Both books point out the challenges and lessons learned on the application of conceptual frameworks and indicators in practice. In the first book, Ruth Alsop and her co-authors provide a simple conceptual framework of empowerment which can be used in both academic analysis and practical applications. This conceptual framework emphasizes the power relationship which always change and interact between the "agency" and the "structure". Meanwhile, in the second book, Deepa Narayan emphasizes the different interpretation of empowerment from two perspectives of the "process" and "result". She distinguishes four different levels of empowerment -individual, household, community/local and society/ national.

In researches and interventions section, the series research papers will provide a solid analysis of empowerment, agency and autonomy across specific groups such as ethnic minorities, women suffered from violence, trafficked women and girls, HIV people, sex workers, migrants, etc. The authors of these research papers challenge traditional perspectives that look at these groups as weak and should be saved by others.

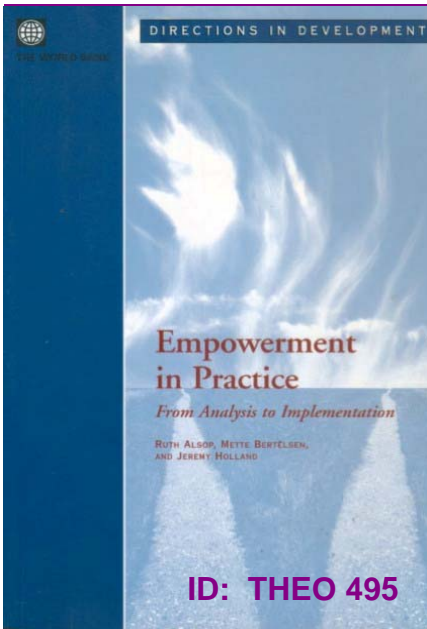
To illustrate the theoretical discussion, two interventions for empowerment of Vietnamese women will be introduced—one is women with political participation, and one of women suffered from domestic violence. These examples illustrate the interrelationship between "agency" and practices/decisions of one person in his/her specific individual and social context. Besides, they show the importance of the necessary to consider these factors when analyzing and interpreting empowerment.

At the end of the Newsletter, as usual, there will be information about resource centre's other events and materials. We hope that readers will find useful information in this newsletter. We also look forward to receiving your

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BOOK REVIEW



Empowerment in practice: from analysis to implementation

Ruth Alsop, Mette Frost Bertelsen & Jeremy Holland, 2006

Empowerment has become a familiar term within many development agencies. Empowerment objectives also appear with increasing frequency in policy documents issued by governments, especially strategy papers dealing with poverty reduction. Yet there are many different interpretations of what empowerment means, analytically and operationally, and these interpretations are often inconsistent even within one organization. In addition, limited material is available on the practicalities of measuring, tracking, and evaluating progress made toward empowerment.

After the chapter 1 which gives introduction about the book, this book, divided into two parts, offers one way of understanding the concept, using a simple framework that can be laid across both analytic and operational work to identify issues, focus discussion, and prioritize practical entry points for promoting and tracking empowerment.

Chapter 2 provides an analytic framework for understanding and measuring empowerment and for framing action to further empowerment of individuals or groups. The framework introduced here draws on a long sociological tradition of the analysis of power. The framework focuses on the dynamic and interactive relationship between structure and agency.

Chapter 3 briefly reviews some of the challenges involved in measuring empowerment, drawing on existing literature and on the five country case studies. It then shows how empowerment indicators that address these challenges can be generated. Finally, the chapter examines the use of empowerment indicators as part of a mix-methods approach to describing and explaining trends and patterns in empowerment, and discusses the limitation of current analytic approaches.

Chapter 4 introduces the case studies and reviews the similarities and differences, reflecting on how the framework can be applied in different

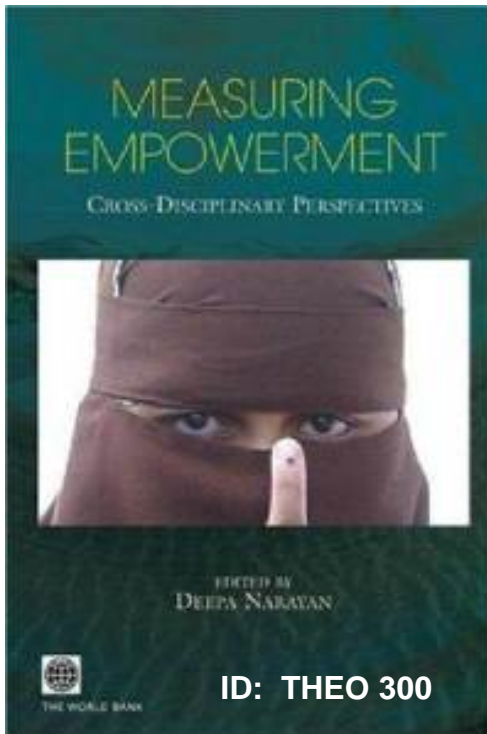
operational contexts. Chapter 5 considers how the framework can be applied to the design, implementation, and monitoring of development policies, programs and projects. Chapter 6 briefly revisits the use of structure and agency as determinants of empowerment and summarized their application to the measurement and operationalization of empowerment.

Part 2, starting from chapter 7 to 11, presents summarize of each of the country studies in Brazil, Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia and Nepal, using them to discuss how the empowerment framework can be applied in very different country and sector contexts and what lessons can be learnt. Demonstrating a key message of this publication that diversity in application is critical, these studies illustrate the adaptation and use of the framework in specific country and development contexts.

This volume represents an effort to present an easily accessible framework to readers, especially those for whom empowerment remains a puzzling development concern, conceptually and in application. While rooted in academic discourse, the discussion in the book focuses on presentation and illustration of a framework that can be used for development practice rather than on theoretical discussion of the framework's conceptual underpinnings.

Measuring empowerment: cross-disciplinary perspectives

Deepa Narayan (edt), 2005



Book review of Bimbika Sijapati. *Progress in Development Studies* October 2006 6: 363-365,

Measuring empowerment: cross-disciplinary perspectives rests on the premise that empowering the poor to move out of poverty is the only way for poverty reduction. The book brings together development academics and researchers from various social sciences to present a comprehensive understanding of how to conceptualize and measure empowerment at four different levels – individual, household, local and national. The two initial chapters set the stage for the rest of the book. 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. While the existing literature on empowerment tends to be polarized on the structure and agency debate, this book recognizes that empowerment is a product of

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“agency”, “opportunity structure” and the complex interaction between the two. The 17 chapters that follow are divided into four segments according to the four different levels of empowerment.

This book is meant to be a sequel to the World Bank’s (2002) *Empowerment and poverty reduction: a sourcebook*, which provides the outline of an analytical framework on how empowerment could be used to guide state reform and policy action. One of the merits of the book is that it does not restrict itself in its connection with prior work and recognizes the interconnectedness between theory and methodology. Each chapter therefore, clearly states the theoretical underpinnings of “empowerment”, which, in turn, informs the subsequent methodological frameworks proposed. Some of the authors conceptualize empowerment as a “process” while others as an “outcome”. For instance, Moser (Chapter 11) makes a case for how “participatory evaluation tools” used both to measure and involve local people in the process of peace-building (a precondition for development) can itself be empowering to their participants. In contrast, Uphoff (Chapter 10) uses lessons from an irrigation scheme in Sri Lanka as an illustration to demonstrate how empowering local farmers can enhance the effectiveness of water delivery systems.

In this respect, instead of this book being a bible for the exact science of measuring empowerment, it presents a dialogue between different scholars and

practitioners that simultaneously recognizes the multifaceted nature of the concept. For instance, Diamond (Chapter 18) emphasizes the importance of state policies in empowering the poor. A methodological framework for measuring “good governance”, which consists of the state’s capacity to deliver services, commitment to the public good and more, are proposed to measure states’ effectiveness to implement pro-poor policies at national levels. Diener and Biswas-Diener (Chapter 6) argue that such forms of “external empowerment” must be combined with “internal empowerment”. Their focus is on the latter, which relates to poor people’s positive evaluations of their lives (subjective well-being) and psychological feelings of competence (psychological empowerment).

The book also engages in the broader debates surrounding data collection methods in light of its central focus on measuring empowerment. Upon identifying the advantages and disadvantages of using quantitative and qualitative data in isolation, some contributors propose strategies to combine these approaches in complementary ways. For example, with respect to building a stronger foundation for designing, implementing and assessing empowerment initiatives, Rao and Woolcock (Chapter 13) discuss how qualitative data can be used to either inform the type of quantitative questions sought and/or build richness to the quantitative data being collected.

Despite these commendable aspects, the book suffers from certain drawbacks that are worth highlighting. It

seems that diverse authors are represented for the purpose of consolidating and accommodating most of the themes in vogue in current development thinking such as “social capital”, “good governance”, “gender”, “participation”, “conflict”, “decentralization” and more. It is not always clear how these themes relate to the central focus on empowerment and poverty reduction. To give a concrete example from the section on Gender and household, various conceptual and methodological frameworks for empowering women are proposed, based on the assumption that gender relations are unequal throughout the world. However, given that the thrust of the book is on empowerment as a means of poverty reduction, it remains to be explained how “women’s empowerment” relates to poverty reduction. Are gender issues considered variants of the poverty problem? If so, does this mean women from high-income households face no discrimination? On some level, the latter two are indirectly addressed, as women’s empowerment is viewed as an end in itself and as a universal issue. At the same time, such simplistic labeling of “women as victims” and “men as perpetrators” across societies poses more questions than it answers. How about marginal men? How about the view of women as “agents” and “actors” with their own priorities and projects but constrained by structures of varying flexibility? What are the implications of defining gender as an analytical category constitutive of all other social relations? Furthermore, how would such a view of “women” inform the gender-specific “empowerment”, and relate to issues of measurement? Engagement with such critical issues is missing.

These bring us to more substantive limitations of the book. Although “diverse” perspectives are represented, those who hold a more transformatory view of “empowerment” are effectively excluded. The concept is stripped of its political edge through an overrepresentation of authors who explicitly or implicitly view empowerment as a “positive-sum” game. Amongst the more obvious examples, Kanck devotes an entire chapter (16) to the assumption that “empowerment” can come about through economic and political change that can benefit the poor without necessitating a comparable decline in benefits to the non poor. Such an approach seeks to give the poor and marginalized a place within the existing power structures and paradigms and avoids confronting and seeking to transform structures of inequality that create, maintain and reinforce unequal power relations in the first place. Further, such a “pragmatic” view of

empowerment sits comfortably with the static, ahistorical and voiceless portrayal of the “poor” throughout the book. The fact that empowerment is inextricably tied to disempowerment, but must be conceptualized within a framework that recognizes differentiated human agency to manoeuvre within unequal power relations, remain unexplored.

This conceptual framework lays the foundation for methodologies employed and, consequently, the ability to collect and assess evidence in a meaningful way is somewhat reduced. Going back to the section on “Gender and household” as an illustration, Mason (Chapter 4) evaluates the problems associated with using proxy indicators, observational studies, sample survey questions to measure women’s empowerment. She then suggests that a promising area of research is in using “subjective” measures that reflect women’s perceptions of themselves relative to other household members. She maintains that a combination of “survey research” and “observational study” must be used to capture these measures. An examination of her recommended type of survey questions reinforces my earlier argument of the static, ahistorical and voiceless portrayal of the beneficiaries of empowerment initiatives. There is no attempt to find out how women, in specific historical junctures, interpret the institutions that shape their lives, and how their interpretations in turn influence the strategies they employ in negotiating and bargaining in the household and wider domains of institutional arrangements. Further, her segment on “observational study” does not discuss how it will complement and validate the reliability of the survey research data. In particular, there is no reference to the rich methodology emphasizing the importance of building rapport between informants and researchers to tap into the private, political domains of human relationships.

In the introductory chapter of the book, Narayan indirectly predicts the above-mentioned points as inevitable criticisms of the book. Towards the end of the chapter, she suggests that the central focus on the book is on measuring a complex issue – empowerment. But she argues that the task has to be made simple so as to be comprehensible and meaningful to both policy-makers and “poor people”. Given the diverse and highly academic dialogue taking place in the book, it can hardly be called “simple”. Despite the many laudable aspects of the book, it does privilege a certain type of “simplicity” over others.

Assessing women's empowerment: towards a conceptual framework

When policymakers and practitioners decide that “empowerment”—usually of women or the poor—is a development goal what do they mean? And how do they determine the extent to which it has been achieved? Despite empowerment having become a widely used term in this context there is no accepted method for measuring and tracking changes. Presumably if we want to see people empowered we consider them to be currently dis-empowered i.e. disadvantaged by the way power relations presently shape their choices, opportunities and well-being. If this is what we mean then we would benefit from being better informed about the debates which have

shaped and refined the concept of power and its operation. Therefore in this paper, after briefly reviewing how the empowerment of women has been discussed within development studies, I look at how the concept of power was debated and refined during the second half of the twentieth century and discuss how power relations might be described and evaluated in a particular context. I then propose a conceptual framework within which empowerment might be assessed.

Link: <http://ideas.repec.org/a/wly/jintdv/v17y2005i2p243-257.html>

Rosalind Gill (2008). Feminism & Psychology, 18: 35

Empowerment/Sexism:

Figuring Female Sexual Agency in Contemporary Advertising

This article argues that there has been a significant shift in advertising representations of women in recent years, such that rather than being presented as passive objects of the male gaze, young women in adverts are now frequently depicted as active, independent and sexually powerful. This analysis examines contemporary constructions of female sexual agency in advertisements examining three recognizable “figures”: the young, heterosexually desiring “midriff”, the vengeful woman set on punishing her partner or ex-partner for his transgressions, and the “hot lesbian”, almost always entwined with her beautiful Other or double. Using recent examples of adverts, the article asks how this apparent “agency” and “empowerment” should be understood. Drawing on accounts of the incorporation or recuperation of feminist ideas in advertising, the article takes a critical approach to these representations, examining their exclusions, their constructions of gender relations and heteronormativity, and the way power is

figured within them. A feminist poststructuralist approach is used to interrogate the way in which “sexual agency” becomes a form of regulation in these adverts that requires the re-moulding of feminine subjectivity to fit the current post-feminist, neo-liberal moment in which young women should not only be beautiful but sexy, sexually knowledgeable/practiced and always “up for it”. The article makes an original contribution to debates about representations of gender in advertising, to poststructuralist analyses about the contemporary operation of power, and to writing about female “sexual agency” by suggesting that “voice” or “agency” may not be the solution to the “missing discourse of female desire” but may in fact be a technology of discipline and regulation.

Link: <http://fap.sagepub.com/content/18/1/35.short?rss=1&ssource=mfr>

Nripendra K. Mishra, Tulika Tripathi (2011).
Economic & Political Weekly, 46 (11) 207-248

Conceptualising Women's Agency, Autonomy and Empowerment

Women's agency, autonomy and empowerment are widely used ideas in development literature. But there is substantial ambiguity in the conception of these ideas. While women's well-being and women's agency is sufficiently distinguished from each other, there seems to be a large overlap between agency and empowerment and between agency and autonomy. This paper attempts to examine the degree of empowerment and autonomy across different characteristics like place of residence, religion, caste, education, type of employment and wealth quintiles at the individual as well as the regional levels. A regional analysis shows that empowerment may not always lead to autonomy.

Link: www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/yogyakarta-article-human-rights-law-review.pdf

Amy Leisenring (2006). *Symbolic Interaction*, 29 (3), 307-330

Confronting "Victim" Discourses: The Identity Work of Battered Women

In this article I explore how battered women both draw from and reject victim discourses in their processes of self-construction and self-representation. Data gathered from semi-structured interviews with forty women who experienced violence from an intimate partner in a heterosexual relationship demonstrate that available "victim" discourses are both enabling and constraining. Four common representations of a victim emerged as most influential to women's identity work: as someone who suffers a harm she cannot control; as someone who deserves sympathy and/or requires some type of action be taken against the victimizer; as someone who is culpable for her experiences; and as someone who is powerless and weak. "Victim empowerment" and "survivor" discourses also played a role in how women understood and made sense of their experiences. In their attempts to construct identities for themselves, battered women become caught between notions of victimization, agency, and responsibility.

Link: <http://www.jstor.org/pss/10.1525/si.2006.29.3.307>

Ruth E. Davis (2002), *Qualitative health research*, 12 (9), 1248-1263

"The Strongest Women": Exploration of the Inner Resources of Abused Women

Domestic violence is reaching epidemic proportions and is designated a national health crisis in the United States. Yet, the stories of abused women and their experiences are only just recently appearing in the literature. The use of coping strategies in dealing with abusive intimate partners is one such area that invites further research. Using the phenomenological method, 17 volunteers discuss their inner resources for surviving abusive experiences and developing ways to protect themselves in future relationships. Women's accounts of abuse experiences add depth to what is known about their strength and portray them as survivors rather than as victims. Future research is called for that adds to the understanding of the inner resources attributed to the women in the study findings.

Link: <http://qhr.sagepub.com/content/12/9/1248>

Zoë D. Peterson (2010). *Sex Roles*, 62 (5-6), 307-313

What Is Sexual Empowerment? A Multidimensional and Process-Oriented Approach to Adolescent Girls' Sexual Empowerment

Theorists disagree about how to define the concept of empowerment. This disagreement extends to discussions of adolescent girls' sexual empowerment. Feminists struggle with whether sexual empowerment should be conceptualized as a subjective internal feeling of power and agency or an objective measure of power and control. Defining sexual empowerment as a subjective state may mistakenly equate feelings of agency with cultural and institutional power. Yet, a subjective definition of sexual empowerment is advantageous in that it validates girls' own experiences and perceptions. This commentary argues that sexual empowerment might best be conceptualized as a continuous and multidimensional construct. This would allow for the recognition of sexual empowerment as a developmental process, and it would allow for the acknowledgment of ambivalent empowerment.

Link: <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content-content=a916820784~db=all-jumptype=rss>

Rape Experiences and the Limits of Women's Agency in Contemporary Post-Reform Vietnam

The research explores how women and girls cope with their experiences of rape and how this is affected by social discourses on gender and sexuality in the Vietnamese context. Data are collected primarily through an ethnographic study of a limited number of respondents, using open-ended interviews, life histories and participant observation. Supplementary data are retrieved from court files and examination of representations of rape cases in a number of selected newspapers. The findings show that social prejudices and inconsistencies in judicial proceedings have the combined effect of restricting women's choices in coping with the consequences of rape. An understanding of individuals'

consequences of rape. An understanding of individuals' autonomy as "mediated" in relation with other actors in the social sphere is proposed. This idea of mediated autonomy might serve as a useful theoretical tool to throw light on the so-called "grey" areas in which individual women, in their nuanced and variegated ways, act out their life strategies in the aftermath of rape. In this respect, attention should be paid to individuals' particularities, their subjectivity and their ability to mediate within the context of gender relations from a cross-cultural perspective.

Link: <http://dare.uva.nl/document/206770>

R. Jewkes and R. Morrell (2011). *Social Science and Medicine*, 2011, in press, online version in May, 2011 .

Sexuality and the limits of agency among South African teenage women: Theorising femininities and their connections to HIV risk practises.

In South Africa, both HIV and gender-based violence are highly prevalent. Gender inequalities give men considerable relational power over young women, particularly in circumstances of poverty and where sex is materially rewarded. Young women are often described as victims of men, but this inadequately explains women's observed sexual agency. This paper takes a different approach. We use qualitative interviews and ethnographic observation among 16 young women from the rural Eastern Cape to explore ways young women construct their femininities and exercise agency. The data were collected as part of an evaluation of Stepping Stones, which is a participatory behavioural intervention for HIV prevention that seeks to be gender transformative. Agency was most notable in particular stages of the dating "game", especially relationship initiation. Constructions of desirable men differed but generally reflected a wish to avoid violence, and a search for mutual respect, sexual pleasure, romance, modernity, status and money. Agency was constrained once relationships were consented to, as men expected to control their partners, using violent and non-violent methods.

Women knew this and many accepted this treatment, although often expressing ambivalence. Many of the women expressed highly acquiescent femininities, with power surrendered to men, as a "choice" that made their lives in cultural terms more meaningful. In marked contrast to this was a "modern" femininity, centred around a desire to be "free". A visible third position, notably emerging after the Stepping Stones intervention, rested not on a feminist challenge to patriarchy, but on an accommodation with men's power whilst seeking to negotiate greater respect and non-violence within relations with men. These multiple and dynamic femininities open up possibilities for change. They demonstrate the need to engage with women, both as victims of patriarchy and active supporters of the gender order. The multiplicity of women's hopes and desires and circumstances of emotional and relational fulfillment provides potential for interventions with women that acknowledge existing gender inequalities, validate women's agency, reduce violence and prevent HIV. HIV.

Link: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21696874>

NGO report on CEDAW implementation in Vietnam. In press.

Women and political participation

Vietnam has been recognized for its advanced legal system on gender equality in every field. The system is being refined and specified to improve women's role and status in family and society. In order to promote women to participate in politics, the Party and State have approved Resolutions, Decrees, Directions, laws and policies on female cadres. Targets have been especially set to increase and enhance women's political participation. Therefore, female cadres have been improved in both quality and quantity, which, however, is not sustainable. The rate of women in the National Assembly is 25.76 percent; in People's Councils at provincial level, 23.8 percent; in People's Councils at district level, 22.94 percent; and in People's Councils at communal level, 19.5 percent for the term of 2007-2011. For the term of 2011-2016, the rate of female cadres in People's Council slightly increases to 25.05 percent at provincial level; 24.79 percent at district and 22.26 percent at communal level, which has not achieved the set target of 30 percent.

In general, women's political power role is still weak when gender gaps in politics have not been much reduced. Targets were set for women in politics; however, some of them have not been achieved. Therefore, women's voices and influence in the policy making process are limited. Women are not treated equal to men in terms of retirement age in political participation. Therefore, many of them have been limited to promotion in their career when they reach 50 years.

The main causes for the above situation are leaders' weak political will, especially, those in the Party Executive Committees and state agencies and organizations. There has been a lack of direction, management, investigation, monitoring and evaluation of the Government and State bodies on their realization of Resolutions, Decrees, Laws, Policies related to female cadres' work. People and leaders' awareness of gender equality is limited and "male chauvinist" thinking is dominant. The state management bodies for the advancement of women (NCFAW, GED and VWU) have not worked effectively.

Recommendations to the State focus on strengthening accountability of the Party Executive Committee and leaders at all levels (central, provincial, district and commune level, hereinafter, all levels or levels) and branches in setting and directing the implementation of female cadres planning as well as providing support policies for them; enabling a mechanism to bring into play leaders', people's and women's organizations' democratic participation in developing and improving female cadres.

Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum 2011: Moving the agenda forward

October 10 -13, 2011, Cape Town, South Africa

Website:

<http://www.svri.org/forum2011/>

The 6th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights

October 20-22, 2011, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Website: <http://www.apcrshr6.org/>

International Conference on Global Health and Public Health Education

October 25 – 27, 2011, Hong Kong

Website:

<http://www.sphpc.cuhk.edu.hk/conference2011/>

16th International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa

4 – 8 December 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Website:

<http://www.icasa2011addis.org/>

Intervention model: Empower women who experience gender based violence through self-help groups and responsible men groups

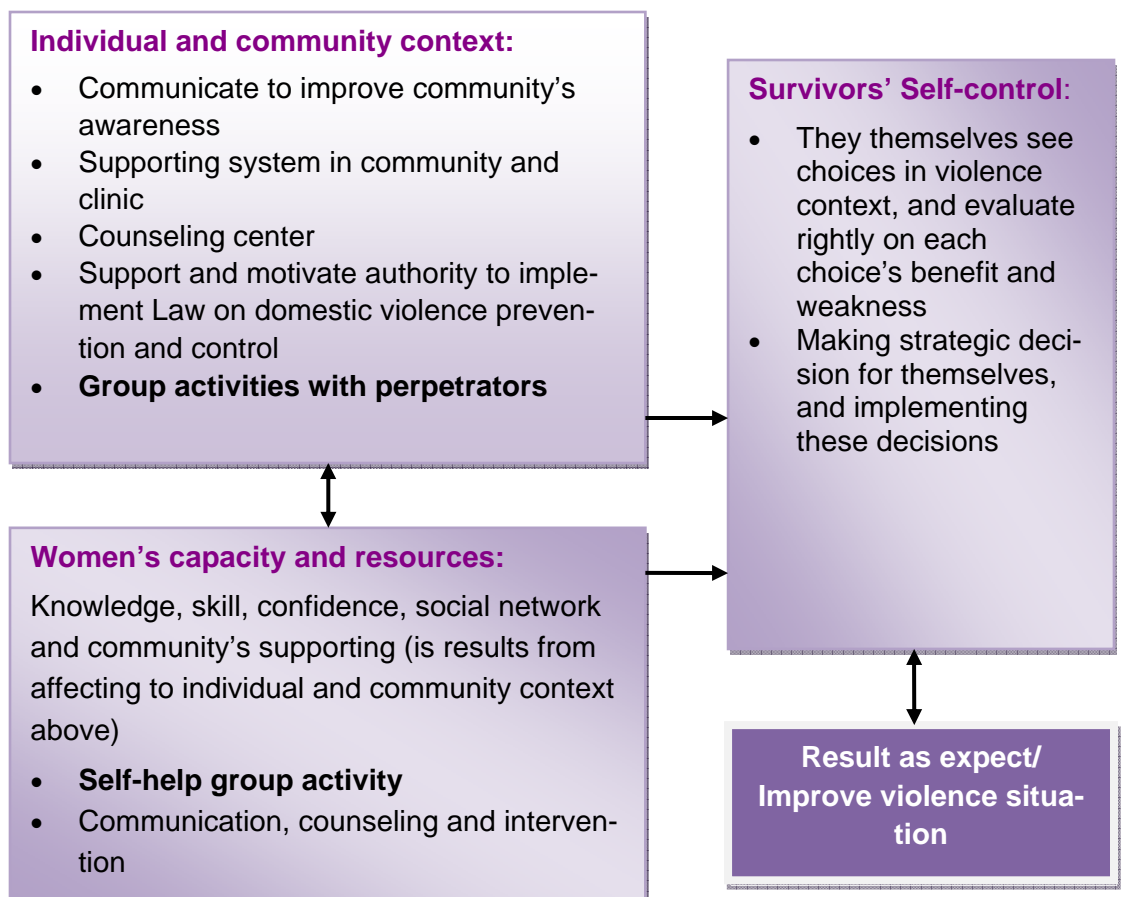
In domestic and gender based violence (GBV) prevention activities, objectives related to empowerment are very important. The project “Integrated model on gender based violence prevention in clinic and community” has been implemented by the Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP) in CuaLo town, Nghe An since May 2006. The project, has piloted strategies for the empowerment of women who experience GBV. In particular it has concentrated upon not only building the skills of survivors to cope with and address violence, but also has involved work with male perpetrators and has initiated communication activities within the general community to build awareness and advocate for change to address the issue of GBV..

The project applied the framework developed by Alsop et. al, to develop and measure levels of empowerment. This framework is mentioned in the Book Review section.

The project aims to create changes in the individual context by building social capital amongst women survivors of GBV and through working with the male perpetrators of this violence. The approach is to develop and dignify the internal power of GBV survivors by enabling them to build a positive image of themselves, that does not involve seeing themselves as weak, bad or as victims. Work with the men, involves examining issues of “masculinity” and examining their roles within the household. The concept of gender equality is then introduced and work

undertaken to ensure their perceptions of these roles changes, thus helping to improve the relationships with their wives. The project is undertaken with the Happiness and Family Counseling Centre that provides counseling services and supporting system within the wider community.

In 2009, group manuals were written and used to train for facilitators, getting comments to revise at once. Manual’s program includes 14 sessions for 14 times, 90 minutes for each time. Manuals’ content were designed particularly for women and men group. There are 3 main activities: relaxing, providing knowledge and building skills through games, group discussion, role play and creative activities. Women group’s manual concentrates on: 1) providing knowledge on gender and gender based violence, 2) preparing emotion to admit truth on violence relationship, 3) changing treatment attitude





Self-help group activity

to violence behavior and non blame themselves, 4) recognizing relationship between violence and reproductive and sexual health, 5) building coping skill with violence, includes communication skill, negotiation and safe ensuring skill, supporting seeking skill, making decision skill, etc. Men group's manual concentrates on: 1) conflict treatment skill without violence, anger control skill and replace by positive behavior, 2) understanding reason of violence and identifying consequences of violence to themselves, 3) tools to monitor violence behaviors based on think – emotion – behavior relationship, and maintain positive behaviors.



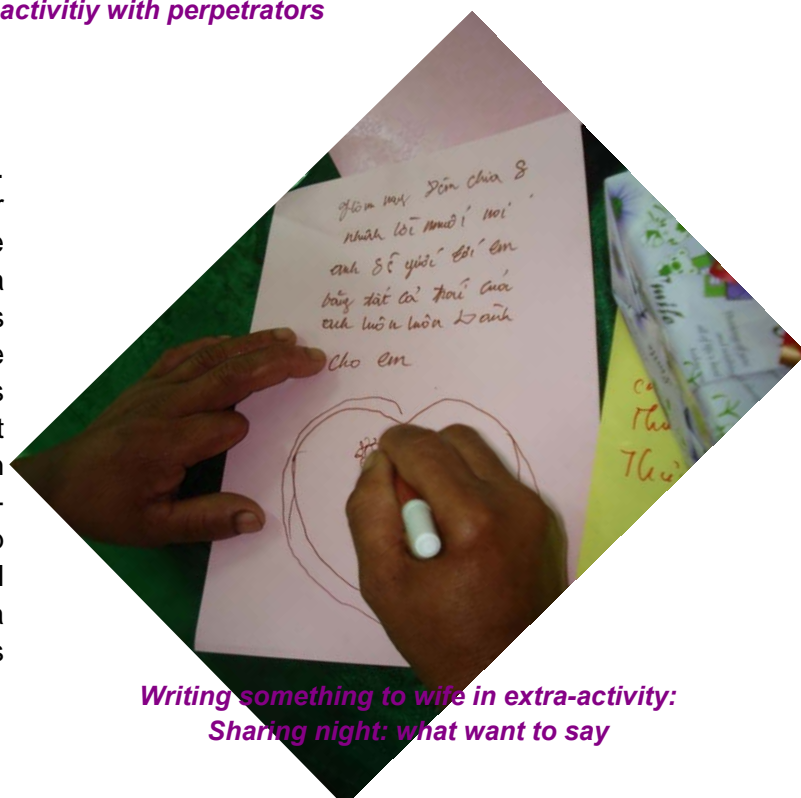
Role play in group activity with perpetrators

Manuals have been produced for use by facilitators. The manuals have been specifically produced for work with women's groups and men's groups. The exercises within the manuals focus upon creating a relaxing atmosphere in which knowledge and skills can be built, through games, group discussions, role play and other creative activities. The women's manual focuses upon: providing knowledge about gender and gender-based violence; dealing with emotions and self-blame, changing attitudes towards violent behavior, recognizing the relationship between violence and reproductive and sexual health and developing communication skills, such a negotiating and decision making skills. The men's group manual focuses upon managing anger,

dealing with conflict without resorting to violence, understanding the reasons for violence and maintaining positive behaviours.

From 2010, 6 women's self-help groups have been established and implemented in 6 communes. There are 12-14 members in each group; 3 men's groups have also been established and these have been implemented in 3 communes consisting of 14-18 members in each group. After the first round of implementation results show that women had a much better understanding of gender and gender-based violence and over 90 per cent of the women had developed plans to maintain their safety, most knew where to go for support and most supported other women survivors within their community. This is a significant improvement upon what was occurring prior to the intervention, where most women blamed themselves for the violence and did not know to where to go for help. With the men, the improvements were also dramatic, as over 70 per cent learnt to modify their behavior and did not use violence against their wives in the last 6 months.

If you want to know more information, please contact Ms. Tran Thi Thanh Tam – Email: ttam@ccihp.org



Writing something to wife in extra-activity: Sharing night: what want to say

Training course on abstract writing skills for submission to international conferences

The Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP) has been running capacity building activities for researchers and program officers in the field of social sciences in Vietnam since 2003. These courses have included developing skills for writing research abstracts and articles for scientific conferences and international journals. Since 2010, the Gender, Sexuality and Health Resource Center (GSHRC) established by CCIHP has continued to develop professional research skills.

One approach the GSHRC undertakes is to run training courses on writing and presentation skills for specific events. This approach has proved successful on several occasions, for example successful presentations were given at Vietnam's 4th National Scientific Conference on HIV and AIDS. In addition to this people who attended the abstract writing skills course had their abstracts accepted for the 10th International Congress on AIDS in Asia-Pacific (ICAAP). The participants then went on to make successful oral and poster presentations.

The 6th Asia Pacific conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights (APCRSHR6) will take place from 19 to 22 October, 2011 in Indonesia. This is an important event for many people who are working in the field of gender, reproductive health, sexuality, HIV and human rights in the Asia - Pacific. To preparation for this event, GSHRC held a training course on abstract writing skills for submitting to APCRSR 6 in 2 days, 23 and 24 May. The goal of the training is to help participants: 1) describe the steps

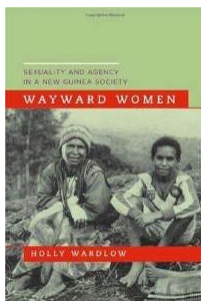
of exploring and using the conference information to write and apply for scholarship, and, 2) practice the abstract writing skills, including set arguments, writing format, and using of language, etc.

A similar approach has now been adopted for the 6th Asia-Pacific conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health Rights (APCRSHR6). This is an important conference for researchers in the field, and Vietnamese researchers attended a course on how to submit abstracts specifically geared towards this conference. A common mistake of the participants in this course was to develop abstracts that were not specifically tailored towards the aims of the conference. The course therefore enabled them to develop abstracts that were more in-line with the conference themes. The nine participants of the course developed their skills in writing succinct abstracts with clear titles, that were related to conference themes. The participants commented upon each others work and helped each other to develop themes.

The participants very much appreciated the course and its effectiveness was demonstrated in the fact that all nine participants had their abstracts accepted for the conference. The course was followed up with training in effective presentation skills.

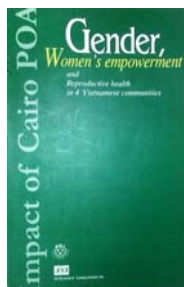
For more information, please contact with Ms Trung via email trung@ccihp.org.

The same topic materials from CCIHP's Library



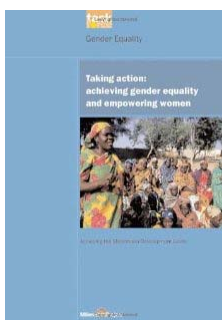
Holly Wardlow. 2006. Wayward women: Sexuality and agency in a new guinea society. University of California Press. USA.

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CIHP, PDI & JSI. 2002. Gender, Women's Empowerment: Reproductive health in 4 Vietnamese communities

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Grown, C., Rao Gupta, G. and Kes, A. 2005. Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women

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Sida. 2001. Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice

ID: THEO 596

Information and free counseling on HIV/AIDS, Sexual and Reproductive health for Teens

Website: <http://tamsubantre.org/>

Information and free counseling on HIV/AIDS, Sexual and Reproductive health for MSM

Website: <http://nam-man.vn/>

Phone number of the North: **04 66841568**

Phone number of the South: **08 35882441**

Information and free counseling on Gender based violence for women, men and youth in Central Vietnam

Address: The second floor 2, Internal Medicine Area, Cua Lo Hospital

Phone: **0383 955 912**

Male counselor (Mr. Nguyen): **0977 760 249**

Female counselor (Ms Than): **0167 9318569**

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Building a healthy future for all



"Why not? – Tại sao không?" is a contest which is run by the Center for Creative Initiative in Health and Population (CCIHP) with the aim to reduce unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion in adolescents and youth through claiming their sexual rights.

The contest encourages initiatives which promote communication between parents and children, the school and students about sexual and reproductive health. The contest aims to develop communication skills amongst adolescents and youth in safer sex.

This program is a partnership between CCIHP and the Southeast Asian Consortium on Gender, Sexuality and Health with funding from the Ford Foundation through ARROW. Detailed information is included on the fan page of the program: <http://facebook.com/whynot.taisaokhong>

If you have questions and comments please do not hesitate to post or comment on the fanpage or contact us via email: whynot.taisaokhong@ccihp.org or Ms Dinh Thi Phuong Nga: nga@ccihp.org or Ms Ta Hoai Giang: hoai giang@ccihp.org

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