GENDER
POLICY

COOPI
**COOPERAZIONE
INTERNAZIONALE**

SUMMARY

CIAD
Ph. Fabio Lovino

Introduction

GUATEMALA
Ph. Herbert Reyes

COOPI – Cooperazione Internazionale is a secular and independent humanitarian foundation founded in 1965. During 50 years of activity it has worked in 59 countries, involving thousands of local operators and providing a direct benefit to millions of people. Its mission consists of contributing, through the commitment, motivation, determination and professionalism of its human resources, to the process of poverty reduction and growth of the communities it cooperates with around the world, while intervening in emergency, reconstruction and development contexts in order to achieve a better balance between the North and South of the world, including developed and depressed or developing areas.

The Policy on Gender[1] is part of a series of documents which COOPI is adopting in order to position itself with respect to issues that are central to the work of the organization. These documents outline the international theoretical framework COOPI's approach has been elaborated within and is based on. In addition, along with each policy document, specific guidelines are drafted with the aim of translating the theoretical level into the practice of programs management.

Gender is central to all COOPI's interventions since the development of a country is strictly connected to an equal participation of men and women in all the economic, social, cultural and political processes. In its humanitarian actions COOPI enhances gender equity[2] by fighting the causes of inequality, protecting the victims of gender inequality, promoting change in unbalanced relationships between men and women and within the communities and families. Women capacity building, awareness and participation at a social, economic, political and symbolic level are central to COOPI actions. Finally, sex-specific needs of the various actors and beneficiaries are always taken into account in the programs carried out.

1

[1] This document was approved by the COOPI Board of Directors on the 9th of December 2014
[2] For a definition see the following paragraphs

Why focus on gender?

Globally, over the past decades, the living conditions of women have significantly improved, showing progress hardly expectable a few years ago. Unprecedented strides have been made in human rights, education, health and access to employment opportunities and livelihoods, due to the increasing awareness internationally gained on the relevance of the role women have in promoting the development of the communities they are part of. However, in those areas that experienced such advancements for women, disparities remain, relegating women to a condition of weakness which deeply limits their full recognition as key actors of development. In this sense, the education sector is still critical, since about two-thirds of the 774 million illiterate adults are women (UNDESA 2010). The progress made in terms of access to primary and secondary education in many countries, in fact, is characterized by strong gender inequalities still causing girls to be excluded from a service that is expression of a fundamental right: the right to education. This is also the case of health services that remain difficult to access for women in many countries: in addition, such services, particularly those relative to maternal and child health, are generally weak both in terms of coverage and quality, which still results in very high maternal mortality rates. In this regard, recent data from the World Health Organization reported that in 2008 the Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest maternal mortality rate in the world with 640 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, followed by South Asia with 280 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (WHO et al. 2010). Likewise, widespread and deep are the difficulties that women face in accessing fair employment opportunities and resources, as well as in participating in the decision-making processes that govern the life of the communities they are part of. The strong gender inequalities still permeating these areas of concern force women to a state of weakness that makes them vulnerable to the violation of their rights. Of such vulnerability the gender based violence is a very common expression throughout the world: in 2009 over 30% of women in Ethiopia[3] were victims of physical and/or sexual violence by a family member, whereas in Peru the same phenomenon involved more than 25% of women (UNDESA 2010).

It is important to underline that, although data available at global level highlight that women are still discriminated, a central issue, when dealing with gender, is the importance of taking into consideration also men's needs.

Gender equality between women and men refers to the equal enjoyment by females and males of all ages and regardless of sexual orientation, of rights, socially valued goods. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male. Protecting human rights and promoting gender equality must be seen as central by the humanitarian community when protecting and providing assistance to those affected by emergencies. (IASC 2009). To this extent, COOPI is committed to support both women and men in all its actions, in order for them to be able to exercise their rights of access to equal opportunities and resources, thus ensuring gender equity which is necessary for the full recognition of women's role in development processes.

Therefore, this document depicts the international framework on the theme, followed by the key concepts behind COOPI's action on gender issues. The final section shows the experience gained by the organization in the operational management and the good practice[4] that the application of such key concept consists of.

---

[3] The figure refers to rural areas in the province of Butakira.
[4] The practices described in this document are just a few examples of the activities that COOPI carried out in the field concerning gender issues. They were selected based on their results, their impact, the potential for replication and consistency with respect to the contents of his policy.

2

ETIOPIA
Ph. Alessandro Gandolfi/Parallelozero

COOPI

Theoretical framework

Definition of gender

CIAD
Ph. Sara Magni

The word *gender*, in its common definition, comes from a debate that started in the 50s and that is getting more and more important thanks to feminist movements and scientific definitions in different disciplines (anthropology, sociology, history and psychology). Gender has entered the common use to indicate the construction of social roles ascribed to men and women based on of physical and biological sex characteristics[5]. The idea of gender is a relational concept referred to the social and symbolic construction of masculine and feminine which has taken many shapes throughout different ages and societies. Although this word cannot be used simply as a synonymous of women, as it has been created to highlight relationships between masculine and feminine and, as a consequence, the contradictions and power inequalities, it is often utilized to give voice to the component that has less (symbolical or instrumental) power in the hierarchical relation.

Gender is a crucial concept in the construction of a more equal society, because it allows to question structures and processes that lead to the con-

struction of social relationships and organisational models. Therefore, it is important to analyze and face inequalities produced at a local level, taking into account, at the same time, the whole processes within which they are generated. The protection of women, as mothers and wives, means the recognition of their multiple role played within economic, political and cultural mechanisms of the society they belong to. (Scott, 1986, 2013).
Utilizing a gender approach to development – where COOPI intervenes – means focusing attention on power relations between men and women, the latter representing, in general, the weakest and most discriminated component of the relationship.

The following section briefly outlines the various definitions and conceptual approaches that have been debated in the last decades around gender discourse and that constitute the theoretical framework at the base of our reflection on the theme.
The first milestone of this process is the so-called **welfare approach**[6], utilized between the 50s and the 60s. All policies and actions referring to this approach were aimed at guaranteeing community welfare from which women would have taken advantages as mothers and wives (Moser, 1989). "Reference is made to Western household based on a strict role division" (Moser, 1993, p. 123). The kind of interventions were, basically, food aid, education, hygiene and vaccination campaigns, due to the fact that women were seen only in their reproductive function[7].

The first time women's role in development dynamics as well as the need for their better integration in the economic system have been recognized, is associated with the introduction of the approach

known as **Women in Development (WID)** identified by Moser (1996) as **equity approach**, derived from the observation that the economic development process had a negative impact on the sexual division of labor causing disadvantages to women (Boserup, 1970). The term 'WID' remained popular in later years, in particular during and following the Decade for Women[8] enshrined by the United Nations (UN) which started after the first World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City in 1975[9]. In those years, a gradual institutionalization of the WID approach took place. At the same time, the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** of the UN[10] was formulated and formally adopted by the General Assembly in 1979 and entered into force in 1981.
The CEDAW defined what a *discrimination against women*[11] is and proposed an agenda to be implemented at the national level in order to combat any form of discrimination. The signatory states committed themselves to implementing a series of measures such as, amongst others, the acknowledgment and incorporation of the principle of equality of men and women in their legal systems, the adoption of appropriate laws prohibiting all forms of discrimination against women (including trafficking of women and their exploitation) and the establishment of tribunals to ensure the effective protection of women against discriminations. The CEDAW also sanctioned the international commitment for realizing equality between women and men by ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life as well as education and health.
In line with this perspective, two other approaches have been developed: the **antipoverty approach** (World Bank) and the **efficiency approach** (World Bank and International Monetary Fund). These approaches focus on income inequalities between men and women. Both -in particular the antipov-

erty approach- proved to be limited since the focus on the economic issues is not sufficient alone to modify subordination and disparities caused by social, formal and cultural rules.
The next step in the debate on the theme was marked at the beginning of the Eighties, when the approach called **Gender and Development (GAD)** emerged. While adopting the GAD approach, the concept of gender[12] was introduced for the first time and, as explained above, it focused on power relations between men and women determined by their identity as well as by the existing social dynamics, and thus extended the attention to the whole sphere of action of women in their own societies.
The recognition of the link between the role assigned to women in their communities and the existing social dynamics was further deepened by the approach focused on **empowerment**[13] that came up in the second half of the Eighties. This term is defined as – and formally acknowledged - the centrality of women as agents of change through the achievement of a greater awareness of their own rights, as well as stronger ability to make them a reality. These concepts were formalized in 1995 while adopting the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** at the Fourth World Conference on Women[14].
Such declaration sanctioned the joint commitment of the signatory states - which defined a strategic agenda - to achieve equality, development and peace for women worldwide focusing on twelve critical areas of concern, among which: education and training, health, economy, human rights, violence against women and their access to decision-making processes. Among the key strategies for achieving the set goals, gender mainstreaming was given paramount importance and was thus formally identified as a tool to structure specific interventions to achieve equality for women.
Gender mainstreaming is one of the instruments

4

5

[5] 'Gender' is referred to as the process of social construction of biological characteristics (sex): definition, representation, promotion of appropriate behaviors associated with social expectations related to the status of men and women (Ruspini, 2003, p.9).
[6] In this document the classification proposed by Caroline Moser (1996) has been adopted. Notably the following approaches have been referred to: welfare approach, equity approach, anti-poverty approach, efficiency approach and empowerment.
[7] This approach has been the first even within Western societies, where women were protected basically in their role as mothers.

[8] United Nations Decade for Women, 1976 -1985.
[9] First World Conference on Women, Mexico City, 19th of June – 2nd of July 1975.
[10] The CEDAW began to be developed in 1976 under the auspices of the Commission on the Status of Women, and continued during the following years; it was strongly encouraged by the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year, which was adopted following the world conference held in Mexico City in 1975. To date, all UN Member States have ratified or acceded to the Convention, except: Iran, Palau, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tonga and the United States. The United States and Palau have signed the Convention but have not yet ratified it.
[11] Discrimination against women is defined as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on

to reach equity between men and women formally elaborated and strengthened during the Beijing Conference. This instrument is important because it obliges the institutions to reflect and consider the various consequences that policies have on the lives of men and women.

Another important step towards the adoption of a gender perspective in the development processes was the definition of the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**[15] in 2000. In particular, the objectives 3 and 5 were explicitly focused on issues related to gender:

- MDG 3, aimed at promoting gender equality and women empowerment, particularly focusing on the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015;
- MDG 5, aimed at improving maternal health, while reducing by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio in the period between 1990 to 2015 and ensuring universal access to reproductive health.

Gender equality was also embedded in the second goal (MDG 2), which aimed at ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, are able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The MDGs as a whole have been criticized mainly due to what was considered as a weak inclusion of a gender perspective (Anderson 2004). These criticisms are currently among those considered in the consultation process aimed at the elaboration of the development agenda after 2015, that should bring in more attention to gender in the new Sustainable Development Goals- SDGs.

Afterwards, the year 2003 marked a further step toward the acknowledgment of women's rights and the need for concrete actions to put them in practice, as the **African Women's Protocol**[16] was formally adopted. This document, apart from stressing what was previously defined in other documents on women's rights on a regional scale, was the first example of international law that explicitly recognized the rights of women in sexual and reproductive health, dealing with issues such as the legitimacy of medical abortion and the prohibition of female genital mutilation.

Finally, in 2008, the **Accra Agenda for Action**[17] specifically called for a greater international commitment to ensure the protection of women as well as their participation in development processes, by adopting specific measures as, for instance, the collection and analysis of disaggregated data.

It is important to consider a last perspective, in addition to those offered by the International Organisations: the **intersectionality approach**. This approach is one of the major contemporary theoretical contribution to the theme and considers at the same time ethnicity, class and gender (McCall 2005). This theoretical and methodological approach considers the person as a whole with all the assumed identities and takes into account if the characteristics can be source of discrimination (Berger, Guidroz 2010). The combined effect of being a woman, belonging to an ethnic minority and being part of an economic disadvantaged group, for instance, is seen as the sum of the effects of these three demographic variables. The intersectionality approach, considering people in their multiple identities, helps understanding disadvantages and discriminations to which they are exposed and not simply adding the single discrimination. Therefore, this approach underlines the necessity of analysing the economic, social, political and cultural context in order to derive the existing different forms of oppression and discrimination in a given situation. The starting point is what it is considered relevant for the different groups within a given community.

7

---

a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." (UN 1979).

[12] The term 'gender' refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to women and men on a differential basis. It is not biologically predetermined but refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female in a particular point in time...Gender is also relational, meaning that gender roles and characteristics do not exist in isolation, but are defined in relation to one another (UN-INSTRAW 2004).

[13] For the full definition see the glossary.

[14] Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, Beijing, 4th –15th of September 1995.

CIAD
Ph. Massimo Zecchini

Gender based violence

When dealing with gender, COOPI focuses also on gender based violence[18] (GBV) since it is originated by disparities in power relations between men and women. This phenomenon is endemic within all the communities around the world and affects all nationalities, ages, religions and social classes. According to a recent WHO's report, indeed, around the world almost 30% of women in a relationship have suffered forms of physical or sexual violence by their own partner (WHO 2013).

In fact, COOPI not only aims at protecting and defending women's and men's physical integrity, but also actively promotes changes in unbalanced (symbolical, cultural and economic) relations between men and women, starting from their families. In addition, the Organisation enhances women's awareness of their rights and promotes non-violent relationships models.

Since women and girls are the vast majority of victims of gender based violence (UNFPA 2009), the main steps to frame this issue are closely related to the commitments of the international community in the recognition and elimination of violence against women[19]. Amongst these, particularly relevant are:

* the **CEDAW** (1979)[20];
* the **Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women**, adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in 1993. This declaration proposed the commonly used definition of violence against women and led to the institution in 1999 of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women;

* the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (1995)[21];
* the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court** (1998)[22], which is the first international treaty to consider the crimes against women as crimes against humanity, war crimes and, in some cases, genocide;
* **Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council** (2000), which considered the role of women in armed conflicts, recognizing on the one hand their greater vulnerability to the impacts of these and, on the other, their contribution to conflict prevention and resolution;
* **Resolution 1820 UN Security Council** (2008), which condemned the acts of sexual violence against civilians by all forces involved in armed conflict. In order to prevent such acts from being committed, the Security Council of the UN declared to be ready to intervene.

It is important to underline that both men and women are victims of violence and that consequently COOPI fosters protection and the promotion of rights for whoever may suffer from it.

8

[18] Gender based violence is defined as any violence that occurs as a result of the expectations associated with the role of men and women, determined by unequal relations of power between these in the context of a particular society (Bloom 2008).
[19] Violence against women refers to 'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life' (UN 1993).
[20] See the previous paragraph.
[21] See the previous paragraph.
[22] This document is the international treaty establishing the International Criminal Court in the Hague in the Netherlands. It defines the basic principles, jurisdiction, composition and functions of the organs of such international organization, as well as the relationships with the United Nations, intergovernmental organizations, international and non-governmental organizations, the establishment and functions of the Assembly of States Parties.

COOPI

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
Ph. Marco Palombi

Gender for COOPI: Key concepts

COOPI deems gender issues as central to the consolidation of the development processes of the communities it cooperates with. These, in fact, may originate the disparities in the attribution of roles, responsibilities, rights and power relations between men and women that determine the inequalities women are subjected to.

COOPI promotes **gender equity**, seen as the possibility to exercise and enjoy equal rights and opportunities by men and women, both in accessing and controlling the resources and in the participation into decisional processes. Central to gender equity is **women empowerment**, i.e. the acquisition of the control over their choices and their own lives. COOPI supports women in reaching access to information, resources, capacities and opportunities. COOPI adopts a **gender mainstreaming** strategy in all its interventions. This means undertaking programs with a specific attention to all the consequences of the activities promoted on men and women's lives within the beneficiary communities.

Each action, social phenomenon, process or policy is analysed on the basis of the differences in terms of power relations between men and women. This perspective allows the identification of possible discriminations and/or consequences on immediate needs and medium-term development processes.

Thus women are considered within a complex system of relations and are actively involved in the promotion and respect of their rights. Through capacity building and empowerment processes, COOPI always takes into account gender relations and, as a consequence, the involvement of men in developing its actions and in promoting rights awareness. In this perspective, private organisations, authorities and institutions have to be involved actively (at a local, regional and/or national level) in order to foster the full recognition of women's rights, the promotion of equal opportunities and a reflection on gender relations.

Every action implemented promotes changes in the social dynamics these inequalities are based on. With an **intersectional** approach, the attention is focused on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged categories (disabled people, belonging to marginalized communities and/or previously associated to armed groups). This approach for COOPI forms a precondition to reach gender equality. To better clarify this approach, some of the key gender-related concepts guiding our programmes and interventions are hereunder recalled.

MALAWI
Ph. Il Maestro e Margherita

PROTECTION

Women's **protection**, the heart of a gender approach, is defined as protection from all kind of violence (gender or sexual, physical, psychological or symbolic) and threats to security. Notably protection refers also to enforcing women's dignity[23]– and people's dignity in general – in order to guarantee the person's physical and moral integrity, and his/her identity.

COOPI ensures protection to women by providing services such as medical assistance, psychological support or involvement in educational programs. The existence of functional and accessible services helps not only their immediate protection (in response to the violence they are exposed to), but also on the medium-long term.

Also, COOPI sets up mediation activities to promote family and social reintegration of women who have suffered from violence. It encourages community participation through awareness raising campaigns and social mobilisation of associations, family members and communities to whom they belonged, in order to create safety nets able to identify violence victims and offer adequate support. Furthermore, for COOPI the role of the Institutions is essential to ensure protection to women, since they are responsible for the adoption of specific laws promoting their rights. Acknowledging the role of Institutions as central to create a safe society to women, COOPI supports their action at a local and national level.

PROMOTION

For COOPI, promoting women's rights and equal opportunities means increasing the community awareness of the existence of diversity and gender inequalities. Awareness raising implies a change in communities' conscience: on the one hand, adopting women's rights protection laws and equal opportunities promotes a structural change; on the other, it promotes a cultural change in relations, behaviours and attitudes between men and women. Women's rights and equal opportunities promotion is a process and not a mere response, so that long medium-long term actions have to be undertaken in order to lead the communities towards a real gender conscience.

To this extent, the awareness actions taken by on this theme are crucial both at a community level (providing information on gender inequality forms and promoting its elimination) and at an institutional level (raising awareness among authorities and local institutions to fully assume their role as guarantors of women's rights). Finally, in the educational field, training programs for teachers are held in order to promote the introduction of sessions on how to identify and face gender inequalities.

PROVISION

Assuring educational and health **services provision** and access to resources (natural and economic) to women allows to create a positive environment to carry out significant changes in favour of women within the community.

This is why COOPI is committed to ensuring the availability of and access to services to all women in need. Such services include medical care, psychosocial support, access to education and/or training and the creation of *crèche* facilities for children of women in work. In these areas of concern, COOPI's action mainly focuses on: i) the rehabilitation and/or construction of facilities that provide specific services; ii) capacity building of local staff, iii) raising communities (including their leaders and local authorities) awareness about providing these services with continuity. In addition, it is important to work for reaching an equal access and control over resources and salaries between men and women. This can be fully achieved when women are free to make decisions, to access resources and opportunities and to control their own life.

PARTICIPATION

The acknowledgment of the role of women in their own societies, as well as its strengthening, is closely

---

[23] The concept of Human Dignity adopted by the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 has been replicated in the humanitarian aid sector in the "European consensus on Humanitarian Aid", ratified by the European Union's member states in 2008.

CIAD
Ph. Sara Magni

MALAWI
Ph. Il Maestro e Margherita

linked to their full participation in decision-making and development processes within public institutions and private organisations. Women participation at decision-making level in local and national institutions can lead to more equal choices in terms of gender and also define a political agenda responsive to women specific needs. At the same time, the presence of women (at high levels) within associations and private organisations becomes crucial to an equal resources management between men and women. Active participation into community processes is necessary to resources control and management (natural, economic or human) and allows women to contribute to the development of their own communities.

Therefore COOPI encourages women participation in all the phases of its intervention and recognizes it as the foundation of their empowerment. COOPI promotes the participation of women first of all through their sensitization, because being informed is the first step for them to become aware of their own rights. COOPI involves women within decision-making processes of its programs, both

in the assessment phase and during the implementation, promoting their leadership. The role played by the associations (in particular women's ones), organisations and local institutions is also central and they are strengthened in the contexts in which we operate.

The definiton of the key concepts provided above is meant to provide a theorical background to our work, yet we are conscious that all the terms and areas of intervention described are deeply connected to one another. Only in long-term processes, working for structural and cultural changes addressing the causes of inequalities, it is possible to achieve relevant and long-lasting results.

COOPI in the operational management

Given the cross-cutting nature of the gender issue and the attention paid to it, over the years COOPI has carried out a wide range of actions in this context. To better clarify the conceptual and theoretical framework previously illustrated, a few examples of COOPI's most relevant experiences in different intervention areas (prevention, promotion, provision and participation) are provided. In some cases, the programs focus on one of the areas of interventions, in some others they involve different ones.

FIGHT GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
Gender based violence (GBV) is still a widespread phenomenon that affects mainly - but not exclusively - women and children in many of the countries where COOPI works. In such contexts, characterized by prevailing patriarchal systems derived from deeply rooted traditions, extreme poverty and weak institutions, gender inequalities tend to be very marked. Furthermore, the lack of systems to prevent and respond to SGBV strongly limits the possibility to significantly reduce the incidence of such violence and adequately address its consequences. With the aim of counteracting these issues, COOPI has been working for many years in countries as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Uganda on the prevention and response to SGBV in order to ensure medical assistance as well as psychological and social support to victims.
In light of this, the organization provides medical assistance to victims within 72 hours from the violence, through targeted treatments and hospitalization if needed. These actions are carried out based on local structures that are supported both in terms of equipment and provision of medications, and training of medical personnel. Great attention is given to the psychosocial support of victims of gender based violence: COOPI, in fact, supports and follows the creation of centers or mo-

bile teams where victims can be assisted by skilled personnel through individual counseling sessions and group therapy. In addition, in order to reduce social exclusion often experienced by victims of violence, COOPI promotes their rapprochement to the community, both by mediating meetings with families and promoting their socio-economic reintegration. To this extent, income-generating activities are promoted and sustained through specific training, provision of equipment and the creation of local associations for savings and credit[24]. In the case of girls victims of violence, often associated with their forced inclusion in armed groups, great importance is then given to their reintegration into education programs. Moreover, where communities and local institutions show weaknesses in the adoption of appropriate mechanisms for prevention and protection of SGBV victims, COOPI realizes awareness campaigns aimed at youth, community leaders, representatives of women's and men's associations and institutions, in order to increase the knowledge and awareness on the issue[25]. Finally, with respect to the legal prosecution of violence perpetrators, the organization supports victims by increasing the awareness of their legal rights. Likewise, it works closely with local authorities raising their awareness on the need to ensure adequate protection and assistance to victims while identifying the culprits.

D.R.C.
Ph. Marco Palombi

[24] The Village Saving Loan Associations
[25] The most utilised tools are: organisation of sports events, dance, music, theatre

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND REINTEGRATION OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE VICTIMS IN ITURI DISTRICT AND MANIEMA PROVINCE (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO)

GBV is a common phenomenon in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where it is not only associated with the long going conflict, but also rooted in society and exacerbated by deep poverty and weakness of local institutions. In this context, COOPI has been active for years in different areas of the country to give support to the victims of violence - particularly women who make up the great majority of them - and reintegrate them in their communities. As part of this project, carried out between 2008 and 2012 as part of a larger program that COOPI has conducted in Eastern DRC since 2003, an integrated approach was developed: medical assistance, psychological support as well as socio-economic and legal aspects were included as they contribute to the full recovery of GBV victims. According to this approach, 60 health centers in the District of Ituri and Maniema Province were supported and provided medical assistance to more than 10,000 victims of GBV; over 25,000 victims of violence benefited from psychosocial support at community centers; about 12,000 people received socio-economic assistance to start or strengthen income-generating activities; more than 1,600,000 people were involved in sensitization and mobilization activities to develop a greater awareness on the issue of GBV.
Also, specific actions have been carried out in favor of men, notably: sensitization of male community leaders aiming at fostering a change in their attitudes, campaigns and trainings for couples aimed at creating new spaces for dialogue and for sharing views/opinions; finally, training sessions with parents to improve the interrelationship dialogue.

PROMOTE WOMEN'S RIGHTS
The violation of women's rights is common to the different contexts where COOPI operates with the aim of reducing inequalities women are subjected to. These violations hinder their participation in decision-making processes, access to natural resources, production inputs, education and basic health services. Therefore COOPI strongly promotes women's rights and commits itself standing by their side for them to be respected. In this sense, the organization structures its interventions on different levels, first involving women to make them protagonists of their own development, but also their communities, in order to create an environment where their rights are known and respected, and, finally, the local and national authorities who are responsible for the respect of such rights. While working in close collaboration with these subjects, COOPI's commitment extends across all sectors of intervention, with the aim of ensuring women the access to and control over resources, the ability to rely on quality services and actively participate in decision-making processes at the community level but also on a larger scale. Particularly relevant is the experience that COOPI launched in Sierra Leone, which aims to promote women's rights to education and ownership of land in order to enhance the role of women in society as well as their substantial contribution to food security. With regard to this, other significant experiences have been carried out both in Africa (Somalia, Malawi, Sudan) and in Latin America (Guatemala, Paraguay), where the inclusion of women in committees for the management of water and/or facilities designed for food processing is aimed at allowing them to control resources and production processes.
Focusing on the health sector, COOPI works in contexts where access to medical care is often limited for women due to both the weakness of services and gender inequalities intertwined with deep-rooted traditions. COOPI's commitment to extend the coverage and strengthen such services is thus aimed at ensuring them the right to receive medical assistance. Finally, in line with the engagement of the organization in support of local communities, COOPI works in favour of women who are the most vulnerable to various forms of discrimination. Interventions in this sense – whose the experience in Ecuador is an important example - are to promote social inclusion of women by integrating them in the local economy and strengthening their coordination and representation capacities.

ECUADOR
Ph. Luca Salerno

EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT OF MUJERES NEGRAS ORGANIZATIONS (ECUADOR)

Amongst Ecuadorian people of African origin, traditionally at the edge of the development processes of the country, women appear as the most vulnerable. The main problems they suffer from are widespread domestic violence they are victims of which is not reported nor prosecuted, the lack of psychological and legal support to deal with it, the weak representation and participation in decision-making processes. In order to improve the social status of women of African origin (*mujeres negras*), as well as their integration in the Ecuadorian society, COOPI carried out this project between 2006 and 2009 with the aim of strengthening their organizations by promoting socio-economic, political and cultural development. In this context, 3,300 women (110 associations) participated in the strengthening of CON-AMUNE[26] that groups them at the national level, both in Quito and in five provinces in the North of the country; more than 3,500 women participated in training sessions to improve their level of education and gain a greater awareness on topics of interest, such as domestic violence and the right to participate in decision-making processes at the local and national level. Additionally, various small enterprises involving over 300 women were launched and supported.

16

ENSURE ACCESS TO EDUCATION

COOPI stands for women so that their right to education is fully respected. Indeed, the organization acknowledges its relevance in promoting women's and men's empowerment. Failure to achieve good levels of education, in fact, precludes –most of the time women- the opportunity to have a voice, take on roles of responsibility and actively participate in community life. In order to fight discriminations in access to education – which are one of the most common outcomes of gender inequalities – COOPI intervenes both in formal and informal contexts, from primary to secondary level, including also professional training. The organization therefore supports the school enrolment of girls by promoting an intense awareness of families and communities: the importance of their education for the development of their communities is emphasized in order to reduce the general and female (usually very high), school dropout rate. Particular attention is given to the inclusion (or reintegration) of GBV victims, as well as of children formerly associated with armed forces. With regard to this, teachers training and the development of appropriate educational programs are planned in order to create a safe and secure environment that foster the reworking of the traumatic experience, as well as the culture of dialogue. Thus, COOPI promotes the formation of support groups and the performance of recreational activities. In addition, particularly relevant for those who have experienced violence, is the professional training to enhance their employment opportunities, which is part of the path to recover their dignity. A significant part of COOPI's commitment in support of the right to education also takes shape in the dialogue and awareness rising of local institutions that should be guarantors of such rights by implementing gender sensitive policies.

26 National Coordinator of Mujeres Negras

C.A.R.
Ph. COOPI Archive

ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN THE HAUT MBOMOU PREFECTURE (CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC)

The political instability in the Central African Republic (CAR) following the wave of violence by LRA[27] in 2008 destabilized the already fragile education system in the Eastern part of the country where the prefecture of Haut Mbomou is located. The climate of violence had a heavier impact on girls that, apart from experiencing more difficulties in access to educational services traditionally, are more vulnerable to GBV. To address these widespread issues, COOPI, that has been active in CAR for years in the sector of education, realized this project in 2011 focusing on two complementary aspects: on the one hand, the support of the schooling system to ensure access to education and, on the other, the prevention and protection of victims of GBV in the towns of Obo, Mboki and Zemio. During this initiative, approximately 6,500 children including indigenous, disabled, displaced persons, refugees and adolescents previously associated with armed groups, had access to primary education whose quality was significantly improved due to the distribution of school equipment and the

training of more than 100 teaching parents and 50 preschool educators. The communities of the towns of Obo, Mboki and Zemio were sensitized on gender based violence (with particular concern on sexual violence) and actively involved in its monitoring and prevention. Aiming at strengthening protection and psychosocial support to victims of violence, also men were actively involved in every step of the programme. Also specific activities, such as training session and counselling groups were introduced. The value of this intervention was indeed the acknowledgment of the link existing between a safe environment and the access for boys and girls to the essential service of education.

ENSURE MATERNAL HEALTH

COOPI, historically engaged in the health sector, has been working for years in order to reduce the limitations – first of all the weakness of the health care system and gender inequalities – that prevent women from accessing quality health services. For this reason, the organization gives special attention to reproductive health in its programs both in Africa and in Latin America. In this contexts COOPI's interventions aim at improving the quality of health services to reduce both maternal[28] and infant morbidity and mortality that still reach high levels. This is achieved, firstly, by rehabilitating and/or constructing health centres and training medical personnel in order to improve the identification of high-risk pregnancies and provide pre/post-natal and childbirth assistance. The training is also extended to mediators that sensitize the local population – especially women – on the need for this type of assistance: in many cases, in fact, the prenatal check-ups are for women the only opportunity to be informed and trained on the adoption of good sanitation practices, whose failure to comply is one of the leading causes of both ma-

17

27 Lord Resistance Army
28 Maternal morbidity is defined as the condition in which a woman who nearly died survived a complication that occurred during pregnancy, childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy. Statistically it is referred to as the number of survivors of serious complications for number of total born or born alive (Say et al. 2004). Maternal mortality is defined as the condition in which a woman dies while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes. Statistically it is referred to as the number of survivors of serious complications for number of total born or born alive (WHO et al. 2010).

ternal and infant mortality. Moreover, COOPI pays particular attention to women victims of SGBV as, very often, in addition to the psychological trauma and social exclusion they are exposed to, they face unwanted pregnancies. In their case, the basic medical care comes with psychosocial support.
Finally, the focus on local communities and their traditions that characterizes COOPI's intervention across all sectors is also an important component of the support the organization gives to the health care system. In some contexts, in fact, COOPI has been committed to integrate the official medical system with the traditional one, by supporting the implementation of practices that ensure the health of pregnant women and newborns while meeting the local traditions.

BOLIVIA
Ph. Carla Ricci

REDUCTION IN MATERNAL MORTALITY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TINGUIPAYA BY INTEGRATING THE OFFICIAL AND THE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE (BOLIVIA)

In 2005, the Department of Potosí in Bolivia, particularly in the Municipality of Tinquipaya, used to have a maternal mortality rate amongst the highest in South America: this issue was due to both the weakness of the local health care system - which did not adequately cover rural areas – and to the existing gap between the conventional medicine, practiced in centers across the region, and the deeply rooted local traditions. Indeed, it is on the latter ones that local communities rely on concerning reproductive health, thus increasing the risk of complications during pregnancy and/or childbirth due to the adoption of improper practices. Hence, the intervention conducted by COOPI between 2005 and 2006 aimed at strengthening the local health care system particularly focusing on reproductive health, by promoting an intercultural approach that integrated the official medicine with the traditional one, in order to offer the local communities quality health services specifically structured to meet their own traditions. In this context, 16 people part of the personnel in 6 health centers of the Municipality of Tinquipaya were trained to increase their knowledge on traditional medicine; 142 traditional midwives were trained to identify pregnancy and childbirth related complications; an intercultural hospital was built, equipped and started up in Tinguipaya, giving value to local traditions while organizing the delivery rooms as well as the environments for relatives coming with pregnant women; moreover, an organization[29] grouping traditional doctors and midwives was created and legally recognized.

18

---

[29] COMETRAT - Consejo de Médicos Tradicionales del Municipio de Tinguipaya
[30] For more details, see COOPI Policy on Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction, COOPI, Milan, 2013.
[31] Human being trafficking
[32] This approach considers also other vulnerable groups like minorities, disabled, refugees/IDPs, and HIV/AIDS affected people.
[33] Resilience is the capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards, to adapt by resisting or changing

PERÙ
Ph. Francesca Colombi

GENDER, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

COOPI believes that attention to gender in humanitarian crisis contexts (socio-political or related to natural origins) is crucial and promotes a gender approach also in high level disaster risk contexts[30]. COOPI directly addresses to sex-specific needs in socio-political crisis contexts, ensuring protection and provision of services. Furthermore, the organisation focuses on possible side effects which can lead to gender violence, worsening of sexual and reproductive health, job loss, trafficking[31] and denial of education rights. In areas vulnerable to natural risks, even at a pre-crisis stage, COOPI sets up processes to prevent the risk of rights violation, through the strengthening of institutional and community mechanisms of empowerment, protection and provision of services, functional also to the effective management of the crisis.
COOPI's approach aims at having a specific attention on the gender vulnerability analysis in these contexts[32] and on enhancing and strengthening women's capabilities. Women play an important and active role in contributing to peace processes, increasing resilience[33] and reducing disaster risk even in emergency situations.

VALUE WOMEN IN ACHIEVING FOOD SECURITY

COOPI acknowledges the fundamental role of women in achieving food security, recognizing their contribution both to the production of the majority of food resources globally[34], and to their distribution and use at the household and community level. In order to value such role, the or-

19

---

in order to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structures. Such capacity is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organizing itself to increase its capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures (UN / ISDR 2004).
[34] The State of Food and Agriculture 2010 – 2011 (FAO 2011)
[35] Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook (World Bank 2009)

ganization adopts a gender perspective in all food security programs across the countries where it works, by tackling the main issues women suffer from: severe restrictions in access to and control over resources (both production inputs and technologies), lack of proper training and fair employment conditions. In this framework are thus included actions aimed at promoting the right to ownership of land and its acknowledgment in national policies; the access to quality inputs such as improved seeds and agricultural tools, as well as to technologies (e.g. energy saving stoves and irrigation systems); the inclusion in technical training sessions. The organization also promotes the participation in decision-making processes as both the control of resources and the strengthening of

women production organizations strongly depend on it. Likewise, the attention paid by COOPI to natural resources conservation fits into this context, given the dependence of women on these[35] due to the type of activities they usually carry out for the livelihood of their community.

COOPI also recognizes that women's access to education and health services significantly improves the nutritional status of both households and communities they are part of. In light of this, it actively involves them in nutrition education activities. In addition, the organization aims at enhancing women's contribution to food security also indirectly, by guaranteeing them the access to quality services in order for them to fully play their role to their communities' benefit.

20

D.R.C.
Ph. Chiara Oggioni Tiepolo

21

SIERRA LEONE
Ph. Karen Zamboni & Marco Serena

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH LITERACY AND LAND PROPERTY (SIERRA LEONE)

In Sierra Leone, women are still subjected to heavy discriminations: lack of recognition of literacy and property rights. COOPI's program, realized between 2010 and 2013, involved three different levels of recognition and promotion of these rights: improvement of women's rights awareness and promotion (individual level); creation of conditions that allow women to participate into decision making (community and local authorities level); formal acknowledgment and guarantee of women's land property within National Land Policy (national level). Among the main results:

- 8,109 community members, including 5,137 women and 126 leaders have increased their awareness of women's property rights and their relation with education rights;
- 338 women leaders have improved their educational levels, increased their management and advocacy capacities and carried out women's rights promotion (education and property);
- 112 women have been trained to lead literacy courses in their own communities;
- 3 women's organisations and associations networks have been strengthened at a national level;
- The National Land Policy, currently being processed, has formally included the discussion of various aspects related to the recognition of women's rights of access to land.

MALAWI
Ph. Il Maestro & Margherita

SUPPORT WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The access to and control over resources and opportunities is for COOPI a pivotal component of women's empowerment and gender equity. In this sense, the development of entrepreneurial activities is particularly relevant as, in addition to giving women the opportunity to assume a productive role in the community, it enhances the awareness of their skills as well as their social status. Therefore, the organization promotes the professional integration of women and supports their personal initiative in starting up production and commercial activities. Great importance is given to training, based on the close collaboration with local institutions. With regard to this, significant activities have been conducted in Cameroon and in Senegal (Casamance), where COOPI promoted the inclusion of young women through business activities and access to microcredit. Supporting female entrepreneurship also means improving technical, productive and management skills and, in general, labour conditions of women already part of the productive system, mainly in sectors such as food

processing and handicraft.

In this context, after performing participatory needs assessments, COOPI provides technical and management training courses and consultancy focused on production diversification and commercialization of products. In addition, special attention is given to the creation of facilities and support services for women to combine work with family care (such as promotion and building of community nurseries). All the interventions mentioned are characterized by the strong involvement of the different actors related to the world of entrepreneurship, i.e. local institutions, corporations, agencies, civil society and women's associations, with the aim of facilitating dialogue among them and opening up institutionalized opportunities for exchange.

In the region of Casamance, after a long period of political instability, the early 2000s saw a weak recovery of the economic activities where the small business ventures and the hand-craft sectors, female intensive, had an important role. COOPI's intervention in the town of Ziguinchor, carried out between 2006 and 2009 as part of a larger project to support women's entrepreneurship, was focused on the enhancement of services for children care in order to allow working women to actively engage in their activities. Along with a difficult access to financing and a weak technical and managerial background, women engaging in professional activities used to experience difficulties in combining these with their domestic responsibilities, especially child care. Thus, two crèche facilities were then realized and properly equipped, thanks to which more than 60 women benefited from care services for 80 children between 2 and 6 years old provided by specialized personnel. Hence, the value of this experience lay in the integrated support given to women that enhanced their dual role as mothers and workers.

CIAD
Ph. Sara Magni

Glossary

Gender: the term gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles, relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to women and men on a differential basis. It is not biologically predetermined but refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female in a particular point in time. Gender is also relational, meaning that gender roles and characteristics do not exist in isolation, but are defined in relation to one another (UN-INSTRAW 2004).

Sex: sex refers to the biological characteristics which define humans as female or male (UN-INSTRAW 2004).

Gender equality: gender equality is referred to as the condition where 'women have equal rights and entitlements to human, social, economic, and cultural development, and equal voice in civil and political life' (DFID 2000).

Gender equity: gender equity is referred to as the condition where 'the exercise of equal rights and entitlements leads to outcomes which are fair and just, and which enable women to have the same power as men to define the objectives of development'(DFID 2000).

Women's empowerment: women's empowerment has five components: women's self-confidence; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the household, and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally (UNIFEM 1995).

Gender perspective: gender perspective refers to "with respect to any social phenomenon, policy or process, exposing gender-based differences in status and power, and considering how such discrimination shapes the immediate needs, as well as the long-term interests, of women and men' (UN 1995).

Gender mainstreaming: gender mainstreaming is defined as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programs in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men can benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (ECOSOC 1997).

Bibliography

African Union. 2003. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, Doc. CAB/LEG/66.6. Available at: http://www.achpr.org/english/-info/women en.html, accessed on the 24th April 2013.

Anderson, H. 2004. Missing links: gender equality, the MDGs, and the International Conference on Population and Development. Paper presented at the Seminar on the Relevance of Population Aspects for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. New York. Available at: http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/PopAspectsMDG/PopAspects.htm, accessed the 2nd of May 2013.

Berger, M. T., Guidroz, K. 2010. The intersectional approach: Transforming the academy through race, class, and gender, University of North Carolina Press

Bloom, S. 2008. Violence against Women and Girls: A Compendium of Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators. Chapel Hill. NC: MEASURE Evaluation.

Boserup, E. 1970. Woman's Role in Economic Development. London. Earthscan Publications.

Department for International Development (DFID). 2000. Poverty elimination and the environment. Strategies for achieving the international development targets. Available at: http://www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd27/tspgender.pdf, accessed on the 2nd of May 2013.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). 1997. Agreed Conclusions 1997/2. Available at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/ECOSOCAC1997.2.PDF, accessed on the 24th of April 2013.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). 2011. The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011. Rome. Available at: http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/en/, accessed on the 20th of September 2012.

Inter-Agency Standing Commettee (IASC), 2009. Women, Girls, Boys and Men. Different Needs-Equal Opportunities, Gender Handbook for humanitarian Action. Available at http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=content-products-products&productcatid=3, accessed on the 3rd of Novembre 2014.

McCall, L. 2005. The Complexity of Intersectionality, Chicago Journals Vol. 30, November 3, The University of Chicago Press.

Moser, C. 1989. Gender planning in the Third World: meeting practical and strategic gender needs, World Development, Vol.17, No. 11, pp.1799-1825.

Moser, C. 1996. Pianificazione di genere e sviluppo. Teoria, pratica e formazione, Rosemberg & Sellier, Torino.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2008. Accra Agenda for Action, OECD Publishing.

Ruspini, E. 2003. Le identità di genere, Le bussole, Carocci, Roma.

Say, L., Pattinson, R.C., Gülmezoglu, A.M. 2004. WHO systematic review of maternal morbidity and mortality: the prevalence of severe acute maternal morbidity (near miss). Reproductive Health; 1: 3. Available at: http://www.reproductive-health-journal.com/content/1/1/3, accessed on the 2nd of May 2013.

Scott, J.W. 2013. Genere, politica,storia. Viella, Roma.

United Nations (UN). 1979. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Available at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm, accessed on the 23rd of April 2013.

United Nations (UN). 1993. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. A/RES/48/104. Available at: http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm, accessed on the 23rd of April 2013.

United Nations (UN). 1995. Fourth World Conference on Women. Beijing, China - Action for Equality, Development and Peace. Declaration and Platform for Action. Available at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingdeclaration.html, accessed on the 23rd of April 2013.

United Nations (UN). 1998. General Assembly, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Available at: http://untreaty.un.org/cod/icc/index.html, accessed on the 9th of May 2013.

United Nations (UN). 2000. UN General Assembly, United Nations Millennium Declaration, Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, A/RES/55/2. Available at: http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?page=amdg10&id_article=2253, accessed on the 24th of April 2013.

United Nations (UN). 2000. UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) [on women and peace and security], S/RES/1325. Available at: http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf, accessed on the 9th of May 2013.

United Nations (UN). 2008. UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) [on acts of sexual violence against civilians in armed conflicts], S/RES/1820. Available at: http:// www.un.org/docs/sc/unsc_resolutions08.htm, accessed on the 9th of May 2013.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) 2010. The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics. New York: United Nations.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). 1995. Guidelines on Women's empowerment in Guidelines for the United Nations Resident Coordinator System. Available at: http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/, accessed on the 2nd of May 2013.

United Nations International research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW). 2004. Glossary of Gender-related terms and concepts, 'Gender mainstreaming principles'.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2009. Addressing Gender-based Violence: UNFPA Strategy and Framework for Action. Available at: http://www.unfpa.org/public/publications/pid/1565, accessed on the 2nd of May 2013.

World Bank. 2009. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook. Available at: http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTARD/EXTGENAGRLIVSOUBOOK/0,,contentMDK:21348334~pagePK:64168427~piPK:64168435~theSitePK:3817359,00.html, accessed on the 2nd o9f May 2013.

World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) & World Bank. 2010. Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2008. Geneva: WHO.

World Health Organisation (WHO). 2013 Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence . Available at: http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/index.html

List of acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
COMETRAT	Consejo de Médicos Tradicionales del Municipio de Tinguipaya
CONAMUNE	Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Negras del Ecuador
DFID	Department for International Development
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GBV	Gender Based Violence
LRA	Lord Resistance Army
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UN-INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development

Together we can make the World a better place.