

# Unpaid care: reduction, redistribution, recognition

*Evidence review of key interventions.*

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# 1 Overview

This review focuses on interventions to alleviate the unpaid care burden of women. It builds off [an initial review](#) which was completed in June 2020. Each day around the world, women perform an estimated 12.5 billion hours of care work that is unpaid. This may include a wide-range of domestic chores, taking care of young children, the elderly or other household members, among other tasks necessary for running and maintaining a household. This labor has an estimated monetary value of >\$10.8 trillion, equivalent to 3x the size of the tech industry. Single, young, female-led households often carry the heaviest burden. Time-saving and norm-changing interventions have the potential to reduce and redistribute care work, enabling women to obtain an education, participate in income-generating activities, and gain economic independence increasing their household decision-making and bargaining power.

While there are many potential types of interventions addressing this issue, this review focuses on 1) child care interventions, 2) behavior and social norm change interventions, and 3) access to land and property rights.

## EVIDENCE BASE

For this review, 32 resources in English (26), Spanish (5), and French (1) were included in the final selection. 13 impact evaluations, 9 observational studies, 3 case studies, 2 descriptive studies, 1 systematic review, 1 literature review, 1 outcome evaluation, 1 program guideline, and 1 policy briefing were consulted.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Child care

- Programs which grant flexibility for mothers to choose services (community child care centers, in-home visits, parental counseling) based on their household and working situations support females with financial autonomy.
- Social security laws, need-based federal and state subsidies, and cash transfer grants are most effective for access to child care services by working mothers, mothers seeking employment, and female headed households.
- In-home child care services from trained nurses improve child cognitive, social, and physical development, female workforce participation, and reduce domestic partner violence.
- Community child care centers provide women with employment opportunities as childcare workers, increase workforce participation by vulnerable populations (single mothers, widowed mothers, female household heads), and improve childrens' social, cognitive, and development health.

### Behavior and social norms change

- Interventions addressing parenting behaviors among men have been shown to improve parenting and relationship behaviors, including increased time spent with children and conflict management. However, these improvements have largely not been statistically significant. Gender norm and behavior changes

require long-term investment in localized behavior change programs for sustainable, significant impact. The consensus across the studies appears that the normal 6 to 12 month long interventions are not long enough to see sustained results on changes in behavior.

- Behavior change interventions should include the whole community, with an eye towards sustainability and safety.
- Behavior change interventions targeting household division of labor and gender norms can be cross-cutting with other outcome areas, including land rights and land usage, agricultural knowledge, economic attainment and overall reduction in the experience and perpetration of violence. The outcome areas can include improved economic attainment and control, reduction in local violence (including violence committed by male actors outside the home), and improved income earning behaviors and knowledge. .

#### **Land rights and asset creation**

- Legal reforms allowing for female ownership of land and joint land certification programs can redistribute care work, improve women's household bargaining power, and increase expenditures on female education and resources. If not done in a careful and conscientious manner, however, land conversion can have especially adverse effects on women, including increasing their labor time burden and risk of displacement as well as limiting income-generating activities.
- For land rights, training and workshops at the community level involving adolescent girls, parents, and boys, can be effective in increasing positive land inheritance practices, encouragement of income-generating land-related activities for women, and improving general financial and legal knowledge.
- Agricultural training and even a small amount of land for personal use can increase women's income with positive effects on decision-making power and education.

#### **Other (key findings from initial review)**

- Water-related infrastructure projects can increase paid work by 33% for women, saving 1.5 hours/day, with men taking up more household tasks.
- Time-saving agricultural-related technologies and electrification/solar projects also contribute to increased distribution of labor and improved shared decision-making between men/women. Initial evidence further suggests electrification/solar interventions increase female employment 9.5% and earnings by 23-30%.
- Social transfer programs have been shown to lead to increases in out-of-home paid work and study time, as well as less hours spent on domestic tasks.
- Evidence suggests job/vocational skills training programs can lead to 20-80% increase in female earnings, increased employment (+47%), and increased control of resources and savings. There appears to be a more powerful impact from job/skills training programs on female earnings than business/entrepreneurial training programs.
- Paternity leave is linked to increased division of household tasks. The extension of maternity leave programs without increased public subsidies to employers, however, may have a negative impact on women's employment (particularly for younger women).

### **THEORY OF CHANGE/KEY OUTCOMES**

Key outcomes focused on for this review center around the reduction, redistribution, and recognition of unpaid care work. For the OEF, the review focused on the sub-outcomes Economic Well-being 4, which overlapped with outcomes in Power 2, Education 2-4, and Safety 1-4:

- *women and girls have knowledge and skills about literacy, and numeracy, financial management, negotiation and their legal rights;*
- *women and girls have freedom of movement; women and girls are confident and motivated to use/control resources;*
- *women have information about available resources;*
- *male partners and household members, and higher status females, are motivated to share control of resources;*
- *laws and policies support women and adolescent girls' rights to own and inherit productive assets and property, run businesses and work;*
- *customs, social norms, attitudes and practices support women and adolescent girls' ownership and control of resources and run businesses and work.*

## 2 Childcare Interventions

**Child care services play a critical role in reducing the burden of unpaid care.** These services are most beneficial for mothers who are head of the household, live in poverty, and are in search of employment (28, 30) —both providing caregiving jobs and enabling mothers to work outside the home. Often, there is a disparity between supply and demand for child care services. Legal frameworks which are supportive of child care, child care subsidies, community day cares, and home visits can have positive impacts on maternal labor outcomes. (31) Greater access to child care ensures higher rates of maternal employment, improves parenting styles, child health, school enrollment, and reduces domestic violence —including child abuse, intimate partner violence, and violence against the elderly. (15,13)

### a. Intervention description and impact by type

#### CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES

- Child support grants are often provided through cash transfers. In South Africa, low-income primary caregivers with children <15 years old were provided \$34.50 per child per month on the premise that the child attends school. Although the grant was gender-neutral, 96% of beneficiaries were women, as per a national survey conducted in 2008. According to a quantitative household survey, **significant numbers of child support grant respondents were involved in other livelihood activities that supplemented their regular income:** 24% were able to run their own business, 24% did irregular work for wages, and 11% worked in exchange of food/housing or for personal fulfillment. (16)
- Need-based child care subsidies were provided to low-income families in rural Massachusetts by the federal government in order to grant access to child care programs. **Based on a cross-sectional survey, low-income subsidy group women were less likely than middle-income group women to report that their work time was more stressful because of family responsibilities** (mean scores of 1.69 vs. 2.10,  $p < .05$ ). Comparisons indicated that families in the subsidy group were more likely than families in the waitlist and middle-income groups to report that there were good choices for childcare where they live ( $p < .01$ ). As a result, **subsidies allowed for greater, safer, and more affordable**

**childcare options** ( $x^2 = 8.11$  vs  $x^2 = 6.93$  vs  $x^2 = 11.76$  for the subsidy group, waitlist group and low-income group, respectively).

**Women were more likely to work and more likely to work full time when they received subsidies.** (15)

- A representative longitudinal study was conducted on the Family Life Project USA. The subsidy programs moved children of lower-income households into higher quality care. Household eligibility criteria depended on income status. Of those eligible, between 23-33% of families utilized subsidies when provided. Eligible/subsidy-using families ( $\geq 75\%$ ) selected child care centers more often compared to eligible/non-using families ( $\leq 30\%$ ) and non-eligible families ( $\leq 34\%$ ) **Results indicated that subsidy and grant programs provided low-income children with high-quality care in safe spaces and improved their health and development.** (14)
- An evaluation was conducted on the impact of various Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs in Latin America. The ECE programs offered different child care service options for mothers, including out-of-home community child care centers, in-home visits from nurses, pediatrician visits, and parental counseling. Results indicated that in-home visits were most effective for socio-emotional development for children at 36 months, and domestic violence towards

women decreased. Mothers who sent their children to community care centers completed high school and achieved a better employment status in comparison to the other groups. Informative pediatrician visits and counseling improved parenting styles. **It was recommended that programs have extensive child care service choices so mothers are able to choose services that best suit their living situations and work-related goals.** (29)

- Evidence from qualitative data extracted from publicly supported child care program specialists and coordinators was obtained from 21 Latin American countries. The results indicated that the child care programs were highly fragmented and lacked sustainability plans; different public service provisions (maternity leave, public subsidy childcare, and child care with compulsory education) were offered to families but did not have well-insured and organized transitions. This led to confusion in decision-making for working families. In order to prevent disorganization, child care programs need to plan a long-term agenda and structured transition plans based on different working conditions of family households. (31)

#### LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

- Legal frameworks supportive of childcare services and subsidies grant benefits for low-income households in-terms of improved food security, access to wage-earning activities, parenting programs, and improved child and maternal health (16).
- A qualitative evaluation of the Mexican Institute of Social Security's hybridization model of subrogate nurseries (insurance-based community daycares) was conducted. Nurseries were provided for insured parents/guardians with children 43 days to 4 years of age. By using a hybridization model, private third parties provide childcare services alongside the public sector. Additionally, working women were legally granted daycare services under the Social Security Law, if they chose to participate. Results indicated that with more options available and easy access, **women**

**achieved financial autonomy, avoided the barriers of job permanence and access, and had greater workforce participation while their children were in community centers.** (28)

#### HOME VISITS

- **In-home visit systems consist of nurses and trained caregivers who provide care for children in their homes while mothers work. In Chile's Early Childhood Education program (ECE),** nurses were trained to provide services within households with children aged 0-3 years and teach available parents about child development. Due to frequent visits, they acted as barriers for mothers' domestic abuse and catalysts for childrens' socio-emotional development. Evidence from qualitative program evaluation of ECE, parenting styles improved due to information provided by the nurses. In addition, female workforce participation increased as in-home visits were conducted. (17)
- **An experimental, comparative study was conducted in Ecuador focusing on child developmental outcomes between in-home visits programs and child care centers.** A sample of 2,572 children in 99 centers (38 were child care centers and 61 were in-home visits) were evaluated with a regression continuity design. Child care centers provide day care, breakfast and lunch and educational service. During in-home visits, trained care-givers provided guardians with lessons on enriching activities to partake in with children, such as nutritional meal preparations and non-aggressive child-parent interactions. This had a positive impact on parenting styles and mothers' responsiveness to children (0.5 standard deviation unit), childrens' cognitive and motor development, reduced the likelihood of child anemia and reduced mothers' stress (30 percent deviation), making them more responsive towards their children, while child care centers had either no or negative impacts on these outcomes. **Female labor market participation decreased for in-home visit results, while it increased for**

**community center results.** However, child care centers increased the likelihood that children have anemia, increased mothers' stress (40% deviation), and was five times more expensive than home visit costs. (17)

## COMMUNITY DAYCARE

- Community childcare centers emphasize the standardization of care provided to children.** Three evaluations focused specifically on child care services focusing on child health outcomes, while one provided a strategic framework for centers. The central features of these childcare programs included qualified personnel (i.e., nutritionists, pedagogical assets), standardized health measurement techniques and instruments, and administrative guidelines for personnel and infrastructure. (11; 12)
- In the Children's Stay Program to Support Working Mothers (PGEI) in Mexico,** community child care centers were established to support mothers earning less than a minimum wage. According to a qualitative program evaluation, PGEI's framework offers three different modules, or types of services, targeted towards different population groups. Under the first branch, single mothers and fathers with young children earning minimum wage could obtain services from care centers. Under the second branch, marginalized persons and citizens with legal residency could send their children to nurseries within their residential communities. Lastly, mothers and fathers could train and join nursery centers themselves. **The intervention indirectly contributed to improved educational access for children who were previously serving as caretakers of younger siblings. It also improved women's ability to join the workforce of their choice; by removing barriers to market entry, the incomes and livelihoods of beneficiaries improved.** (30)
- Under the Hogares Comunitarios Program in Guatemala,** local community women were selected to take care of children in their homes for compensation. A cross-sectional beneficiary control survey was conducted to evaluate the program's impacts on children's health. Quantitative recall methods were used to complement information obtained from direct weighing. Results indicated that beneficiary mothers received employment benefits compared to control mothers who were not under the program (10.4% compared to 6.6% respectively). Children's diets significantly improved, **female caretakers enjoyed work while generating income, and poor parents' access to formal sector jobs increased. The income of beneficiary mothers was 30% higher than the random sample of working mothers.** (13)
- Similarly, in the **Hogares Comunitarios de Bienestar Program in Chile,** traditional HCB child care homes were led by a "community mother", a home-based childcare provider living in the same community, who chose to serve children via part-time or full-time schedules. Additionally, 50–70% of daily nutritional requirements were provided to children through lunch and snacks in order to promote physical growth, health, and social and cognitive development. **Long term exposure resulted in improved social and cognitive development,** as per a non-randomized quantitative study. **It was beneficial for mothers to gain access to the service according to their working status. it was also predicted that as a result of the program their wages were likely to significantly increase** (12). Obstacles for success occurred when pedagogical trainees did not attend training at proper times, and/or the planned staff was inadequate in numbers (11). Therefore, it was recommended that more emphasis should be placed on the organizational structure, such as implementing horizontal and vertical training within programs or doing annual operational planning (32).

## b. Costs

| <b>Program</b>                                     | <b>Cost/item</b>  | <b>Cost-effectiveness</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| <i>México, Hogares Infantiles</i>                  | One time pedagogical endowment of \$52/child for toys, books, other materials one time<br><br>\$11/month per child for total nutritional improvement cost |  |
| <i>Colombia, Hogares Comunitarios de Bienestar</i> | \$430/year per child in HCB household   | Cost/benefit ratio of 3:11 (depending on discount rate used for net calculation of presented values at 10% and 5%) |
| <i>South Africa, Child Support Grant</i>           | \$34.50/month per child   |  |
| <i>Ecuador, Child Care Centers vs. Home Visits</i> | \$488/year per child in child care centers<br><br>\$109/year per child for home visits  |  |
| <i>Hogares Comunitarios, Guatemala</i>             | \$1.38/day per child  |  |



## c. Recommendations and obstacles

### Obstacles

- Attendance for teacher training (11)
- Caretakers reported 3 hours of travel and waiting time for monthly checks, yet spent more than 3 hours on care activities; delays in receiving cash transfers occurred. (13)
- Insufficient cash transfer amounts for food (\$0.55/child/day) (13)
- Lack of parental participation, failure of caretaker to allocate adequate time for educational activities (13)
- More than half of participating children were in the program for less than one year, and one one-third participated for less than three months. Long-term programs and high turnover in children could reduce long-term positive effects (community daycare) (13).
- Keeping families in attendance in early childhood home visit programs (29)

### Recommendations

- Add daycare options on weekends (13)
- Develop a more efficient payment system to reduce travel time and make cash transfers quicker for caretakers. (13)
- It is important to have flexible and adaptable childcare programs to meet mothers' needs and work location/schedules. Such situational factors should be taken into account when planning the location and operations of new daycare centers. (31)

## d. Case Study: Hogares Comunitarios, Guatemala

**In Guatemala City, Guatemala, the Hogares Comunitarios (HCP) program was established with an objective to improve child health and create female income-generating activities.** An impact and operational evaluation employing mixed methods analyzed the program. The HCP encouraged community participation, in which groups of parents selected a woman from their local communities to provide home care for up to 10 children aged  $\leq 7$  years. The duration of stay for the children extended from morning to evening (6 am to 6 pm) on weekdays.

Potential caregivers were provided training, educational supplies, furniture and equipment, nutritional food preparation guidelines, and compensation by HCP. Parents also provided monthly contributions for basic supplies and other amenities. **The program allowed women to work at home while also taking care of their own children or grandchildren.** Trained social workers trained women on nutritional meal plans and were present in the home for 10 hours per day, 5 days per week in order to measure child dietary intake.

**Child health and parent work participation increased after the program.** Childrens' diets improved significantly, including the uptake of vitamin A, iron and zinc, which are essential micronutrients for infectious disease protection and for physical and cognitive development. **Childcare constraints were reduced and poor parents had greater access to formal sector jobs which offer stability and employment benefits.** This was particularly beneficial for vulnerable groups, such as single female heads of households. In addition, female caretakers stated that they felt fulfilled and enjoyed their work with children, and were benefited by compensations.

**The cost of the program was estimated at \$1.38 per child per day,** ranking mid-range compared to

five other similar Latin American programs with a focus on low-income parents and mothers with young children.

**Insufficient funds and time delays for cash transfers were an obstacle.** Caretakers needed these funds to provide food to children in the homes. Caretakers often failed to allocate substantial time for educational activities partially due to time constraints and if they did not feel well, motivated, or properly trained. In addition, caretakers often did not spend enough time on psycho-pedagogical activities.

### Recommendations included:

- For operations, a 22% increase (from \$0.55/child/day) of cash transfer for food purchases and 38% increase (from \$0.29/child/day) of incentives for caretakers were recommended.
- 110 educators were necessary to carry out psycho-pedagogical activities and provide educational materials. Parents suggested adding Saturdays to the program and increasing emphasis on preventative and curative health.
- Caretakers recommended restarting healthy supply services, including increased food variety, menu reviews to adapt to local food patterns, and growth monitoring improvements.
- Social workers needed to be more present in the home during child stay and pay more attention to weekly visits regarding safety and hygiene concerns.
- Social workers needed to improve training sessions for parents, staff, and child neglect and abuse prevention workshops. It is important that the program works closely with caretakers to improve areas of concern. (13)

### 3. Behavior and social norm change interventions

**Interventions that focus on behavior and social change can help to reduce unpaid care inequity.** Change at the cultural and individual level in terms of behavior and attitude towards parenting and other unpaid care tasks are critical, regardless of context. Addressing male community member behavior so that behaviors like child-rearing and inter-couple interaction are improved, and both parents are involved, have been shown to improve multiple measures including child development outcomes and family welfare. (1) Interventions have utilized various delivery mechanisms to address behavior and social change including peer mentors, partner involvement, and community engagement events. Addressing gender norms and attitudes, however, is a slow process and the implementations need to be long term to see significant reductions. (2; 4; 5)

#### a. Facilitated community discussions

Facilitated community discussions have been used to engage both men and women in gender norm discussions.

| Uganda   | Impact  |
|--|---|
| <p>A pilot project ‘Piloting Gender Sensitive Livelihoods in Karamoja’ was implemented by Oxfam and local partner organizations from 2011-2014. The objective was to improve women’s livelihoods through enterprises and reduce violence against women with a Gender Action Learning System (GALS) approach. 10 women’s groups of 40 members each were established. GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology with the goal to promote economic, social, and political transformation to gender justice. Men and women work together to develop visions for change, including road maps. The project included training on how to run small enterprises and businesses, support access to small business loans, among other activities. There were also activities focused on reducing violence against women (VAW). (33)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Survey results for a quasi-experimental study reveal that the project was successful for improving women’s overall empowerment, business activities, and material wealth for those involved in the economic empowerment (WEE) activities.</li> <li>● The same results were not found for those involved in the activities focused on Violence Against Women (VAW).</li> <li>● Women involved in WEE activities had:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statistically higher overall levels of empowerment.</li> <li>○ Changed their opinions on women’s economic role, property and gender rights.</li> <li>○ Higher levels of access to savings and credit.</li> <li>○ Higher contribution of personal income to households.</li> <li>○ Lower levels of decision-making power, and no improved say over household assets.</li> <li>○ Greater household wealth.</li> <li>○ More likely to participate in business activities.</li> <li>○ No evidence of different attitudes for care activities or improved ability to redistribute care activities in the household were found. (33)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

| Côte d'Ivoire  | Impact   |
|--|--|
| <p>The Economic and Social Empowerment Program (EASÉ), developed by the IRC, recognizes that even when women are able to earn money, they may not have the independence to use it and further can become more vulnerable to IPV. In Côte d'Ivoire, Gender Dialogue Groups (GDGs) were run with women participating in Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA). The GDGs were an eight-session series designed to engage women VSLA members and their male partners on different elements of relationship and household dynamics, such as communication skills, financial planning, negotiation skills, decision-making, and power dynamics. Couples met 1.5-2 hours over four months on a bi-weekly basis. (34)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Gender Dialogue Groups led to greater reductions in IPV than the VSLA groups alone. Women in relationships who attended at-least 75% of the sessions had a 55% decrease in the likelihood of experiencing physical violence compared to women in the savings group alone.</li> <li>● Women in the GDGs further reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Decreases in sexual and emotional violence.</li> <li>○ Decreases in economic abuse, with a 61% relative decrease in the likelihood of being forced to hand over their earnings to their partner, or having their partner withhold money for household necessities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Key takeaway: Pairing an economic intervention with one aimed at behavior change around gender norms can help to prevent IPV. (34)</li> </ul> |

| Ethiopia  | Impact   |
|---|--|
| <p>A cross-sectoral team held four rounds of community conversations on “gender roles, zoonotic diseases, and women livestock ownership and decision-making” over 10 months in Ethiopia. <b>The conversations engaged both men and women</b> in the same meetings in multiple sites through guided questions and included a variety of community stakeholders. The conversations were not part of a formal experimental trial but the reflections of the participants were collected through qualitative observation. (7)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community conversations that touched on both agricultural concerns and gender norms saw self-reported and partner-reported improvements to gendered behaviors and gender norms, such as men engaging in household and domestic activities.</li> <li>● The conversation guides were mentioned to be helpful for guiding the conversations throughout the process but <b>could benefit from localized contextualization.</b></li> <li>● A district ‘Office of Agriculture’ director was quoted as mentioning that women were more likely to be consulted in decision-making, but acknowledged that changes were still needed in redistributing labor to be more equitable. (7)</li> </ul> |

*“In the past, men did not engage in domestic activities but now, some men have started engaging in domestic activities. The change is not at a large scale, but we see some changes.”*

- Female participant

*“We learned about gender equality and division of labor; men can do what women do and women can also do what men do.”*

- Male participant

| Tanzania   | Impact  |
|--|---|
| <p>Community dialogues were also utilized in Tanzania as part of Concern Worldwide’s Women’s Social and Economic Rights (WSER) Programme. The mixed-method study of the program utilized barrier analysis to determine the role of men as a key influence in attitude and behavior change. Over a 3-month period, community mentor facilitators held six two to three hour sessions to discuss gender roles with topics such as: how married women can influence decisions, men sharing household workloads, and women participating in community meetings.</p> <p>The program partnered on a local level with civil society organizations in each district. The goal of the program was to improve women’s decision-making equity as well as improve women’s economic assets and control of those assets. There was also a goal of influencing the local authorities as well as the private sector to address gender equality, by engaging at the institutional and structural levels, and empowering women so they might increase female representation in leadership and be more involved in community decision making. (8)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women’s decision-making ability, and the equality of household task distribution improved in treatment villages.</li> <li>• At midline, household control of assets shifted with female participants reporting larger shared control compared to the limited or modest shared control at baseline. With the exception of ‘cash’ control, which saw a 25.5% increase in female respondents saying they had some level of control of the asset, the other categories of ‘land’, ‘house’, ‘cows’, ‘goats’, and ‘small livestock’ each saw a 45.7-69.6% increase.</li> <li>• Productive chores were already largely shared at baseline, but domestic chore sharing improved at follow-up, although productive chore sharing remained more common than other chores.</li> <li>• Respondents felt that they were encouraged to communicate more with each other, and the male participants felt they were catalysts for change and they questioned gender norms and gendered household behaviors.</li> <li>• While not anticipated, the program also resulted in female participants changing how they express frustration with male partners, to include more open discussions. Changes to how both men and women express frustrations were mentioned by participants as leading to increased harmony — these dialogues also brought a “sense of relief” to the community. (8)</li> </ul> |

*“We started to realise that a lot of role in the home can be done by anybody, by sharing these we can see the changes on the welfare of the family, how women are treated. If no discussion, no agreement, you can't see development –no peace.”*

- Male participant

| Nicaragua  | Impact  |
|--|---|
| <p>Community dialogues and workshops have also been used to engage community members in Nicaragua by Trócaire to address the reduction of gender-based violence as its primary outcome and having secondary outcomes around equitable decision making and household labor, improved parenting, and the reduction of alcohol consumption. The impact was evaluated through qualitative analysis of the respondent and community member responses. Integrating community-based popular education, psychosocial approaches, and training community leaders into their workshop model, the intervention offered focus groups for men, women, and adolescents as well as multi-day workshops for partner organizations. (9)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation saw decreases in GBV against women. Community members were quoted as reporting changes in gender norms and attitudes, reduction in the use of violence against women, greater shared household decision making, and improved household labor equity.</li> <li>• Adult men and adolescent boys reported changes in their perceptions of masculinity and gender norms, respecting their partner’s rights in allowing free travel from the home, and participating in household chores.</li> <li>• Male to male demonstrations of emotions, feelings of jealousy and control, and integration of new intervention group members into ongoing groups was not significantly impacted. (9)</li> </ul> |

*“He never used to go to the school and didn't even get involved in house stuff – he just put the money on the table. Now he takes the kids to school, helps them with their homework – he's changed quite a bit.”*

- Female community member

*“If we've both got paid jobs and get home tired, we have to share the housework. ‘I'll do the rice and beans if you prepare the tortilla.’ I'm aware now of the need to share all the work that needs doing at home.”*

- Male participant

## b. Targeting fathers through a mentor system

Initiatives targeting fathers can utilize a mentor system in their intervention design.

| South Africa   | Impact  |
|--|---|
| <p>A cluster randomized controlled trial in South Africa evaluated the Sonke Community Health Action for Norms and Gender Equity (CHANGE). The objective of the program was to impact IPV as a primary outcome and improvements to parenting as a secondary outcome — over an 18 month intervention period.</p> <p>CHANGE is a multi-level intervention targeting adult men, aged 18 to 40 years old, in rural and peri-urban contexts. Utilizing both male and female community mobilizers and a full-time manager, the intervention included: volunteer male and female community action teams, community and facilitated dialogue, mini and 2-day workshops, door-to-door discussions, and murals. (6)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intervention saw no statistically significant differences in either the primary or secondary outcomes of IPV or parenting between the intervention and control arms of the trial. The intervention suffered from the limited mobilization of volunteers and limited contact with eligible men.</li> <li>• The door-to-door activities were seen as most effective in reaching intervention group members.</li> <li>• Program implementation in rural contexts was seen as more effective than implementation in the peri-urban contexts due to better ability to engage people and implement more activities. This difference may have also come from increased social cohesion in rural contexts, with peri-urban contexts generally experiencing higher exposure to violence and crime. (6)</li> </ul> |
| Côte d'Ivoire  | Impact  |
| <p>Engaging Men Through Accountable Practices (EMAP) is a program designed by the IRC which engages men and women in complementary and intersecting programming to reduce VAWG and improve gender norms. It was preceded by several programs including the Men &amp; Women in Partnership Initiative pilot.</p> <p>A two-armed, non-blinded cluster-randomized trial evaluated a program run using the Men &amp; Women in Partnership Initiative design in Cote d'Ivoire. It consisted of 16 weeks of weekly sessions for men, designed to increase male participation in household tasks. The selected trial sites were ones which had also received community-level programming on women's rights and gender-based violence by the IRC, including the creation of a GBV committee. (2)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Men &amp; Women in Partnership Initiative trial in Cote d'Ivoire reported both statistically significant and insignificant improvements to male participants' behavior and attitude outcomes.</li> <li>• There were non-statistically significant improvements around the intention to commit physical IPV, reported physical and sexual violence against women, and agreement with women's' right to refuse sex.</li> <li>• There was significant improvement to conflict management and male involvement in household tasks.</li> <li>• The other community-based program that was present in the same sites may have had a joint impact —along with this initiative— on the non-statistically significant reduction in attitudes towards IPV. (2)</li> </ul>  |

| Uganda  | Impact   |
|---|--|
| <p>Save the Children’s REAL Fathers Initiative combined a 12-session mentor program with a public community poster campaign advertising desirable behaviors. The participants were young fathers, aged 16 to 25 years old who had at least one 1-3-year-old child and were married and living with a wife or living with a partner.</p> <p>The mentor program included monthly group and monthly one-on-one meetings over six months addressing nonviolent discipline and conflict resolution. Over the treatment period two one-on-one sessions and one group session also included the participant’s partner.</p> <p>The results of the 10-month intervention period in rural villages in Uganda were calculated through the binary results of a self-report survey — at least partially based on the GEM survey. The study was initially designed as a randomized control trial but due to desired changes by the participants in mentorship matching, the sampling was no longer randomized due to the changes in mentor-mentee matching. (5)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation reported several areas of statistically significant improvements in parenting and relationship behavior outcomes. For example there was significant improvement to the participants spending time with their children (<math>p &lt; 0.01</math>) and the justification for and the use of IPV both diminished (<math>p &lt; 0.01</math>; <math>p &lt; 0.001</math>).</li> <li>• However, short-term and long term follow did show that not all improvements were consistent over an extended period. Some improvements like positive parenting decreased overtime after the intervention (<math>p &lt; 0.05</math>) while others increased like the odds of using physical punishment (<math>p &lt; 0.01</math>). <i>(See Case Study section below for more in-depth results)</i> (5)</li> </ul> |



### c. Peer educators

Peer educators have been used in interventions targeting older teen boys and young men and addressing gender-equal attitudes and behaviors.

| Ethiopia   | Impact  |
|--|---|
| <p>A quasi-experimental study was run evaluating the Male Norms Initiative’s programming for young men in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — the program was run for six months.</p> <p>The programming included community engagement events, such as theater, workshops, promotional materials, and the distribution of condoms. In addition to community events, there were also eight two to three hour group education sessions over 4 months, led by peer educators. Not all participants received both the group education and the community engagement treatments. The study was divided into three arms: one location was assigned both group education and community engagement activities, one location was assigned only community engagement, and the third site was assigned to delayed intervention as the control group. (3)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study reported largely non-significant results on the Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) scale, even though there were predominantly positive changes in attitude outcomes. This scale is used to measure attitudes towards gender norms in intimate relationships. The community engagement only and the community engagement + group education group reported positive shifts in the areas of partner violence, daily decision-making, and condom use.</li> <li>• More specifically, the community engagement treatment group saw marginally statistically significant attitude changes in the IPV domain.</li> <li>• There was also a significant difference between the combination treatment and the comparison group in regards to gender-equal norm support — with the combination group’s increased scores being twice as large as the control’s. (3)</li> </ul> |
| India  | Impact  |
| <p>In the Yari-dosti program, 10 peer educators were used in sites in both rural and urban contexts. Over 6 months, the educators ran weekly one-hour sessions that cross-cut across sexual and reproductive health, gender roles, alcohol use, and partner, family, and community violence through a variety of participatory learning activities.</p> <p>One quasi-experimental evaluation of this program also included social marketing promotion including theater and promotional materials like t-shirts and posters. (4)</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes of statistical significance were found in individual behavior and attitude outcomes among participants. Improvements were seen in the condom use domain, partner communication, and partner violence. There was significant movement from “low gender equity” category to the “moderate” and “high categories” (<math>p &lt; 0.05</math>).</li> <li>• Generally, the risk of HIV and STI to the participants decreased. There were significant improvements to condom use as and reductions in instances of partner violence due to improved attitudes towards sexual safety and gender norms. Conversely, those who supported inequitable rights were less likely to use a condom and were more likely to report</li> </ul>   |

poor sexual health symptoms. (4)

## d. Obstacles and recommendations

### Obstacles

- In interventions like the Male Norms Initiative implementation and Men & Women as Partners where participants may self-select, **there is concern over additional biases that may occur** (3; 2; 4). For example, when studying interventions like the ones centered on gender norms and behaviors, there is the concern of reporting bias as participants are more likely to report positive effects of the programming (2). Social desirability bias may also occur in survey responses in interventions where participants are educated about correct behaviors—that is, socially desirable behaviors—and therefore choose to answer the survey to meet the desire, not the reality (4).
- **Implementation challenges including budget constraints can limit the impact of program implementation**, potential to scale up, and the scopes of the subsequent studies (2; 9; 20; 21). Community engagement activities can be resource-intensive, hence leveraging existing community structures and encouraging self-organization may limit the cost and lead to greater impact (20). For high-cost institutionalized interventions like government-run freehold titling, informal systems may be more affordable and more attractive to clients (21).
- While there are concerns over increased IPV against women who participate in sessions addressing violence and relationships, **including women in the intervention design may yield stronger behavior change results** (5). The safety of the facilitators is often also of concern (9).

### Recommendations

- For improving gender considerations in design, **gender-specific activities should be integrated into the planned budget for the overall intervention**. Specific gender workshops for program staff should be organized at the start of projects. Activities can be guided using a checklist of questions on gender. Champions of gender equality should be designated to work on several aspects of a project. (26)
- **When Cash for Work programs are utilized as part of a general program, care should be given to ensure equal payments between men and women.**
- **Non-traditional gendered labor roles** such as offering women roles outside of food preparation and tailoring, should be promoted in crisis programming. Crisis response can be a time to allow women to move into positions that might not be ordinarily thought of as a traditional role for women. Women should be consulted on what roles they wish to participate in. (27)
- **Programming should not alienate men and boys.** Language should be carefully constructed to not utilize guilt, but instead, promote positive reinforcement and participation in gender-equal behaviors (27). Men should be involved in discussions on behavior and attitudes towards women, both at the community and the household level (26). When men are not involved in activities to change male attitudes and male perpetration of violence, they risk to have less impact (34).
- When conversation guides are used as part of a multi-site intervention, **the content should be localized to better engage with participants** (7). Intervention timing should also be localized to avoid trying to engage clients in time-intensive activities during busy economic periods such as harvest time (9). Programs engaging couples on sensitive topics (specifically IPV) should make sure they are appealing, safe, and culturally appropriate. Programs should consider how to address gender dynamics through content that is useful, non-threatening, and meaningful to sustain the effective participation of men. (34)

- **Interventions in peri-urban and urban contexts should adapt activities to reflect the increased exposure rate** of community members to crime and violence, especially IPV (6).
- **Women’s economic empowerment programs on their own might not be sufficient** to reduce IPV and change gender norms. Providing women with access to economic means could be counter-productive to reducing vulnerability to violence unless expectations about power and norms around violence are addressed directly. (34)

## e. Case Study: REAL Fathers Initiative

Several intervention designs include parenting components as a way to share the burden of unpaid care. **The REAL Fathers Initiative focused primarily on parenting behaviors in young fathers with the goal to address IPV and child maltreatment (CM).** A study of the intervention was conducted in post-conflict Northern Uganda with two cohorts of participant men, 340 men in the first cohort, and 160 men in the second— all aged between 16 and 25 years old.

The REAL Fathers Initiative’s **target audience is young fathers who have toddler-aged children at home and who are cohabitating with a wife or partner.** It matches the participants with a mentor and puts them in groups which includes their mentor and up to three other mentees of their mentors. Each participant meets with their mentor once a month and with the combined mentor-mentee group once a month, covering **topics like parenting behaviors, disagreement management, and household labor involvement.** Throughout the six-month intervention, the mentees’ partners are included in two one-on-one sessions and one group session. After the final group session, a community celebration is held to provide public accountability. A community poster element can also be incorporated in treatment villages to advertise desirable parenting behaviors. The themes of the posters rotate to reflect the session themes.

The results of this intervention were measured at 10-month and again at 8-12 months post-intervention using a binary self-reported survey that was influenced by the attitudes towards gender norms scale (GEM scale). **The surveys indicated that there were several areas of statistically significant improvement that carried over through the long-term follow up including:** disagreements with children leading to physical child punishment, use of

non-violent behavior modification with children, discussions of appreciation and frustrations with partners, less justification of IPV, and the use of IPV.

Not all areas of improvement were consistent between the initial and long-term follow up. Participants had significantly greater odds of using positive parenting behaviors at the endline survey ( $p < 0.05$ ) but this was non-statistically significant at the long-term follow-up. Participants reported improved odds of using physical punishment towards children between the endline survey and the long-term follow up, with the long term follow up survey reporting statistically significant lower odds of using physical punishment ( $p < 0.01$ ).

While there were no statistically significant increases in the rejection of gender norms and roles, this may be due to the lack of involvement of the wives and partners due to fears of IPV and violent retaliation. Increasing partner and wife involvement may improve these measures if fears over IPV are properly addressed.

**In general, the intervention was associated with statistically significant improvements in parenting behaviors and interpersonal relationship behaviors.** (5)

## 4. Land rights and asset creation

**In many countries women are or have been denied legal rights when it comes to ownership of assets, such as land.** This is in part derived from the labor theory of property which posits that property ownership is derived from exertion of labor over land. This can act as a barrier for women in some cultures because they are not seen as contributing equally or are assumed to not make as much full productive use of the land as their male counterparts. Evidence suggests, however, that certain interventions aimed at increasing women’s ownership of property and assets can improve their control over resources, income generation, and ultimately give them more household bargaining and decision-making power. (20)

Interventions involving access to land ownership must carefully consider the cultural context. In dual legal systems, customary rights wherein men are the sole property owners can often override legal frameworks. Context, such as urban vs. rural and educational level have been found to have the biggest impact on women’s awareness of their property rights, with less awareness in rural contexts (18).

Evidence suggests that joint husband-wife freehold titling —the conversion of communal land to

individual or joint titles for an unlimited duration— can have a positive impact on credit access. However, some evidence from LMIC contexts suggests that it can also lead to increased instability for vulnerable women, as it may increase the threat of evictions. (21.1) Formalizing ownership, especially in places with complex levels of sub-leasing, could actually lead to increased rental prices and displacement (18). Thus, while legislation can have an impact, cultural norms, informal ownership, customary law, and existing institutions are all important to take into account (23.1).

Beyond land, ownership of key productive assets can improve women’s position. In the 2004 Tsunami in Tamil Nadu, an NGO facilitated the collective ownership of motorboats through women self-help groups. This was different from the “boat-by-boat” method adopted by many other NGOs where replacement boats were only given to those who lost them during the tsunami —this included mostly men. **Women reported that the collective ownership of a motorboat improved their position in the household and community, and they were able to participate in decision-making more frequently.** (27)

### a. Legal Reforms

| Legal Reform  | Impact  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>NEPAL</b></p> <p>A household survey was used to estimate the impact of land rights on women’s empowerment in Nepal, where a 2002 amendment to the civil code expanded women’s ability to inherit land beyond only unmarried women over 35.</p> <p>A comparison was drawn between landed households —where women who do not own land themselves but work on land owned by their family), female landowners, and landless households —women who neither own land nor work on family land.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 37% of female land owners reported having a final say in a decision, compared to 20% of women living on family land and 30% of landless household women.</li> <li>• 70% of women who own land had the final say in at least one decision alone or jointly (<math>p &lt; 0.01</math>), compared to 48% of landed household women and 60% landless household women.</li> <li>• The single most influential predictor of empowerment was a woman’s place in the family structure, where a woman was four times more likely to be empowered if she is</li> </ul> |

## ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, a reform between 1998-2005 provided households with the right to use, lease and bequeath land to family members. The land reforms were decentralized and operated at the village level. This allowed for quick progress with most rural households being covered within 2-3 years.

## VIETNAM

The 2003 Vietnam Land Law requires that the names of both the husband and wife be stated on the land use right certificate, ensuring joint ownership. Article 48 states *“where the land use right is a mutual asset of a wife and a husband, the certificate of the land use right must state the full names of both husband and wife.”* (32)

the wife of a household head than a daughter or sister-in-law.

- Being the household head’s wife in the study empowerment model is 2.5x more influential than secondary education, 3x more than land ownership, and 4x that of primary education. (22)
- In a study comparing areas with head-only land certification compared to joint land certification, it was found that male-headed households exposed to joint land certificate programs increased the share of household resources spent on healthcare, decreased the share spent on clothing and increased the share of consumption allocated to homegrown food.
- Joint certification was associated with greater spending on women’s and girls’ clothing and lower spending on boy’s clothing, suggesting shifts in bargaining power and household resources from men towards women.
- The cost of the program was kept relatively low at 1 USD/plot, much lower than in other countries. This is due to the use of unpaid elected committee members and local tools for demarcation and measurement of land plots (e.g. ropes, handwritten land registry books) which kept the costs low.
- In regions where land certificates were issued jointly, it was found that 75% of households believed that the program increased the tenure security of women, with 50% of men as well as women responding that land would be shared equally if there was divorce. (25)
- A study found the land law was associated with a decreased care work burden gap between men and women by 65 hours/year. At baseline, women spent 285.68 hours more/year than men on house related tasks at 755.34 hours/year.
- Rural couples invested more in their daughters’ education, while urban couples invested more in their sons’ education. (32)

## b. Private sector involvement

In rural Zambia, a **public-private program established in 1983 subleased land provided by the government for free to outgrowers to cultivate fair trade certified sugarcane**. As part of the program, farmers received six months of training and additional land for a dwelling and domestic food production- for which there was no ground rent for a 14-year sublease. A binding contract between the company (KASCOL) and the outgrower stipulated that each farmer would receive 43% of revenue from the sale of the sugarcane, but would have to cover 43% of the farm operating/maintenance costs. The outgrowers were compensated at market value for any improvements to the land, which could be inherited by the next of kin in case of death. Since the program's founding, **women went from making up 0% to 25% of the participants**.

Of these, 51% were single and inherited the land, and earned on average an income of \$5 USD/day from the land. **In male-headed households where women were the main scheme members, they had a greater say over decision-making around income expenditure than when the man was the main scheme member**. Interestingly, female outgrowers used their domestic plots for household crops instead of cash crops, one reason possibly being a limit of time to sell cash crops with the labor burden

limiting the ability of women to diversify income sources. (19.1)

On a similar theme, the acquisition of communal land in Zambia by ETC Bio-Energy in 2007 for private production of cash crops and biofuel **limited opportunities for women to control resources and seek diverse sources of income**. Much of the land was cleared and not usable for community activities (e.g. firewood, wild plant gathering). The communal land had previously been used -especially by local women- for subsistence farming, collection of firewood, and other income-generating activities.

While the company supported maternity leave, child care leave and schooling, access to housing, piped water, electricity, and healthcare, focus group participants reported the impact of the land use conversion and acquisition **was associated with a loss of income and decline in working conditions for families**. The land was cut off from outside communities, making market stalls lose customers. Women felt their loss of income and domestic food production influenced intra-household power dynamics and made them more dependent on male spouses, with the need to travel further to collect firewood and limited ability to access other land —unlike men— for income-producing activities. (19.2)

*"I am able to grow maize on the 1 hectare of dwelling space to meet my food security requirements and generate additional income for my households. With proper management and care, we are able to feed ourselves for the whole year... I have built a 3 bedroom house with a 2 roomed servant quarters. All my children are in school except for two, of which one has completed school and is about to enter college..."*

**Female farmers generally perform better with respect to productivity and investments in household welfare improvements. They invest more in household goods and family education.** As you can see, I own a car and bought a residential plot ... I want to rent the new house so that I diversify my risk portfolio... My husband has been very supportive of me. His key role is advisory but I am in-charge of receiving all payments with respect to my business. But I think [the small amount of sugarcane land] inhibits our expansion and growth... Our benefits from the scheme and contribution to employment creation for the surrounding communities is **largely constrained by our (women's) gross underrepresentation in the scheme.**"

- 38-year-old female smallholder (19.1)

## c. Obstacles and recommendations

### Obstacles

- Even when women have legal property rights, lack of general knowledge and awareness can be a major barrier to exercising them. (18)
- Formalizing land ownership can lead to displacement and increased land prices. (18)
- Cultural norms against female land ownership and economic inequalities can be difficult to overcome, even in the presence of progressive land legislation. (23)

### Recommendations

- It is important to disseminate knowledge and raise awareness through storytelling activities using radio, television, theater, or other platforms. (18)
- It is important to get buy-in and do training at the local level, including a local council if possible. (18)
- The law should focus beyond equal distribution of land through co-ownership and inheritance, and ensure that women have the social and economic power to purchase land, including in marriage, after a divorce, or upon the death of their parents. (23)
- A land registration, if used, should also account for informal access to land and should be spatially comprehensive, including all lands held by rural households. (24)



## d. Case study: Land Training and Awareness Program, India

**The Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA) initiative in rural India was launched in 2010 by the NGO Landesa.** In India, biases for male ownership and inheritance of land persist due to traditional beliefs, in spite of legal equal inheritance provisions and the feminization of agriculture. This program aimed to change such beliefs through raising awareness among adolescent girls on land rights, asset creation, equal inheritance, as well as land-based livelihood skills.

The trainings included in SABLA were focused on:

- 1) Teaching land-based livelihood skills that girls can apply at home, in order to become recognized labor/income contributors in the household.
- 2) Connecting girls with the land, showing its value as an asset and inspiring them to secure their own land.
- 3) Increasing cash income that girls can use at their discretion to increase economic agency.
- 4) Teaching lessons in time/resource management, patience, and discipline.

SABLA used a practical hands-on approach, with demonstrations. The program taught girls how to navigate the land registration process and raise awareness of legal rights through community conversations and meetings, as well as theater

workshops and essay writing. **Three versions of the program were implemented: basic, light, and intense.** The basic sites had weekly meetings with some added land components. The light engagement sites added community engagement elements through community meetings which included adult community members. The intense engagement sites added an additional weekly girls group discussion as well as additional community engagement components through community conversations and activities for adolescent boys. Community conversations and meetings were held at the light and intense sites.

The economic assets part of the program encouraged parents to create assets for their daughters to ensure security and girls were encouraged to save their income. This proved to be more easily received because they did not directly touch on the more controversial topics of dowry and inheritance.

Due to the resource-heavy nature of community engagement programs, the SABLA program is said to be expensive and hard to scale. Landesa recommends a lighter and more dispersed means of involving parents, encouraging them to organize on their own within the existing social structures at the village level. (20)

*“It is fact that girls are neglected because they don’t have control over assets. If I have something in my name then it gives me power.”* – Adult female participant, Community Conversation

*“Before joining the Self-Help Group, we normally are afraid*

### IMPACT

A comprehensive Self-Administered Questionnaire in 2013 revealed some of the pilot program’s initial results. When compared to non-participants, SABLA participants overall were:

- 15% more likely to have financial assets in their name. Those in the intense program were 27% more likely.
- 24% more likely to inherit land. Daughters who were more educated and unmarried were more likely to inherit land than married daughters.
- 13% less likely to drop out before secondary school.
- 24% more likely to earn their own income.
- Participants reported significant higher legal knowledge and life skills empowerment.
- 18% more likely to help in home cultivation of crops and 26% more likely to keep some of the income for their own use.
- The girls were more likely to practice improved agricultural techniques, such as manure composting and mulching.

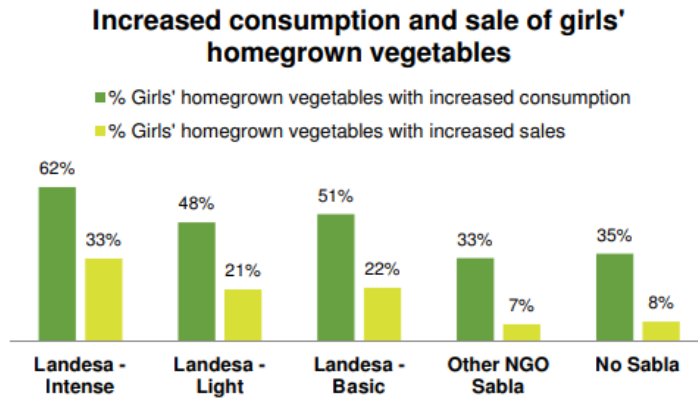
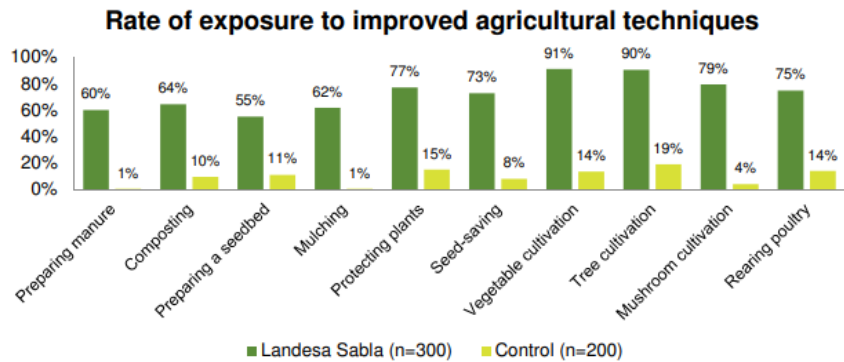


*to go anywhere, to talk with any unknown, but now even the bank manager talks to us with respect – we like this and wish our daughter she gets more respect than us.”* – Adult female participant, Community Conversation

*“We never think that we can cultivate a small plot of land. It will give us vegetables and different crops. We can consume and sell these. We can also save money from there.”*

– Adult male participant, Community Conversation

- They reported more year over year increases in the consumption or sale of the vegetables they tended. While the earnings were low, even a small profit amount can have a huge impact on a girls’ sense of economic agency and can help them to attend school.
- The community generally recognized girls’ contribution to agricultural tasks.



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| Trung, Le Dang. (2008). <i>Two-name Land Use Certificates and Gender Inequality: An Empirical Investigation for Vietnam</i> . Depocen Working Paper Series No. 2008/19. Center for Analysis and Forecasting, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.                           | <a href="#">32</a> | Impact Evaluation             | Instrumental variables, difference-in-difference from household survey data |
| Vegas, Emiliana et al. (2006), <i>Evidencia Internacional sobre Políticas de la Primera Infancia que Estimulen el Desarrollo Infantil y Faciliten la Inserción Laboral Femenina</i> . May 2006. Working Document. The World Bank: Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. | <a href="#">29</a> | Literature review             | Mixed-methods   |

Verma, Ravi et al. (2008). *Promoting gender equity as a strategy to reduce HIV risk and gender-based violence among young men in India*. Instituto Promundo. [4](#)

Wonani, Charlotte, et al. (2013). *The Gender and Equity Implications of Land-Related Investments on Land access, Labour, and Income-Generating Opportunities: A Case Study of Selected Agricultural Investments in Zambia*. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). [19](#)

Impact Evaluation Baseline/endline, Quasi-experimental design

Case study Key informant interviews, focus group discussions



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