



GT4AFRICA

Gender Transformation for Africa: A Sexual, Reproductive and Maternal Health Research Collaborative

Transformation du genre pour l'Afrique: Une recherche concertée sur la santé sexuelle, reproductive et maternelle

The Gender Transformation for Africa (GT4Africa) cohort brings together seven implementation research projects (2022–2025) across Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, The Gambia, Burkina Faso, Malawi, and South Africa. Supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the cohort addresses critical gaps in gender-transformative approaches to sexual, reproductive, and maternal health (SRMH).

As part of this effort, the cohort has hosted a series of interactive webinars to strengthen capacity and foster collaboration. These sessions facilitate cross-project learning and knowledge exchange. The slides are from one of these events.



GRADE Africa



NACOSA



African Population and Health Research Center



HOPE AFRICA



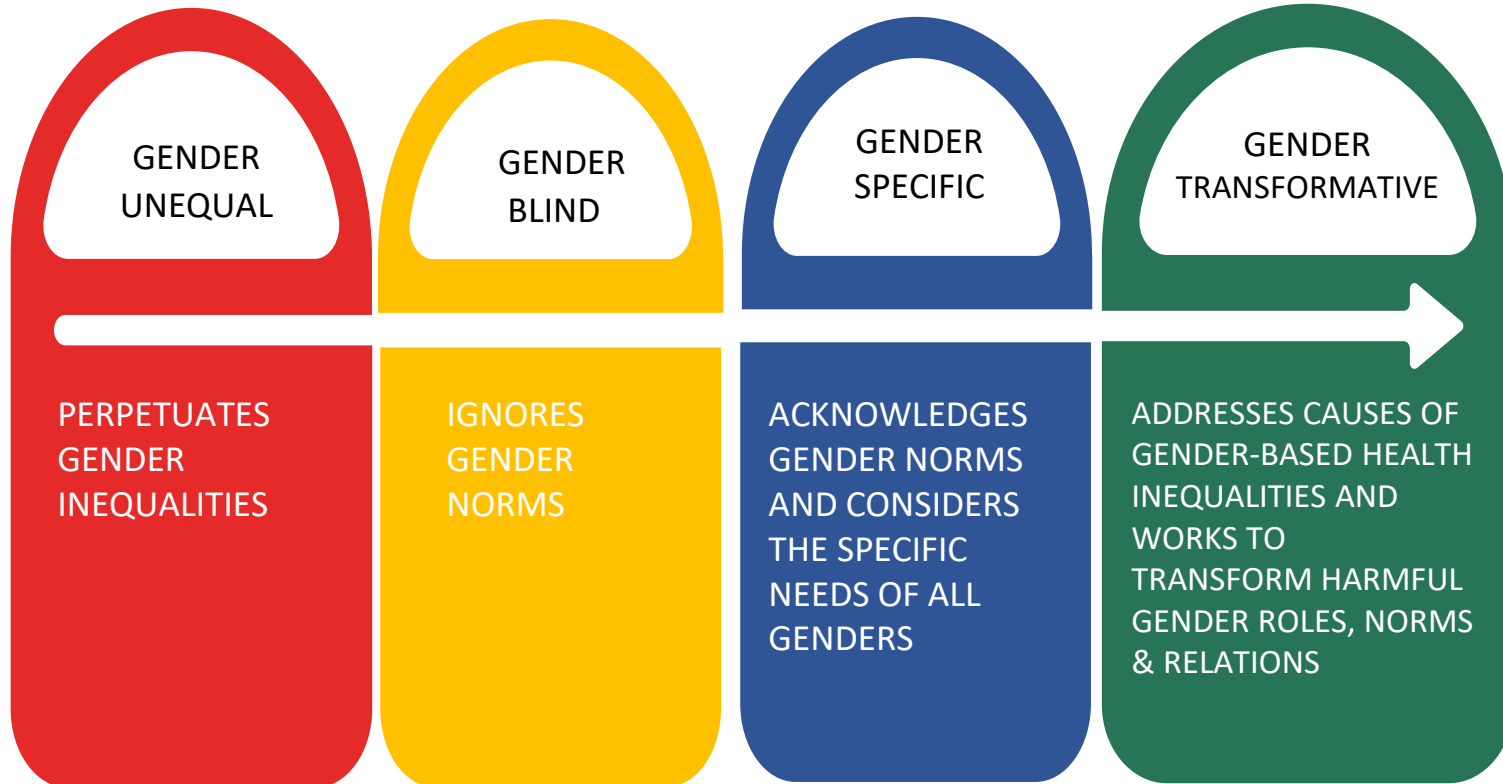
Canada



Gender Transformative Approaches

GT4Africa Cohort Webinar: 12 July 2022 (Revised 6 July 2022)

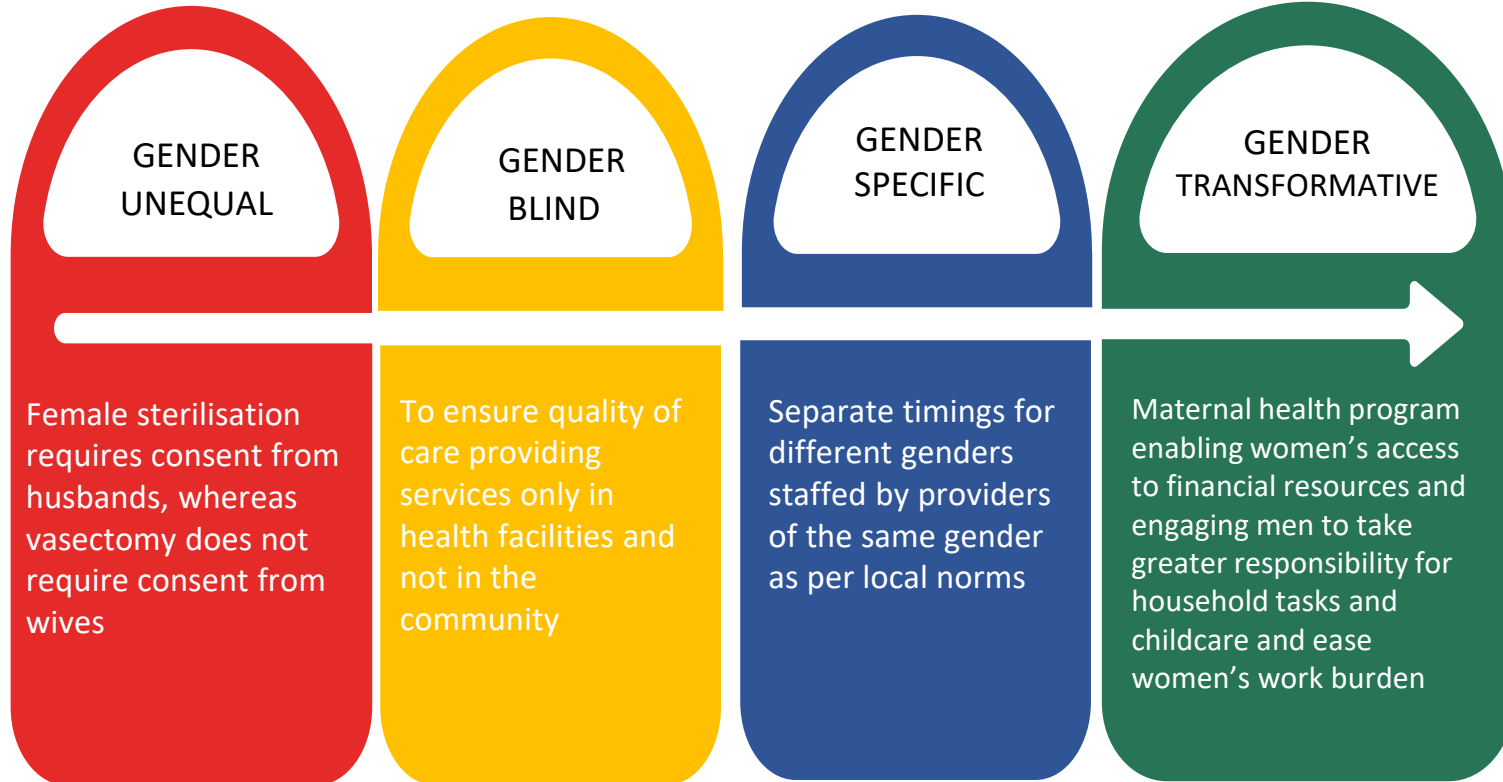
GENDER CONTINUUM



Goal



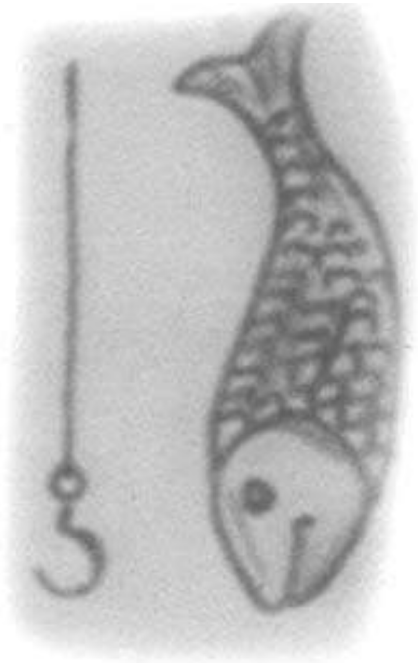
GENDER CONTINUUM – examples



Goal

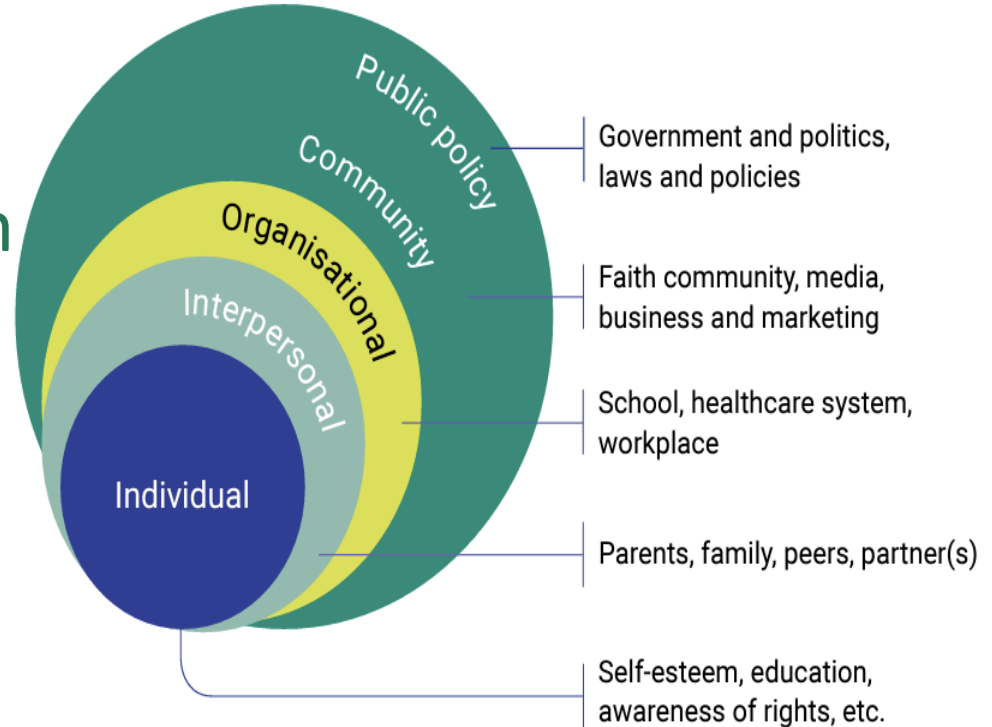


Are gender transformative programs always more important than gender specific programs?



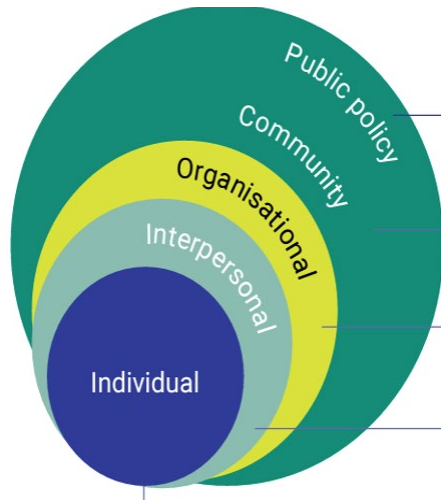
- In health, there are differences in health needs between girls/women and boys/men because of biological differences, or the interaction of biology with social and gender norms.
- Getting to gender-specific would be an important first-step in the transition to gender-transformative programming.
- Gender-specific programmes address the practical health needs of women, men, intersex and gender non-binary persons.
- Gender transformative programmes not only cater to the practical health needs but try to do so in ways that address strategic gender interests, which alter the unequal power relations between and within genders

Gender Transformation requires changes across actors & levels



Source for the FGM example: UNICEF (2020). Gender transformative approaches to FGM. <https://www.unicef.org/media/86391/file/FGM-Mainstreaming-Gender-Equality-2020-v2.pdf>

Gender Transformation requires changes across actors & levels



FGM EXAMPLE:

- Advocacy for legal and policy frameworks that support elimination of FGM
- Creating champions against FGM in the media and the faith community
- Gender-sensitization of healthcare providers at all levels
- Provision of comprehensive sexuality education
- Working with parents towards gender-transformative parenting, support for girls' and women's (in their diversity) right to bodily integrity, support for girls' education, economic security and self-efficacy
- Enhancing girls' and women's access to and control over resources, agency and empowerment

Ways of understanding and challenging power

- Gender transformation
 - Intersectionality
- Women's empowerment



Ways of understanding and challenging power

- Women's empowerment is not the same as gender transformation necessarily. "The circle is larger now.. But it is still men who draw the circle"
(Frontline worker from RUWSEC, a rural women's organisation in Tamil Nadu). Gender transformation seeks to alter the unequal power inequalities between genders to greater equality
- Progress from gender-unequal to gender-transformative is not a linear process. There is often backlash which may result in moving a step or two backward and working again to regain lost ground



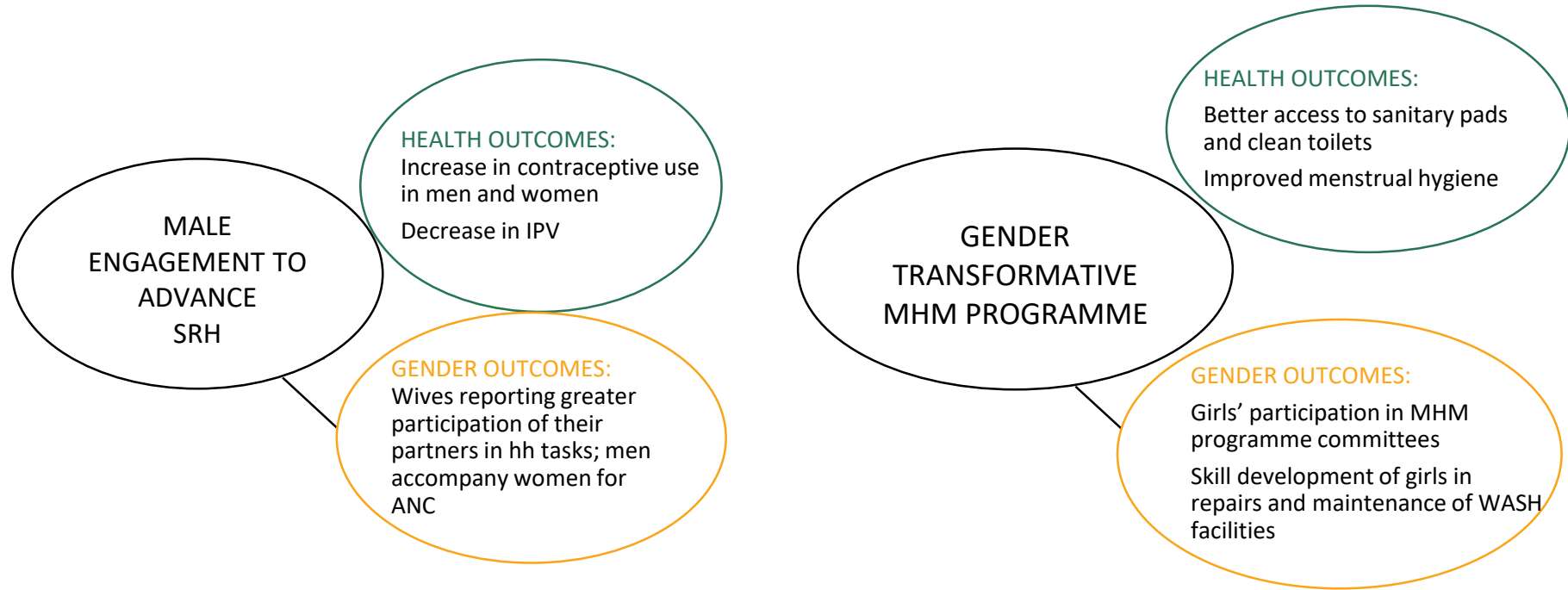
Ways of understanding and challenging power

- Intersectionality views power relations as dynamic and intersecting across various dimensions: class, race, location, sexual orientation, age etc
- The same person may enjoy privileges across some dimensions and vulnerabilities across others. For example, a male manual labourer; a celebrity who is a transwoman.
- These privileges and vulnerabilities are dynamic and context-specific. Someone who is powerful in one context and point-in-time may be vulnerable in another



Assessing gender transformative approaches in health

Entails assessing both 1) changes in health; and 2) changes towards gender equality



Handouts/ extra slides

Gender Transformative Approaches

- Encourage critical awareness and action on gender roles and norms
- Empower women/girls and work with and support boys, young men to question their own privileges & vulnerabilities
- Move away from a sole focus on individual-level change to also address change at community, organisational, policy levels as well
- Foster an enabling environment across actors and levels
- Consider girls, boys, young women and young men and gender non-binary persons in all their diversity
- Consider complexity in project design, implementation, and evaluation strategies

<p>EXPLOITATIVE: Gender-unequal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing unbalanced norms, roles and relations • Privileges men over women and those with non-binary identities (or vice versa) • Often leads to one sex enjoying more rights or opportunities than the other
<p>GENDER BLIND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignores gender norms, roles and relations • Ignores differences in opportunities and resource allocation for women and men and those with non-binary identities • Often constructed based on the principle of being “fair” by treating everyone the same • Very often inadvertently reinforces gender-based discrimination
<p>ACCOMMODATING Gender- specific</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers gender norms, roles and relations for women and men and those with non-binary identities and how they affect access to and control over resources. • Considers women’s and men’s specific needs • Intentionally targets and benefits a specific group of women or men to achieve certain policy or programme goals or meet certain needs • Makes it easier for women and men to fulfil duties that are ascribed to them based on their gender roles
<p>TRANSFORMATIVE Gender- transformative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers gender norms, roles and relations for women and men and those with non-binary identities that these affect access to, and control over, resources. • Considers women’s, men’s and those with non-binary identities specific needs • Addresses the causes of gender-based health inequities • Includes ways to transform harmful gender norms, roles and relations • The objective is often to promote gender equality • Includes strategies to foster progressive changes in power relationships between women and men and those with non-binary identities

GTA to programming

IMPLICATIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMMING¹³

1 Individual level

- **Individual women's and girls' access to knowledge and skills**
Fostering women's and girls' knowledge and skills can lead to an increased consciousness and understanding of their rights and increased confidence to claim those rights.
- **Women's and girls' access to resources**
Expanding women's and girls' economic opportunities such as jobs, assets and skills development can impact on women's and girls' agency and transform social norms.
- **Increasing women's and girls' influence in decision making**
Strengthen women's and girls' leadership capacity and include a focus on their influence in local decision making at community, village and district levels.
- **The importance of safe spaces and support mechanisms**
Collective action of women and girls not only build peace at the community level, but also offers a degree of support and protection for women and girls themselves.

2 Household level

- **Targeting all members of a household**
Evidence suggests that interventions which target all members of a household (both male and female) can have a valuable impact on the success of a programme/project.
- **Recognizing and redefining gender roles within the household**
Interventions which are designed to encourage recognition and redefinition of gender roles within the household can be an effective mechanism for women's and girls' empowerment.
- **Women's economic empowerment**
Women's economic empowerment has been found to improve women's decision making in the household when traditional approaches, such as microfinance or cash transfers are combined with other interventions, such as empowerment and educational strategies.
- **Utilizing existing positive opportunities**
Examining existing dynamics in the household can also enable programmes to build on positive opportunities for women and girls, which in turn, may impact on the success of interventions at the community and societal levels.

GTA to programming

3 Community level

- **Community education**
Localised approaches to educate, mobilize the community and raise awareness about discriminatory practices can be effective in reducing gender inequalities through tackling myths and social norms.
- **Relationships interventions**
Relationships fostered in the spaces created by groups of women and girls can bring about the changes associated with empowerment and the capacity to act collectively to demand gender equality.
- **Working with traditional leaders and faith communities**
Working with faith organizations and traditional leaders, who are often gatekeepers to the local community, can strengthen community ownership and support for programmes/projects and many have an impact on changing discriminatory community perceptions.
- **Engaging men and boys**
Working with men and boys to transform beliefs and behaviours that underpin gender inequality is an important intervention in order to achieve transformative change for women and girls.
- **Working with and supporting women's rights and organizations**
Evidence suggests that for community mobilization efforts to achieve transformative change for women and girls, they should work with and support women's and girls' rights organizations.

4 Societal level

- **Implementation and enforcement of legal frameworks**
The implementation and enforcement of legal frameworks to ensure equality before the law has been identified as critical for transforming discriminatory norms and social practices but will only be effective if also accompanied by mechanisms for enforcement, interventions to improve women's and girls' access to justice and gender-responsive police and judicial systems.
- **Large scale media and education campaigns**
Large scale media and education campaigns are a useful tool for reaching broad audiences. However, evidence suggests these are most effective when combined with locally targeted outreach efforts and interventions such as training and workshops.
- **Supporting women's and girls' participation and collective**
Active participation of women and girls and women's rights organizations in policy-making, combined with legal reform which promote women's and girls' equality and enhanced state capacity to implement agreed gender commitments are essential for successful initiatives to promote gender equality.

[Source: DfID FPA Learning Partnership Gender Group (2015). What Works to Achieve Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment?]

GTA to programming in adolescents' & young people's SRHR

AREAS OF ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED:



Community and social context



Education and awareness



Economic stability



Physical environment or safe space

TO TRANSFORM GENDER NORMS THROUGH CHANGES IN

Knowledge related to	Attitudes related to	Individual agency	Social and intrafamilial support	Economic wellbeing	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws and policies • Rights and entitlements • Access to services • Finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictive gender norms • Age at marriage • Violence • Female genital cutting • Division of labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence • Ability to negotiate or self-efficacy • Freedom of movement • Age at marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familial relationships • Social networking • Partner communication • Equitable division of domestic labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to save • Access to savings • Control over assets • Income generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational achievement

GTA to programming in adolescents' & young people's SRHR AND ACHIEVED STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT RESULTS IN THESE HEALTH-RELATED MEASURES

Knowledge and attitudes	Health behaviours	Use of services	Health outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Body satisfaction• Birth knowledge and preparedness• Family planning methods and use• HIV stigma• Sexual and reproductive health• Sexually transmitted infections• Seeking health care• Substance abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birth preparedness• Breastfeeding• Clean water consumption• Contraceptive use• Diarrhoea management• Handwashing practices• Mosquito net use• Nutritious eating• Perpetration of violence• Risky sexual behaviour• Substance abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pap smears• Sexually transmitted infection screening and treatment• HIV screening and treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anxiety• Child morbidity (age >2 years)• Experience of violence• HIV incidence• Menstrual hygiene• Post-traumatic stress• Stunting• Unwanted or unexpected pregnancy





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Thank you