



MAKING IT REAL: GENDER EQUITY AND DIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 volume 3: March 2011

Welcome to the third edition of CARE USA's Gender Equity and Diversity Newsletter! The newsletter includes information on regional, CO-level and HQ initiatives to promote organizational and programmatic positive change in Gender Equity and Diversity (GED). To be included in the next issue, please send your ideas or updates by May 15th, 2011 to Doris Bartel, Director of the Gender Unit in the Program Quality and Impact division at dbartel@care.org or Allison Burden, Senior Advisor for Gender Equity and Diversity in the Global Support Services division at aburden@care.org.

Advising the Executive Management Team - New GED Steering Committee!

By Allison Burden, Senior Advisor for Gender Equity and Diversity, CARE USA

February saw the formation of a new GED Steering Committee to advise CARE USA's Executive Management Team (EMT) on gender and diversity issues. It has 10 members, 3 from the EMT, as well as 5 representatives from the thematic sub-working groups of the Gender Working Group. The nomination process was impressive and we send a big thank you to each of the nominees - the list of talented people volunteering for this committee was impressive and inspiring! The Steering Committee members will meet virtually (and in person once if possible) 3 - 4 times per year to review and address current gender and diversity issues. Please see the box on the right for the members of the Steering Committee and contact them if you have something you feel is of importance to share with our EMT.

Members of the GED Steering Committee

Helene Gayle – USA (hgayle@care.org)
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Gender Updates Around the Globe

CARE Attends Annual Planning Meeting of the UN GBV Coordination Mechanism (GBV AOR) by Jasveen Ahluwalia, CARE Afghanistan and Leigh Stefanik, CARE USA

We kicked off 2011 by representing CARE at the annual planning meeting for the UN GBV coordination mechanism held in New York City. CARE joined representatives from UN agencies, NGOs and international organizations to reflect on the challenges and successes of the past year, identify priority issues from the field, and plan for the next year's work. CARE was the only NGO to have field representation, which highlighted a current weakness of the Humanitarian Coordination mechanism: that it remains to a large extent UN-dominated. Discussions and planning focused on the following priorities: 1) Advocacy and funding 2) Support to the field 3) Norms, standard setting, and knowledge building 4) Coordination and 5) GBV Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Risk Reduction. Jasveen, who is currently running the coordination mechanism for GBV in Afghanistan, volunteered to represent CARE in the working group that will turn the ideas and planning from the retreat into a work plan for 2011-2012 around these priority areas. To obtain a copy of CARE's report on the retreat, please contact Leigh at lstefanik@care.org. For more information about CARE's GBV work, please see the GBV page on the Gender Wiki at <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/Gender-Based+Violence>.

Sexual Division of Labor: Obstacle for Achieving Women's Autonomy and Empowerment by Miryam Moya, Coordinator, LAC Gender Equity Program

In March 2010, CARE in LAC launched a regional gender equity program, which has put the spotlight on how the sexual division of labor affects women and prevents their real empowerment and autonomy. We have carried out an analysis for identifying the changes that need to happen; made alliances with women's organizations and social movements in Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru; and initiated processes of reflection, training, research, and advocacy on how to address the sexual division of labor and generate joint responsibility from couples, families, communities and the State for unpaid and paid work. We have developed specific policy proposals to address the sexual division of labor, which may be the strongest subordination and discrimination mechanism of women.

Deepening our reflection on unpaid and paid reproductive work carried out by women has led us to question many of CARE's programs and practices. Interventions that promote leadership, income opportunities, and rights awareness without addressing the unfair distribution and responsibilities of the work women do at home are insufficient. Programs that help women step into the public sphere need to also work on resolving the issue of division of labor and responsibilities within the household. Without this analysis, programs could even double or



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triple the burden on women. All of these issues also have directed us toward an intra-organizational reflection: What is the burden that women working for CARE suffer? How do they resolve pressures around childcare and household chores? How can we better support each other? What role do men at CARE play in the domestic sphere?

Integrating Women's Empowerment into Children's Health and Nutrition by Justine Freeman, Gender Program Officer, CARE USA

Does a woman have access to adequate resources and the agency to make informed decisions about breastfeeding and birth spacing? Can a pregnant woman walk to a health clinic alone without being shamed? Do our programs include men and encourage them to be caretakers

concerned with the well-being of their children? These are questions that we asked during a two-day workshop hosted by Leah Berkowitz from the Program Impact Unit on integrating Women's Empowerment into the Children's Health and Nutrition Unit (CHAN) on January 20-21. During the workshop, the team explored issues like seeing the value of women's empowerment as an important goal in its own right as well as a factor in the health and nutrition of children. Every one of us has a range of choices that is heavily influenced by the roles and relationships in our lives. Through the exercises during the workshop, the CHAN team was able to identify how their work can reflect these important connections and is now working to put these in place. For notes and resources from the meeting, please email me at jfreeman@care.org.

Gender Equity and Diversity – What it Means to Me!

By Nana Yaa Nartey, Staff Development Assistant, CARE Ghana

Participation in the GED workshop for CARE Ghana staff in January 2011 was the best way to start off the New Year. I know my colleagues will agree with me that the workshop was immensely beneficial not just because the facilitators were a great resource but more importantly because it completely transformed our mentalities with regards to GED. Those of us who hitherto equated GED with feminism appreciate now that it is a whole lot more; much more than we ever imagined.

The first lesson I learned is that human beings are by nature **diverse**. We have different communication and work styles, different experiences and we are affected by different socializations. What could be acceptable to me as a person may seem odd to someone else. Usually we judge people based on the way we see the world (our **world view**) and we hardly stop to consider that that person also has their own world view. This is bound to bring about conflict if the two parties decide not to budge. If on the other hand we take the time to engage in **awareness** (know ourselves, know others, learn about other people's culture and beliefs) then we would have taken the first step to being GED sensitive and practicing the **Aikido model**. What struck me the most is that we need not seek agreement with the other party all the time. It is enough to **understand** each other and reach a consensus on the way forward.

I have undertaken to be a GED champion, to appreciate the diverse nature of human beings more, to share the knowledge with my spouse, family and circle of friends, to be more aware of others' backgrounds, to **suspend judgment** when communicating with others and ensure that I understand the person with whom I communicate. As I do my part and you do yours, I believe CARE will be the champion GED leader that we all seek. An interesting statement that was shared at the workshop to emphasize the value of team work was "If you want to go fast, you move alone; if you want to go far you move with the group". Think about it!

Please see CARE's GED training materials in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese on the Gender Wiki at: <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/Gender+Equity+and+Diversity+work+at+CARE>



Learning the Lessons of the Women's Empowerment Strategic Impact Inquiry

Jean-Michel Vigreux, Senior Vice President, CARE USA

I'm happy to share that a final set of briefs have been produced about key trends, successes, challenges and lessons learned about programming and women's empowerment as part of the Women's Empowerment Strategic Impact Inquiry (SII) from 2004-2009. These briefs are available in English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese. On the front page of the library are links to most of the key documents that were produced during the four years of the SII, and now includes the six final briefs on emergencies, group organizing strategies, violence, engaging men, village savings and loans associations, and HIV/AIDS prevention. The implications from the SII for our work are great; if we wish to play a substantive role in



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facilitating the enduring empowerment of women, we must increasingly pay attention to the power relations and structural dimensions that perpetuate inequality in addition to addressing women's agency. Increasingly, we see that many CARE country offices are putting a significant emphasis on women and girls as impact groups or women's rights as key goals among the new set of long-term programs. I encourage all of you who are contributing to this new generation of programs to make use of the information in these summaries and briefs. Please see these and other SII resources at <http://pqdl.care.org/sii/default.aspx>.

Addressing Gender Transformative Behavior Change: What Did We Find?

Julia Ahmed, Team Leader of COVAW, CARE Bangladesh



The Cost of Violence Against Women (COVAW) initiative is based on over two decades of CARE Bangladesh experience in women's empowerment. It has a strong prevention focus. It starts by questioning how we can best bring a gradual change to traditional gender norms, behavior and practices that accept violence as a means to resolve conflicts. As a part of this effort we have introduced tailor-made exercises in fortnightly education sessions in 48 community based groups in 24 villages of COVAW's three areas. From this experience, we have found that:

- 1) Previously, upon questioning what is the root cause of violence a resounding answer was DOWRY. Now, a gradual change is happening, as the wholesale mindset that gives men proprietary rights over women and girls is challenged. And in the group discussion, the important debate is not the issue of taking power from men and giving it to women. It is to bring a new **equitable relationship between** men and women.
- 2) A time analysis exercise in two groups about how men and women pass the 24 hours in a day powerfully demonstrates the instantly visible sharp contrast of time distribution between women and men. Now, the group can link how women's involvement in income generation puts **double pressure** to perform both the reproductive and productive functions.
- 3) Through a consultative process, we have identified **positive men** - those who use their power for resisting violence and help with the household work like cleaning, cooking, washing. We all know that it is not easy and not 'manly' in the context where we work. We have awarded these men as role models in front of a wider audience in the recently held 16 Days of Activism Campaign. This approach has been received as a huge silence breaker in the community that has long term transformative potential for achieving equitable gender relations.

Diversity: A Treasure to Hold on to

Rose-Marie Nkumbiri, Administrative Coordinator, CARE Burundi

I was first employed in a program support role in the sub-office in Muyinga by CARE International in Burundi in 2004. I really wanted to work in Bujumbura because I wanted to be near my family. In 2009, the position of Administrative Coordinator opened up and as I thought I was able to fill it, I put my application in with other internal candidates. When it got to the short-listing, there were three candidates to go through the written test and interview; two were Tutsi and I am a Hutu. Remember that Burundi is a country that has been battered by war and where ethnic divisions are deep.

As I came out of the interview, I passed a group of Tutsi colleagues who were whispering together: "We are sure that the position will go to Rose-Marie because she is Hutu but let them do it because they will be surprised when they find out that she's not good enough to do the job well." I carried on walking past and I came across another group of the same ethnic group saying: "It's Hutus who are on top these days." This frustrated me because none of those whispering were actually on the recruitment panel and therefore they could not judge based on concrete facts; on top of this the interview process had not yet finished to be able to come to such conclusions.

Finally, when the result of the recruitment was published by Human Resources, I was selected as the person who had succeeded and able to take up the post. Since then, my determination has been to work hard to prove wrong those who thought that I was favored because of my ethnic group.

Success was not slow in coming from my daily efforts and I have even been recognized for them - I received Drumbeats of Excellence in 2009 and 2010. To my great surprise it was those same people who had doubted my competence in the corridors who were the first to congratulate me. The lesson that I learned from our gender and diversity training is that we have to put our perceptions, expectations and judgments aside and recognize the qualities and resources of others because as we are diverse, we are also complimentary.



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In brief: Gender on the Move

- 25 staff members in CARE Myanmar took the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) “Different Needs – Equal Opportunities” course during January and February, 2011. Additionally, Myanmar’s Gender Advisor, Phyu Phyu Lin, has planned for all 9 Field Office Coordinators to take the course by the end of May 2011. To access the free online course, please see <http://www.iasc-elearning.org/home/>.
- CARE’s work with widow’s associations in Afghanistan was featured in the Globe and Mail at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/asia-pacific/in-broken-justice-system-women-in-kabul-find-their-legal-voice/article1914820/>. Just 4 full time Afghan women and 20 daily wage workers have mobilized over 11,000 widows into solidarity groups over the last year and a half.
- CARE USA staff attended a meeting with Dr. Caren Grown, the new Senior Gender Advisor of USAID’s Policy, Planning, and Learning Bureau. For notes from the meeting on strengthening the unprecedented level of activity on gender issues throughout the agency, please see the Gender Wiki at <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/>.
- CARE in Asia hosted the inaugural workshop of the Female Leadership Program, bringing together over 20 women from across the region. They prioritized three areas of focus to increase female leadership in Asia: the recruitment, retention and development of female staff; paying attention to the whole person; and ensuring accountability for change. For more information please contact aburden@care.org.

Adolescent Girls and Governance in Southern Africa

Siân Long, Independent Consultant on Child Rights and HIV, based in South Africa

In Southern Africa, CARE has identified ‘youth’ or ‘adolescent girls’ as an impact group and governance as an underlying cause of poverty and vulnerability. Recent research in South Africa and Mozambique is identifying some key issues and potential entry points on how governance processes can support better conditions and opportunities for adolescent girls, using the existing Women’s Empowerment Framework and the new draft Governance Framework, finalized in 2010.

Participatory workshops have been held with groups of boys and girls aged 12-14 years and 15-18 years and discussions held with stakeholders such as parents, teachers and local decision makers. Although the adolescents in these two countries live very different lives, there are a number of similarities. Pregnant girls and young mothers were found to be highly stigmatized, both by adults and their female peers. They were excluded from existing support projects for teenagers, and young mothers themselves felt they could not participate in adult livelihoods groups.

Sense of justice: In order to feel motivated to claim one’s rights, a person has to feel that she or he is entitled. The already well-recognized lack of confidence and self-esteem of teenage girls links to a less-formed sense of justice and what is ‘fair’ and ‘not fair’ than their male peers. Boys were far more able to articulate why they felt some things were unjust or to rationalize things when they did not like them. This means having a greater focus on supporting both boys and girls to think about rights not just as ‘child rights’ but how to look at injustices that they can address and translate these into practical solutions that can be raised with adults.

Safety: There was a lot of interest and concern from boys and girls around feeling safe in both countries, but especially in South Africa where the level of sexual and physical violence against both boys and girls is extreme. The priority is to enable girls to get out of the private sphere, into public spaces and ‘see and be seen’. Some options arising from the research include challenging the physically submissive way that girls are expected to behave, for example through self-defense classes. Advocating for safe physical public space is also an entry point for mobilizing local stakeholders such as caregivers, police and local authorities to understand the needs and realities of adolescents.

Teen-friendly spaces: The adults all talked about how ‘difficult’ teenagers are, especially once they become 14 or 15 years old with greater condemnation of girls than boys. Teens talked a lot about the communication problems with their elders. Older teenagers, 15 years plus, were not interested in existing ‘children’s activities’ and want to be in less formal, peer-owned spaces - places that allow boys and girls to listen to music, dance, be on their own and yet receive life skills, financial literacy and other practical support that will enable them to speak as a collective voice and learn practical governance skills. Another potential entry point is to support the participation of both boys and girls into existing decision making by supporting mechanisms that build up skills in representation and dialogue, and support adults to listen to and learn to respect the perspectives of boys and girls. One school council and one partner NGO were both interested in supporting greater adolescent participation.

CARE in the Southern Africa region will be using this information to identify potential areas of work as well as find out what gaps are still needed. *Stay tuned to the Gender Wiki for the report on this work.*