

**Mozambican Girls Living With Poverty Speak Out:
A Case of Using Participatory Methodologies
With Very Young Adolescent Girls
To Identify Barriers To Alleviating Poverty**

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO
MCGILL UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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This work is dedicated to 10 amazing girls:

Anna, Beatrice, Carla, Fatima, Joana, Patricia, Paula, Rosa, Rita and Yolanda.

You have taught me the true meaning of humanity. You have defined the meaning of courage, integrity, wisdom and love through the way you live your lives. You have enriched my life in countless ways. I only hope that the barriers that remain firmly entrenched in your lives can be lifted so that others can experience the wisdom and creativity that lies inside each of you. I hope the quality of life that you envision for yourselves becomes a reality. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives. I am truly privileged to have known each of you.

ABSTRACT

Decision makers at every level of society, local, national and international, along with NGOs and civil society are committed to alleviating abject generational poverty. In the context of what many refer to as the ‘feminization of poverty’, my dissertation focuses on girls during their early adolescent years in order to uncover the barriers that are present and which prevent them from exiting a life of poverty. By using participatory methodologies, in particular photovoice, we hear directly from ten girls between the ages of 10 – 14 who describe their experiences of living a life of poverty.

In my engagement with the girls what became apparent is the impact of pre-determined roles and responsibilities on girls living with poverty. Many of these are noticeably absent in capacity building, poverty and gender related literature. Also absent in discussions related to girls living with poverty and capacity building is a spotlight on the influential role of cultural and societal norms resulting in the lower status of girls. The impact of culture and societal norms becomes self-evident in discussions with the girls, particularly after the girls’ conducted community-based interviews with their grandmothers, mothers or aunties. Comprehensive data is often missing which includes specific barriers that emerge in a girl’s life including attending school, achieving optimum health, accessing diverse economic opportunities, as well as achieving independence and empowerment.

In this study, the importance of obtaining data directly from girls living with poverty becomes evident. For example, girls living intimately with poverty will identify barriers which may not be readily visible to researchers and decision-makers who do not share the same life experience. Only by understanding the diverse barriers that are present in young adolescent girls’ lives that prevent them from accessing capacity building opportunities like education and literacy will decision makers be able to develop capacity building policies that will have a higher probability of being relevant, meaningful and high-impact. And only when these capacity building policies have quality of life as key success indicators, can

girls living with poverty access a higher quality of life – a clear objective for research and policies related to girls, capacity building and poverty.

RÉSUMÉ

Les décideurs à tous les niveaux de la société, locaux, nationaux et internationaux, de concert avec les ONG et la société civile, consacrent leurs efforts à réduire la pauvreté générationnelle abjecte. Dans un contexte que plusieurs décrivent comme la féminisation de la pauvreté, ma thèse se concentre sur des jeunes filles au début de l'adolescence, afin de découvrir quelles barrières sont présentes et les empêchent de se sortir d'une vie de pauvreté. Utilisant des méthodologies participatives, en particulier photovoice, nous entendons les récits de dix jeunes filles entre 10 et 14 ans qui décrivent leurs expériences de vie dans la pauvreté.

Ce qui est ressorti de mes échanges avec ces jeunes filles est l'impact de rôles et responsabilités pré-déterminées sur les jeunes filles vivant dans la pauvreté. Plusieurs de ceux-ci brillent par leur absence dans la littérature scientifique sur le renforcement des capacités, la pauvreté et le genre. Est également absent des discussions reliées aux jeunes filles vivant dans la pauvreté et au renforcement des capacités un éclairage sur le rôle influent des normes culturelles et sociétales entraînant un statut plus bas chez les filles. L'impact des normes culturelles et sociétales devient évident au cours de discussions avec les jeunes filles, particulièrement après qu'elles aient réalisé des entrevues au sein de la communauté auprès de leurs grand-mères, mères ou tantes. Il manque souvent de données complètes incluant des barrières spécifiques qui émergent dans la vie d'une jeune fille, incluant fréquenter l'école, atteindre une santé optimale, avoir accès à des opportunités économiques diverses, atteindre l'indépendance et se prendre en main.

Dans cette étude, l'importance d'obtenir des données directement de la part de jeunes filles vivant dans la pauvreté devient évidente. Par exemple, les jeunes filles vivant intimement dans un contexte de pauvreté identifieront des barrières qui ne sont pas nécessairement visibles pour des chercheurs et décideurs qui ne partagent pas la même expérience de vie. C'est seulement en comprenant les diverses barrières présentes dans la vie des jeunes filles, particulièrement au début

de l'adolescence, qui les empêchent d'avoir accès à des opportunités de renforcement des capacités telles que l'éducation et l'alphabétisation que les décideurs pourront développer des politiques de renforcement des capacités qui auront une plus grande probabilité d'être pertinentes, significatives et d'avoir un grand impact. Et c'est seulement lorsque ces politiques de renforcement des capacités auront la qualité de vie comme indicateurs principaux de succès que les jeunes filles vivant dans la pauvreté auront accès à une meilleure qualité de vie - un objectif clair pour la recherche et les politiques liées aux jeunes filles, au renforcement de capacités et à la pauvreté.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Undertaking a PhD is as much about discovering yourself as it about learning about individuals whose life experiences are meaningfully different from your own. My PhD study was a result of incredible people that supported, motivated and inspired me throughout this important journey.

To begin my journey, I had the most amazing supervisor both from an academic and personal perspective - Claudia Mitchell. Claudia inspired me with her capacity to translate research into action. Given that her expertise in gender, girls and poverty had an international perspective, she was able to guide and encourage me to discover more, consider diverse perspectives, and to strive to gain deeper insight into complex issues like gender and poverty. Claudia provided me with guidance but above all else, allowed me the room to work in my own way. Her enthusiasm and belief in my work encouraged a deeper sense of discovery to better understand the barriers that marginalized girls living with poverty. Despite Claudia's hectic schedule which included various time zones and multiple deadlines, Claudia always responded to my emails within 24 hours. Her positive attitude was critical on days that I felt overwhelmed. On a personal note, Claudia's thoughtfulness and kindness never ceased to amaze me. Thank you Claudia for always being present during all points in my journey. My deepest gratitude for being an exemplary supervisor and mentor.

I am also indebted to Charles Lusthaus, Lynn Butler-Kisber and Naydene De Lange – my committee members all of whom are recognized leaders in their areas of expertise. Charles, Lynn and Naydene each provided a unique and important perspective to my research. They shared their knowledge and time generously. Their valuable, insightful and thought-provoking comments towards my work enabled my research to have varied and richer content. I am deeply appreciative of your time, support, input and kindness academically and personally. I have learned much from each of you. Thank you.

I would also like to acknowledge one additional member – Joe Kincheloe. Even though Joe passed on during my research, I cherish the opportunity to have

met and learned from him. His love for his students, his unconditional belief in my work, his desire to see us succeed will always be remembered.

I am deeply appreciative of the financial support received from the Jackie Kirk Fellowship. As the first recipient of the Jackie Kirk Fellowship, I hope that my work undertaken with the girls in Mozambique will contribute to Jackie's vision for a better future for girls.

Many thanks to my two outstanding research assistants, Anaisa Rashul and Maria Rosalina Dengo, for their dedication, enthusiasm and support during my research. Without the trust and relationship you each developed with the girls, it would have been challenging to gain true insight into the diverse nature of barriers faced by girls living with poverty in Mozambique.

On a personal front, I was lucky to be surrounded with the constant love, and support of my family members and many close friends. Whether it was through regular care packages, sincere interest in my work as I achieved important milestones, without their unconditional support and belief in me, this journey would not have been as rich and meaningful. I would also like to make a special mention of my parents who have worked tirelessly to give us a better life. They have always inspired us to be the best and to work hard. They believed and supported us unconditionally. My heartfelt thank you to my family and close friends for always being there, for cheering for me, for reading my work and providing me with thoughtful feedback.

Last but not least, to my incredible husband, best friend and life partner - none of this would have been possible without you. Emran, you encouraged me to pursue my dreams and never look back. You provided me with the space and time to explore and gain as much as possible from this journey. In my moments of frustration, you made me laugh. In my moments of celebration, you shared my accomplishments – no matter how big or small. The countless discussions we had regarding girls, poverty and capacity building enriched my work. And most of all, your love for me and belief in my work enabled me to have a rich, fulfilling experience. Thank you for all your unconditional support, enthusiasm and love. This is as much your accomplishment as it is mine!

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	African Development Bank
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CPRC	Chronic Poverty Research Center
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EFA	Education For All
FRELIMO	The Liberation Front of Mozambique
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GdM	Government Of Mozambique
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INE	National Statistics Institute
LDC	Low Developing Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MINED	Ministry of Education, Mozambique
MISAU	Ministry of Health, Mozambique
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWSA	Ministry of Women and Social Action
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PARPA	Action Plan For The Reduction Of Absolute Poverty
PGBS	Partnership General Budget Support
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance Party
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policies
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organization
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*“Until women and girls are liberated from poverty and injustice,
all our goals -- peace, security, sustainable development –
stand in jeopardy”*

Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, March 10, 2010

OVERVIEW

Globally, eradicating poverty and in particular girlhood poverty has been an elusive goal. Governments, decisions makers, donors and NGOs have been committed to eradicating poverty since adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (OHCHR) in 1948. A more concerted effort was made towards eradicating childhood poverty with the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989. The CRC was designed to protect the child and ensure that s/he is able to access a higher quality of life. Although progress has been made towards protecting the child, much work remains as noted by the following statistics. Today, approximately one billion, or every second child, continues to live with the multiple complexities related to poverty (Shah, 2010). One billion children continue to be deprived of one or more essential services for survival (UNICEF, 2009). 1.1 million children are still unable to attend primary school (UNICEF, 2009) and 270 million children continue to be denied access to health services. 640 million children are living without adequate shelter; 400 million children do not have access to safe water. In 2003, 10.6 million children died before they reached the age of 5 which translated into approximately 29,000 children *per day* (Shah, 2010). And 2.5 million children are living with HIV (UNAIDS, 2010).

As Whiteside (2002) and others note, HIV&AIDS is the major threat to development and poverty alleviation in Africa (Whiteside, 2002). Of importance to note is that poverty *and* HIV&AIDS has been identified as having largely a female face. 70% of individuals living with poverty are girls and women (UN WOMEN). Of the 33.3 million worldwide living with HIV&AIDS, more than

half are women. Notably, 98% of these women live in developing countries (UNAIDS, 2010). Of the estimated 2.5 million children living with HIV globally, 9 out of 10 live in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2010).

Education and health sectors have been identified as being essential players in the fight against poverty and HIV&AIDS faced by girls (Kelly, 2009; WHO, 2008c; UNESCO, 2007a). The global community initially committed to providing adequate health and education for all citizens in 1948 by adopting the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Since 1948, world leaders have made numerous promises and achieved some progress towards providing education and health for its citizens. In 1990, 155 countries of the United Nations and 150 organizations gathered at Jomtien to recommit their efforts towards providing Education For All (EFA) by 2000. The conference was sponsored by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank. It was attended by world leaders from around the globe (UNESCO). During this conference, education was acknowledged as being the “single most important critical element in combating poverty, empowering the poor, enhancing economic growth, controlling population growth, protecting the environment and promoting human rights and democracy” (Tilak, 2003, p. 2). EFA has subsequently been identified as a major global strategy for development (Tilak, 2003).

Ten years later, at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, 191 United Nations member countries agreed to eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for poorer nations. In the Millennium Declaration which establishes the values used to guide global development, leaders pledged to “promote gender equality and empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable” (Paragraph 20, United Nations, 2000). In Paragraph 6, the Declaration further stated that “men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children with dignity, free from hunger and fear of violence, oppression or injustice” and that “the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured” (United Nations, 2000). Despite equality being mentioned in the Millennium Declaration, and the reality that HIV&AIDS, as well as poverty

have largely a female face, the MDGs only referenced gender explicitly in Goal 3 and indirectly in Goal 5 with a focus being on improving maternal health. The remaining six goals are void of explicit reference to gender (Ariffin, 2004). UNFPA acknowledged the critical failing of the MDGs in explicitly addressing gender inequity (UNFPA, 2005). The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) also argued that equity should have been addressed, particularly “as women are generally the poorest of the poor ... eliminating social, cultural, political and economic discrimination against women is a prerequisite of eradicating poverty ... in the context of sustainable development” (ICPD, 1994).

Even though girls’ education and the reference made to the ‘girl child’ has been identified as a focus for the past 21 years, progress has been made, but much work remains particularly in relation to equal access and completion of quality education for girls and achieving gender equity – both major barriers towards developing the capacity of girls living with poverty. Specific reference to the girl child first appeared in 1990 at the Jomtien Conference. Members of the Jomtien Conference included girls in the World Declaration on Education for All document in Article III, point 3. The Article states: “The most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated” (UNESCO).

At the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000, members adopted the Dakar Framework for Action Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments. This document underscored the commitment of governments to achieving quality basic education for all by 2015, with a particular emphasis on girls' schooling. Article 7 and 9 made specific reference to girls. In Article 7, point 2, the focus was on providing girls in ‘difficult circumstances’ with free and quality primary education. Article 7, point 5, outlined the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality by 2015. Article 9 pointed to strengthening of National Action Plans by 2002 with a focus on girls’ education (UNESCO, 2000). UNGEI, an organization dedicated to girls’ education was launched during the Dakar 2000

Conference. UNGEI's work is driven by MDG 2 and MDG 3 which focus on universal primary education by 2015 and achieving gender equality by 2015.

Twenty years after the Jomtien Conference, the Dakar Conference on girls' education, 'Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality' was held in 2010. The Dakar Conference refocused on providing access to girls for primary education globally. Participants at this Conference proclaimed extreme poverty, structural inequality, poor quality education and violence against girls as critical gaps which remained as barriers for girls attempting to access and complete their education. The barriers noted put at risk achievement of the MDGs goals by 2015, as well as gender and education commitments re-affirmed and represented by the EFA in 2000 (UNGEI, 2010a). The Dakar Declaration acknowledged that "despite the progress that has been made, poor quality of education, extreme poverty, structural inequality and violence against girls continue to jeopardize the achievement of the education- and gender-related Education for All and Millennium Development Goals by 2015" (UNGEI, 2010a). In considering the shortfalls to achieving gender equality, access to education and health for all girls as noted above, it is important to consider why it is seemingly not possible to achieve eradication of poverty given the involvement of many nations and great minds. Why it is that girls and women are the primary inheritors of poverty? With this thesis I hope to contribute to the dialogue regarding girlhood poverty by shining a light on elements which demand more attention in one country, Mozambique.

WHY GIRLHOOD POVERTY?

In this study I focused on girlhood poverty in Mozambique, which according to the UNDP is the fifth poorest country in the world, as well as the fifth poorest country in Africa (UNDP, 2010). I chose to focus on girlhood, in particular early adolescence, because according to UNICEF and Population Council, the very early years of adolescence (10 – 14 years) are often understudied and yet are critical years for development (UNICEF, 2008; Population Council, 2009). A wide body of diverse research in the fields of anthropology, developmental psychology, medicine, sociology, and education

(Shonkoff, 2009; UNICEF, 2008; Heckman, 2004; Dodge, 2004) all underscore the vital importance of development during the early years of childhood in relation to the formation of intelligence, personality, and social behaviour (Farah, Shera, Savage, Betancourt, Giannetta, Brodsky, Malmud, & Hurt, 2006; Brown & Pollitt, 1996; Winick & Rosso, 1969).

It has been noted that the effects of neglect during the early years of life can be cumulative and lasting (UNICEF, 2008). There has also been a call since the late 1990s for research with girls and boys that engages their voices, particularly during their early adolescent years. Cannella (1998), for example, notes that “the most critical voices that are silent in our constructions of early childhood education are the children with whom we work. Our constructions of research have not fostered methods that facilitate hearing their voices” (Cannella, 1998, p. 10). I would add that the voices specifically of young adolescent girls are notably absent particularly in relation to poverty and capacity building resulting in a higher quality of life.

Considering that 70% of those classified as poor in the world are women (UN WOMEN; Tomlinson, 2002), I presumed that girls living with poverty must face different challenges than those experienced by boys, which overwhelmingly prevented them from transitioning out of a life of poverty. I was curious to learn what factors led to poverty having an overwhelmingly female face. In reviewing data pertaining to childhood poverty used by leading organizations such as UNICEF, I noted that not all data pertaining to children in general had been disaggregated by gender or age. Given the feminization of poverty, along with an absence of age and gender disaggregated data pertaining to poverty, I decided to focus solely on girls living with poverty.

In the absence of gender-disaggregated data one can conclude that poverty-related challenges faced by girls and boys are similar. Yet UN WOMEN, UNGEI and UNICEF confirm that poverty *and* HIV/AIDS have an overwhelmingly female face. They have also indicated that girls living in poverty are likely to become women living in poverty. In the absence of age disaggregated data, the statistics presented also seem to give the impression that girls and boys

of all ages experience poverty in similar ways. However, UNICEF indicates that there is still an incomplete understanding of how poverty specifically impacts girls. There is also limited research which analyzes the relationship between childhood poverty and girlhood (Delamonica, Minujin, Davidziuk, & Gonzalez, 2006). According to the Chronic Poverty Research Center, (CPRC),¹ the knowledge base is thin regarding specific research on girls' and adolescents' experiences with poverty (Jones, Harper, Watson, Espey, Wadugodapitiya, Page, Stavropoulou, Presler-Marshall & Clench, 2010). Poverty from a female lens places a spotlight on a combination of elements including lack of property and land rights; lower status; lack of decision making ability; inconsistent access to basic rights including access to clean drinking water, sanitation, health care and quality education, upward mobility employment; limited ability to protect oneself from physical and sexual violence (UN WOMEN).

Even though there is a gap in knowledge regarding girls' and adolescents' experience with poverty, there is widespread agreement within the development sector that to eradicate girlhood poverty; well resourced, high quality health and education sectors are the impetus needed to develop appropriate human capabilities (Kelly, 2009; WHO, 2008c; UNESCO, 2007a). It has also been acknowledged that "gender inequality is pervasive and begins *before* a girl child is even born. In every part of the world, families and societies treat girls and boys differently, with girls facing greater discrimination and accessing fewer opportunities and little or sub-standard education, health care and nutrition (Graca Machel in Plan, 2007 p. 8 emphasis mine). By strengthening health and educational sector inputs, including access and quality, this can lead to an increased probability of alleviating poverty for girls (Kelly, 2009; WHO, 2008; UNESCO, 2007).

In this context, it is important to understand what influences the development of strong health and educational sectors. Along with strong policies, supported by qualified staff, infrastructure and appropriate financial support, another equally critical factor is culture. There are many diverse definitions for

¹ Chronic Poverty Research Center comprises of international partnership of universities, research institutes and NGOs

culture. For this study, I have used the following definition which was adopted at the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico 1982. “Culture... is... the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 1982 p. 1).

Why does culture matter? According to Sen (2004), culture matters because it has an instrumental influence on the behaviours of individuals, firms and governments (Sen, 2004). Decision makers are after all part of the wider culture and thus predominately subscribe to values, beliefs and opinions endorsed by society at large. Social institutions, like health and education are also important because they are part of a wider culture which defines “what is valued in terms of wellbeing, who does the valuing and why economic and social factors interact with culture to unequally allocate access to a good life” (Rao & Walton, 2004 p. 4).

Health and education issues are notably influenced by culture, and are reinforced through policies developed and adopted locally, nationally and internationally. Legal instruments have been designed to protect the rights of girls and enable them to access a higher quality of life. These legal instruments include Universal Declaration of Human Rights signed in 1948; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted in 1979 (CEDAW, 2007) and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified in 1989 (UNICEF). In addition, to these conventions and declaration, the international community also signed a ‘Substantial New Programme of Action’ designed to alter the course of deteriorating socio-economic conditions of the most vulnerable countries through international commitment and action in 1981.

These legal instruments have been ratified by numerous countries including Mozambique. Yet, what continues to remain absent are strong national laws required to implement policies and declarations designed to ensure that girls, like boys, have an equal opportunity to increase their quality of life (Plan, 2007). An additional challenge in implementation is that local and national laws are

likely not reflective of the experience, role and impact of poverty on girls since girls' voices have largely remained absent in policy and poverty related research (Jones et al, 2010; Greene, Cardinal, & Goldstein-Siegel, 2009; Ridge, 2002).

Therefore, in order for laws and policies to be relevant and meaningful for girls living with poverty, what is required is direct representation and engagement of girls living with poverty (Greene et al, 2009; Ridge, 2002). To achieve this, a shift in paradigm is needed (Greene et al, 2009) from working *for* girls to working *with* them in partnership. This shift in paradigm would involve listening to girls, gaining deeper insight into their unique life experiences, understanding their barriers, needs and dreams. It would require decision makers to learn how to maximize the girls' potential whilst considering the barriers outlined by the girls. The shift in paradigm would necessitate decision makers to recognize girls as part of the solution process. Through this process, decision makers would have a greater probability for success in addressing the diverse capacity building needs of girls living with poverty (Greene et al, 2009).

FRAMING THE STUDY: GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Conceptually the study is located within two broad yet overlapping bodies of literature 1) gender and gender equality and 2) poverty alleviation, both areas, as noted above, that are central to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, but which are, in and of themselves critical areas of research. Gender is perhaps the more obvious one as I highlight throughout the thesis. Poverty (models of poverty alleviation, indicators of poverty, intergenerational poverty, capacity building and poverty reduction, poverty and human rights) is in some ways 'the new face' although it is of course also an area that features in a variety of discourses including the novels of Charles Dickens from 19th century Britain. Poverty discourses have typically focused on income (Conley, 2001). But as Rodenberg (2004) points out poverty experienced by girls and women should consider other critical elements:

'Women [girls] are...more often affected and jeopardised by poverty. Lacking powers of self-control and decision-making powers, women [girls] – once having fallen into poverty – have far

fewer chances to remedy their situation...If poverty is understood not only as income poverty but as a massive restriction of choices and options, a step of this kind, not taken in isolation may also mean an improvement of women's [girls'] life circumstances" (Rodenberg, 2004 p. 13).

As Chant (2010) and others have pointed out, there are strong links between gender and poverty. These important discussions do not often distinguish between the impact of poverty experienced specifically by girls and that by women, or the ways in which barriers imposed by poverty have an impact on girls during their critical very early adolescent years (versus the impact on women). Recent discussion related to gender and poverty, noted in Sylvia Chant's *International Handbook of Gender and Poverty* (2010), brought together some of the leading thinkers from around the world to discuss diverse issues related to gender and poverty including empowerment, health, education and policy. Absent, however, is an analysis of how girls are victims of poverty. One of the few areas related to girls in the *International Handbook of Gender and Poverty* focused on child marriages, an important issue, but not the only issue.

It is the situation of girls living with poverty having far fewer opportunities to change their quality of life (Rodenberg, 2004) that this study sought to explore, aiming to deepen insight into the barriers that exist in accessing relevant capacity building opportunities. Given the absence of girls' voices in relation to poverty and capacity building in poverty and gender related discussions this study aimed to bring forth the girls' ideas, experience and thoughts in order to deepen our understanding of poverty experienced by girls. The girls' voices which clearly emerged through the study highlighted the unique barriers that prevent them from accessing a higher quality of life.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In developing my study, I considered the following facts. Education and health have been acknowledged as being two critical sectors required for the alleviation of girlhood poverty. Yet, girls continue to be absent in primary schools. Access to quality health is also severely restricted for girls. And girls continue to experience a lower status than boys. I also considered the following questions. What factors prevent girls from accessing and completing their education? What barriers exist in their ability to access quality health education and resources? What factors impede their ability to increase their status? One of the common threads among all these questions is culture.

Culture has a strong role in shaping health, education and gender policies; in sustaining the lower status of girls and in turn limiting opportunities available for girls to transition out of a life of poverty. In light of this, I wanted to develop a study that would seek to understand the role of culture in shaping opportunities available for girls to develop their capacity through accessing quality education and health sectors and ultimately exiting from a life of poverty. Given the absence of age and gender disaggregated data, I wanted to study this with girls living with poverty during their very early years of adolescence. Through my study, I also hoped to contribute towards answering the bigger question in development which is ‘what would lead to dependable development for girls living in poverty?’

In the context of what many describe as the feminization of poverty, along with the reality that Mozambique is the fifth poorest country in the world (UNDP, 2010), I wanted to design research questions that would provide me with a road map to identify specific challenges related to girls living with poverty. I wanted to understand what is unique to a girl’s life experience which makes it significantly more challenging to access a higher quality of life over and above her male counterparts. Current capacity building models are void of girls’ voices; hence I wanted to learn from girls what type of capacity building would lead directly to relevant, sustainable and dependable development that would translate into a higher quality of life from their perspectives. Due to the absence of girls’ voices in developing policies and strategies related to poverty, gender and

capacity building, I wanted to provide space for girls to become active participants in the creation of new knowledge and to understand how this process of engagement impacts their sense of self, self-worth and empowerment. Finally, I wanted to consider strategies that would take the conversations between the girls and me to decision makers who are able to influence policies that can meaningfully impact the girls' lives. With this in mind, I developed the following three questions to guide my study.

1. What barriers do girls face in their attempt to exit a life of poverty?
2. According to the girls, what specific capacity building opportunities will result in a meaningful and sustainable increase in their quality of life?
3. How can participatory and visual methodologies such as photovoice be useful tools to create increased awareness and develop critical thinking at the grassroots level? What role can visual methodologies have in the creation of relevant policies for girls living with poverty?

EMBARKING UPON A JOURNEY

I wrote this thesis as someone who started out first as an outsider to Mozambique. I have now been living in Maputo since 2008. In the time that I have been in Mozambique I have tried to gain a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and gender. Since the complexities related to poverty intersect multiple sectors, I wanted to better understand the impact of sectors beyond health and education in order for me to have a more nuanced understanding of poverty faced specifically by young adolescent Mozambican girls. It is only by being present in the 'field' that I could experience overt and subtle influences of poverty experienced by Mozambican girls. It is only by being present in the field that I would have the opportunity to understand the life cycle of poverty as experienced by girls, women and mature seniors through my engagement with girls and women of all ages.

My approach in embarking upon this study therefore was to become part of the landscape and not simply a visitor to the area. Thus, I spent many months immersing myself in the community, engaging and observing people, particularly girls and women; the roles they played in society, their status, their ability to

advocate on behalf of themselves with boys and men from their own communities, as well as individuals from different sectors. I was also interested in understanding which tools were available to them and which were denied to them as they sought to independently change their quality of life.

On a daily basis, I witnessed the contrasting quality of life of Mozambicans particularly between the growing gap of minority wealthy Mozambicans and the majority living with poverty. On the streets of Maputo, a thriving capital city, I noted the restlessness among youth searching for employment. I understood their restlessness when I read the most current statistics related to unemployed and underemployed youth which noted that 50 – 80% of Mozambicans are unemployed (Dana & Galbraith, 2006; Belda, 2004). Even though statistics differed regarding the percentage of unemployed Mozambicans, either number translated into restricted development as a result of under-utilization of prime human resources between the ages of 18 – 45. Globally, from the approximately 620 million youth between the ages of 15 – 24 years of age, 81 million were unemployed at the end of 2009 – the highest number to date (ILO, 2010).

I also noted the strong presence of embassies, NGOs and donors in Maputo. In each sector including gender, poverty, children, HIV&AIDS large numbers of NGOs are present and active. Even though I was unable to secure the exact number of NGOs addressing HIV&AIDS for example, at minimum, currently there are more than 300 national and international HIV&AIDS focused organizations in Mozambique (RENSIDA, n.d. & MONASO, n.d.) .

Despite significant international presence and commitment, poverty remains visible. Driving a short 10 minutes from the capital city, the reality of Mozambicans becomes apparent. The humble homes along with broken down buildings and dusty roads, girls and women selling small quantities of food along the road side – ten tomatoes, five potatoes is in stark contrast to the men and women in Maputo city selling large quantities and variety of fruits and vegetables.

Observing life on the city streets of Maputo, I saw the contrasting life styles of its citizens. Alongside luxury vehicles including Hummers, BMWs and

Mercedes were overcrowded small minivans used for public transport. These minivans were referred to as chapas. Chapas were noticeably in poor condition. They were used daily to transport majority of Mozambicans. Often four to five people were crowded into a two-seater. There was little space for privacy or even personal space. The majority of Mozambicans living in peri-urban communities line up for 2-3 hours before boarding an overcrowded chapa into the city. It were these contrasts in life styles and life experiences in the fifth poorest country in the world that fuelled my interest and curiosity.

I was eager to learn from the girls living a life of poverty how they fit into these contrasting worlds. I was curious about the tools they had available to them which would enable them to develop appropriate capacity leading to a higher quality of life. It was with this curiosity and a deep commitment towards learning from and with the girls that I began my partnership with 10 young adolescent girls.

THE STUDY

I embarked upon a study that allowed me to see ‘up close’ the experiences of girls and through their eyes. These girls between the ages of 10-14 lived in a peri-urban impoverished community surrounding the capital city of Maputo. Many of the homes were headed by grandmothers and/or older siblings. The issues faced by these girls were multi-faceted in nature. To begin the process of uncovering these multifaceted yet interconnected challenges, I sought to engage these 10 girls through the use of participatory methodologies. Participatory methodologies, in particular photovoice allowed me to gain deeper insight into their intimate experiences with poverty and understand their perspectives on how things could be different. This dissertation tells the story of a six month journey in working with these girls.

Overview of the Thesis

The dissertation is organized into seven chapters. In the first chapter I have provided an introduction to the study. I have also highlighted the questions which will guide my research.

Chapters Two and Three provides context to my study. In Chapter Two, I look at the impact of colonial, neo-colonial and neo-liberal policies on two essential sectors in Mozambique namely education and health. Education and health have been identified by WHO and UNESCO (WHO, 2008; UNESCO, 2007) as critical sectors required for alleviating poverty for girls.

Chapter Three focuses on the study of girlhood itself as a critical area in development, and then as specific to development in Mozambique. The chapter centers specifically on the role of culture and policies in gender, health and education and its impact specifically on the lives of girls living with poverty.

Chapter Four deals with the theoretical and practical elements of participatory methodologies used in my study. The chapter reinforces the powerful use of photovoice as a tool for social change particularly for girls living in poverty.

Chapter Five presents the first part of my research findings responding to the first two research questions: Question 1) What barriers do girls face in their attempt to exit a life of poverty? Question 2) According to the girls, what specific capacity building opportunities will result in a meaningful and sustainable increase in their quality of life?

Chapter Six presents the second part of my research findings responding to the final research question: Question 3). How can participatory and visual methodologies such as photovoice be useful tools to create increased awareness and develop critical thinking at the grassroots level? What role can visual methodologies have in the creation of relevant policies for girls living with poverty?

Chapter Seven summarizes my research findings, presents my contributions to new knowledge, areas for new research, as well as key recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

GETTING THE CONTEXT PART 1

A HISTORICAL READING ON MOZAMBIQUE AND ITS IMPACT ON GENDER IN RELATION TO HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTORS

Despite advances in the policy-framework and female representation, however, structural constraints and a strong patriarchal culture continue to preserve the dominant position of men, and inhibit most women from gaining enhanced economic self-reliance and social independence (CMI, 2010 p. 2).

INTRODUCTION²

This chapter provides a historical review 400 years prior to Mozambique gaining ‘independence’ to its current state of being submerged in neo-liberal policies. This perspective provides an understanding of the combined impact of culture and ideology on the continuing lower status of Mozambican girls. The lower status of females has resulted in poverty being experienced overwhelmingly by girls and women even today in Mozambique. I looked back in history to understand how Mozambique has been shaped by culture, differing ideologies and wars, the combination of which I presumed resulted in Mozambique’s limited transition from being the poorest to the fifth poorest country in the world (UNDP, 2010). Culture plays an influencing role on decisions made by governments and the policies they choose to support (Sen, 2004). According to Isaacman and

² This chapter started out as what might be described as a desk review, but as I went along, I felt it was important to engage other scholars, particularly Mozambican scholars who had an academic and personal understanding of Mozambique’s history. To that end I consulted with a prominent researcher - Dr. João Menelau Paraskeva. Dr. Paraskeva was born and raised in Mozambique. He has taught at schools and universities in Mozambique, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, Scotland and United States. He is a highly respected authority on Mozambique. His areas of expertise are diverse and include African education and cultural studies; global educational policies and politics; as well as, social, cultural and historical foundations of education. I am indebted to Dr. Paraskeva for his close reading of earlier versions of this chapter and for his critical feedback.

Isaacman (1983) and others, Mozambique is a hegemonic patriarchal or male-dominated culture (Isaacman et al, 1983). The Portuguese colonizers for over 400 years reinforced male supremacy found within the Mozambican culture given their own commitment to patriarchal allegiance (Stoler, 1995). Along with culture, Mozambique's history also had diverse ideological influences including colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism³ and neo-liberalism⁴. Mozambique has also confronted long periods of war. The war of independence lasted 10 years from 1964 to 1974 (Rupiya, 1998). A short three years later, RENAMO, *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*, engaged the newly independent government forces, FRELIMO, *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, in a 15 year violent civil war from 1977 until 1992 (Robinson, 2007).

The combination of culture, differing ideologies and long periods of wars directly impacted two critical sectors in Mozambique – health and education. These two sectors are particularly important in alleviating poverty particularly for girls (Kelly, 2009; WHO, 2008; UNESCO, 2007). The chapter begins with a discussion outlining the transitions made by health and education sectors from colonial rule more than 400 years ago to ‘independence’. This will be followed by a focus on neo-liberal health and education policies and their continuing influence on girlhood poverty.

³ Neocolonialism has been described by President Kwame Nkrumah as being “the last stage of imperialism” (Nkrumah, 1965 p. 1). President Nkrumah viewed neocolonialism as another form of colonialism which enabled former colonizers, along with new partners including the United States to shape and influence the economic, political, cultural, religious and ideological spheres of ‘ex’-colonial territories in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America through the strings attached to giving of ‘aid for development’ (Nkrumah, 1965). President Nkrumah recognized that “it is this sum total of these modern attempts to perpetuate colonialism while at the same time talking about ‘freedom’, which has come to be known as neo-colonialism” (Nkrumah, 1965, p.1).

⁴ Neo-liberalism is a set of economic policies that emerged during the Reagan / Thatcher era and that have become widespread over the last 25 years. The main points of neo-liberalism include: 1) liberating free or private enterprise from any boundaries that can be enforced by the government, even if it results in social damage; 2) cutting back public expenditures for social services including health and education care resulting in a weakened safety net for the poor; 3) Deregulation so as to not interfere in businesses maximizing their profits even at the cost of protecting the environment or providing work-safety for employees; 4) Selling state owned enterprises, goods and services to private investors, thus including schools, hospitals and even fresh water; 5) Replacing the concept of the public good or community with individual responsibility, thus pressuring the poorest in our societies to find solutions for their inability to access quality health care and education (Martinez & Gracia, 2000).

SECTION 1: HISTORICAL IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND HEALTH SECTORS

Historical Factors and Their Impact on the Education Sector

Mozambique's experience with external influences shaping its education sector began with Portugal who maintained control of the education sector either through the state or church. Prior to mass migration of the Portuguese community to Mozambique, the Portuguese relegated control of the education sector to the Roman Catholic Church; a practise instituted by other colonizers in Africa. The Catholic Church in Mozambique had limited influence as it answered directly to the State. As a result, the Church in the 1800s was not in a position to question the sub-standard level of education being provided by Portugal. At the same time, the Catholic Church was also in competition with Protestants and Jesuits who also wanted a stake in the education of Mozambicans. Portugal, recognizing the political implications of non-Portuguese missionaries educating Mozambicans banned all non-Portuguese missionaries as early as 1867. However, with a limited number of Portuguese missionaries available, it was only able to enforce this law, 54 years later, in 1921 (Cross, 1987).

The Portuguese occupiers and then colonizers defined education for over 400 years for Mozambican children. Education for girls was defined in the narrowest manner possible. They began by ensuring that schools used by Mozambican children were not permanent structures (Cross, 1987) thus, communicating the low importance Portugal had towards provision of education for the indigenous population. Educating Mozambican children was limited to repeating select prayers, learning the principles of Christianity, basic reading and writing. School was also used as a medium to ensure that children were taught to be respectful towards colonizers and other superiors (Cross, 1987; de Sousa Ferreira, 1974). Simultaneously, missionary activity was used to *civilize* Mozambicans and turn them into obedient slaves. The 'civilization' process was to ensure that Mozambicans would not become too competent. The colonizers were not interested in enabling Mozambicans to take initiative (Lee, 1964). They

simply wanted a labour force that obeyed and acted on orders without thinking. This 'dumbing down' of girls, boys and adults continued for over 400 years.

In 1921, the language of Portuguese became the only medium of instruction in all schools (Cross, 1987). Even outside of school, only Portuguese could be used. African languages were only allowed in Church (de Sousa Ferreira, 1974). The abolition of African languages was consciously used to create divisions among Mozambicans who accepted the Portuguese language and those that only spoke the indigenous language. The colonizers presented their colonial ideas, language and culture as being superior. They cemented ethnic rivalry between those that accepted Portuguese language, culture and ideology and those that didn't through unfair distribution of resources, privileges and participation in political decisions and action (Marker, 2003).

The Colonial Act of 1930, an important document authored during Salazar's reign, focused on assimilating Mozambicans into Portuguese language, culture and thought through education, and the deculturation / acculturation process. The Colonial Act of 1930 was based on the Native Assistance Code of 1921 which stated that a *civilized* African was defined as an African who could speak Portuguese, had separated himself from tribal customs and had secured a livelihood (Cross, 1987). The education legislation of 1930 indicated that education for indigenous children was done with the purpose *civilizing* the *savage* African person, thus enabling him to become more valuable to society (Isaacman et al, 1983).

Two school systems were created, one that privileged the child of a Portuguese father and a Mozambican mother (mulatos) and children who had become assimilated (assimilados) over and above Mozambican children who had not been assimilated. The school systems were run by the Church and Government. The Catholic mission schools for African children only provided basic education. Whereas, the Government schools for whites, Asians, mulatos (mixed race), and assimilados provided a well-balanced education (Cross, 1987).

In reality the opportunities were only available to Portuguese children. Mozambican children, mulatos and assimilados encountered many obstacles thus,

making it all but impossible to access opportunities freely available for all Portuguese children. Portugal's poor commitment towards providing education for the indigenous population is evident. In 1909, a quarter century after Mozambique had been colonized; Portugal only had 48 primary schools for Mozambican boys and 8 for Mozambican girls (de Sousa Ferreira, 1974). With such few schools dedicated to girls, Portugal clearly demonstrated its lack of interest towards providing education for Mozambican girls and systemically made it difficult for them to acquire an education.

In 1930, the Portuguese also enacted what they termed as 'instruction of adaptation' for Mozambican children (Cross, 1987 p. 560). Children received three years of training at the *pre-primary level*. They were exposed to math, science, design, manual work, religion, physical education and music. Girls received female education - sewing, embroidery and cooking, thus reinforcing the traditional roles for girls (Cross, 1987; de Sousa Ferreira, 1974). In order to enter primary school, Mozambican children had to pass an exam. They had one additional stipulation; they were only able to take the *pre-primary level* exam if they were below the age of thirteen (Cross, 1987).

Passing the exam was challenging (Cross, 1987). In 1954, 183,092 Mozambicans were enrolled in basic education. After three years, only 3,595 or 2% were able to write the final examination. Only 2,774 passed the final exam enabling them to pursue *primary education*. In 1955, there were 212,428 Mozambicans enrolled in basic education. Only 1% passed their exam and pursued *primary education*. In 1954, only 120 indigenous students were registered in secondary schools. In the elite preparatory school for university, 5 indigenous and 800 Portuguese students were enrolled. Not one Mozambican successfully passed the preparatory exams (Lee, 1964). According to 1955 statistics, *only 4-6%* of the total 5.7 million populations were literate (de Sousa Ferreira, 1974). As a result, one of the objectives of the Colonial Act of 1930 which was to educate the Mozambican in manner that they could be exploited and their manual labour used to the benefit of Portugal (Isaacman et al, 1983) became a reality.

In the 400+ years of Portuguese occupation and colonization of Mozambique, at independence in 1975, only 36 years ago, almost the entire population, that is 93% of the 10 million Mozambicans had *not* received any form of formal education. And only 40 Mozambicans from a population of 10 million, that is less than 0.004% had received university training (Arndt, Jensen & Tarp, 2002). This statistic is evidence that the colonizers had deemed education unnecessary for Mozambicans and enforced it for over 400 years. The colonizers had also not focused on adult skills development. The Portuguese had governed Mozambique through extensive social and political exclusion, privileging the white and severely disadvantaging Mozambicans of all ages (Mario, Buendia, Kouwenhoven, Alberto, & Waddington, 2002).

Upon independence, Samora Machel, the first president of the FRELIMO party focused on communicating the concept of Mozambicans as free individuals; able to educate themselves with the focus on the common good for all people, leaving behind traditions and working towards a new Mozambican identity (Leao, 2005). Immediately schools were opened throughout the country necessitating the hiring of mostly untrained or minimally educated teachers (Simone Doctors, 2008). The first three years of independence resulted in a surge of attendance as enrolment in primary schools increased from 600,000 in 1975 to 1,200,000 students (Mario et al, 2002). Four years after independence, with the educational system formally under the Ministry of Education, discussions regarding the quality of education were being considered. The Ministry of Education took the lead in developing an educational system based on quality and rigor that matched the country's first national development plans.

But the sense of hope for the future and peace instilled by FRELIMO was short lived. From 1977 until 1992, RENAMO engaged the government forces in a long and violent civil war (Robinson, 2007). It was a war instigated by South Africa and United States in order to destabilize the country (Rebucci, n.d.). RENAMO was a military force backed by South Africa (Rupiya, 1998) and the United States (Reilley, 1992) with the specific aim of destroying the newly independent country (Hall & Young, 1997). In addition, RENAMO had the

support of Rhodesian intelligence since it was protecting Rhodesian borders (Reilley, 1992). RENAMO was also assisted by the Portuguese and by former Commandos from the Portuguese Army and security service. Black Mozambicans who were recruited were notably from Central Mozambique comprising of defected FRELIMO members (Abrahamson, 1995).

Even during the war, FRELIMO persevered with its aggressive education agenda. By 1980, literacy campaigns for adults reduced illiteracy rates to 75%. And in 1981, primary education reached a record 98% enrollment rate. It was in the midst of the civil war that a new national education system was developed with input from the public. The new educational system was approved by parliament in 1982, seven years after independence (Mario et al, 2002). In 1982, for the first time since Portugal rule, education became a constitutional right for every Mozambican. Education was also equated to eradication of poverty in 1982. Hence, compulsory and universal schooling of seven years was introduced. Textbooks for primary school and adult literacy were produced for the first time in the country, complemented by manuals for teachers and literacy educators. Prior to 1982, all textbooks were imported from Portugal (de Sousa Ferreira, 1974). The aim of the new educational system was to improve learning and teaching processes (Mario et al, 2002).

RENAMO, however, destabilized the educational strides made by FRELIMO by actively attacking schools and teachers during the long civil war from 1977 to 1992. Teachers and students were afraid to attend school particularly as news of the violent manner in which death was inflicted by RENAMO upon civilians spread throughout the country (Finnegan, 1992). During the war, approximately 60% of the schools were destroyed or closed. Many teachers escaped from Mozambique for fear of death (Robinson, 2007). Due to 25 years of war along with policies developed by colonizers and imperialists, the educational sector in terms of infrastructure and human resources suffered a significant setback despite the major strides it had made during the first few years of independence.

Historical Factors and Their Impact on the Health Sector

The health sector suffered a similar fate as the educational sector during colonization, imperialism, independence and civil wars. Health care during the colonial period favoured the Portuguese settler over and above the indigenous Mozambican (Walt & Cliff, 1986). The two tier system offered private health facilities that were well staffed and resourced for Portuguese settlers, whereas Mozambicans only had access to severely under-resourced and under-staffed public health facilities (Hanlon, 1984). In the last year of colonial rule, 1/3 of the health budget was allocated to the Central Hospital in Maputo which primarily served Portuguese settlers and approximately 6% of the elite Mozambican population. Upwards of 66% of the total number of doctors in Mozambique worked in the capital city. The majority of remaining doctors worked in three other main urban centers in which 10% of the population resided (Walt & Cliff, 1986).

Therefore, it is not surprising that FRELIMO at independence acquired a largely ultra poor, weak and malnourished nation (Sheppard, 1981). Life expectancy stood at 41 years (UNDP, 2004). Only 86 doctors stayed while the remaining 464 doctors left Mozambique despite President Machel's assurance that they, along with other Portuguese settlers could remain in the newly independent country. President Machel's first few speeches focused on the importance of health as the impetus in their struggle to achieve development (Walt & Cliff, 1986).

FRELIMO also recognized the critical contributions of the rural population in their struggle for independence, as well as their loyalty towards FRELIMO. The party noted that the rural population comprising of approximately 80 – 85% of the total population had been poorly serviced with respect to health, education and economic development during 400 years of colonial rule. The Government developed a policy that would simultaneously address health, education and economic needs of the rural population. All health services were nationalized, thus eliminating the 2-tier system and resulting in free health care for all citizens (Walt & Cliff, 1986). In principle, the policy was

sound; however, the challenge before the Government was providing qualified staff for urban and rural health centers.

For nearly seven years, the ruling party rapidly opened health posts and centers throughout the country (Hanlon, 1984). Staff received refresher courses (Walt & Cliff, 1986) and more than 500 medical workers were recruited from 20 different countries for two year contracts with a modest salary (Sheppard, 1981). In the early 1980s, Mozambique had a National Health Service which incorporated a successful primary health care program. The morale of health workers was high due to proper direction and training given by the Government (Hanlon, 1984). Clients accessing the health care system received education about their treatment. They were expected to return to their villages and act as change agents educating members of their community. Family members were also expected to assist with care of their loved ones admitted to the hospital (Sheppard, 1981).

As noted earlier, from 1977 until 1992, RENAMO engaged the government forces in a long and violent civil war (Robinson, 2007). The war was supported by South Africa and indirectly by the US (Hanlon, 2010). In one year alone, RENAMO successfully destabilized Mozambique by destroying over 840 schools, 212 health centers and posts, 200 villages and 900 small businesses (Walt & Cliff, 1986). Doctors and teachers were specifically attacked and killed (Finnegan, 1992).

More than 1 million people died and 5 million people were forced to escape to neighbouring countries (Hanlon, 2010). In total, damage was estimated at \$20 million (Hanlon, 2010), a staggering amount for one of the poorest countries in the world. These outcomes proved to be insurmountable given that Mozambique was a newly independent country (Reilley, 1992). Mozambique's debt burden accumulated sharply during the long period of civil war (Rebucci, n.d.). The combined human and financial losses left Mozambique with little choice but to turn to the international community for increasing financial assistance. With Mozambique's increasing financial dependence, it led to the neo-colonization of Mozambique this time by South Africa and the West. The

multiple forms of domination also led to increasing influence by foreigners on Mozambique's policies, including health, education and use of foreign funds (Paraskeva, 2006; Sousa Santos, 2002).

SECTION 2: IMPACT OF NEO-LIBERALISM ON EDUCATION AND HEALTH SECTORS

The international community including United States and South Africa had a hand in diverting the changes in Mozambique's ideologies based on African Socialism⁵ which germinated during the liberation struggle and began to take root during independence. The World Bank began to actively pressure Mozambique towards adopting capitalism while Mozambique was in the midst of a civil war, an idea pushed since the time of independence by the West. The donor community during this period began 'educating' Mozambican officials and the newly emerging business class about capitalism. In particular, donors spoke about capitalism's focus on patronage over and above capitalism's assumed focus on profit. The donors imposed on educated Mozambican officials and the newly emerging business class the necessity of privatization, as well as the availability of loans that did not need to be repaid based on who Mozambican officials and newly emerging business class knew and of course according to donor's whims (Hanlon, 2004). This newly enforced 'me' attitude is a critical shift in thinking from African socialism to capitalism. This new way of thinking transitioned

⁵ President Julius Nyerere described African socialism as an attitude that signaled to man that accumulation of wealth must not be for the purpose of domination of another man, but instead used to assist another human being. In a socialist society, everyone contributed his time, energy and thought towards the greater good of the community. Everyone was a worker, and no one was the employer and certainly no one was a loiter. Within a socialist system, classism did not exist. Therefore, increasing the status of oneself was not the objective (Nyerere, 1968)

President Nyerere distinguished African socialism from European socialism by focusing on the class and conflict that arose from the Agrarian Revolution and the Industrial Revolution which gave rise to European Socialism. "These two revolutions planted the seeds of conflict within society, and not only was European socialism born of that conflict, but its apostles sanctified the conflict itself into a philosophy. Civil war was no longer looked upon as something evil, or something unfortunate, but as something good and necessary...The European socialist cannot think of his socialism without its father--capitalism!" (Nyerere, 1968 p. 246) Capitalism's role according to Julius Nyerere was accumulation of wealth for the purpose of dominating another human being.

Mozambican officials from being responsible to the people and the country to only looking after their own personal interests and financial gains.

In 1983 and 1986, in the midst of a violent and long civil war, Mozambique's repeated requests for food aid were not forthcoming from the international community (Hanlon, 1996). An explicit part of South African's destabilization strategy was to create food shortages in Mozambique (Hanlon, 2010; Hanlon, 1991). The US even convinced the World Food Programme not to respond to Mozambique's request for food (Hanlon, 2010). With their requests for food not forthcoming, it became apparent to the Mozambique Government that food aid would only be awarded if it moved to a market-based economy (Hanlon, 1996). In October 1987, still in the midst of a civil war, Mozambique was at an important cross-road. Plunged into a rapidly declining economy resulting in suffocating poverty due to the long war of independence and the on-going civil war, coupled with drought and floods, Mozambique found itself in a weakened position. The Government had no choice but seek financial support from international banks, donors and the international community (Slaughter, 2000). And by moving to a market-based economy, it resulted in a restricted role for the elected administration in all sectors including health and education (Hanlon, 2010; Hanlon, 1996).

Hanlon (2010) writes that even though Mozambique adopted a market based system, Washington-based institutions did not trust Mozambique's senior leadership claim of replacing Marxist ideology with capitalism. Therefore, harsh structural adjustment policies (SAPs) were imposed which did not allow for reconstruction and expansion of health and education – two critical sectors required for development. Also, the development of domestic capital was not encouraged. "Instead" as Hanlon writes, "the 'donor' community promoted foreign investment and international control of policy and of the economy. And in a classic form of colonialism, compliance was bought – in exchange for subservience" through Mozambique's dependence on donors for financial aid and policy development (Hanlon, 2010 p. 1).

The first Economic Reform Programme was introduced in 1987 (Slaughter, 2000) in year 10 of a 15 year civil war. Aid increased substantially from \$359 million in 1985 to \$875 million in 1988 (Hanlon, 1996); an increase of 144% within a short three year period. The in-flow of loans continued to be conditional on the Government relinquishing its control on its own economy (Slaughter, 2000). The Government was also obligated to balance the books. The only way to achieve this goal was to consciously destabilize and further lower the standards of the majority living with poverty. This was done through abolishment of food subsidies for those living with poverty (Hattingh, 2008). The Government's responsibility towards health, education and other services also ceased and service charges were immediately introduced (Slaughter, 2000; Hanlon, 1996).

The economic sector which is a crucial sector for development, particularly for women (ANSA, 2007) was also impacted by SAPs. There were three divisions within the economic sector. Approximately 20% of the population, predominately male, worked within the formal sector. This sector received majority of the aid from donors. The remaining 80% of the population, predominately female worked within the informal urban and the rural (communal) sector. These two sectors have traditionally been under-resourced, leaving women working within these sectors vulnerable with little opportunity for growth (ANSA, 2007).

As a result of SAPs, all state owned enterprises had to be privatized (Slaughter, 2000; Hanlon, 1996). As the workforce within the public sector was being trimmed, it was women that were laid off first. When industries that were no longer profitable closed down, or state farms were closed, it was women that were impacted severely and forced back to subsistence production (Isaacman et al, 1983).

Neo-liberal economic policies continued in the form of SAPs imposed in the 1980s by United States, European Union, World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). In the 1990s, SAPs were renamed Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) (Baker, 2008)! SAPs devastated health and education

sectors. Under SAPs, World Bank and IMF forced Mozambique to cut social programs, including health and education in order to make debt repayments, despite health and education being recognized as essential sectors for development (WHO, 2008; UNESCO, 2007). What this demonstrated was the power imbalance that was at the heart of neo-liberalism given that Mozambique was forced to accept the pre-conditions outlined in the SAPs and later in the PRSPs despite its obvious implications on the deterioration of important sectors including health and education, as well as quality of life of the most vulnerable in society (Baker, 2008), girls living with poverty and the development of the country as a whole. The neo-liberal policies also enforced a *reduction* in teachers' salaries, thus directly impacting the quality of education, as well as commitment teachers would provide towards their profession and students (Hill & Roskam, 2008).

SAPs also introduced mandatory school fees at all levels of education; immediately barring those living with poverty from accessing education (Hill & Roskam, 2008). As noted earlier at independence in 1975, almost the entire population that is 93% of Mozambicans had *not* received any formal education (Arndt et al, 2002). Five years after independence, SAPs were *increasing* the number of Mozambicans who would remain without any formal education. From 1981 to 1988, gross school enrolment rates *dropped* significantly from 95% to 59%. This led to an indefinite postponement of universal and compulsory education, both fundamental objectives of the education reform introduced in 1983 (Hill & Roskam, 2008).

Students continued to struggle learning the Portuguese language which remained as a medium of instruction by FRELIMO. The challenge of using Portuguese as the medium of instruction was particularly pronounced since Portugal unlike Britain had not done very much to bequeath their language to those they colonized. As a result, teachers who were hired in rapid numbers during independence had barely mastered the language they were expected to teach (Rothwell, 2003).

In 1986, 40% of *primary age* students failed to complete their grade in school. There were many factors for this dismal outcome, including untrained teachers with minimal exposure to the new primary curriculum (MINED, 1989), teachers who had not mastered the language of instruction (Rothwell, 2003) along with majority of students who had not mastered the Portuguese language, and the on-going war (Hill & Roskam, 2008). Privatization of public services and the capitalization and commoditization of education resulted in the market taking the lead in the selection, resulting in exclusion and inequality in schools. Critics have long argued that education should not be considered a commodity that can be bought and sold as promoted by the capitalist market (Hill & Roskam, 2008).

In 1987, the FRELIMO party held a conference entitled 'Rethinking Strategies for Mozambique and Southern Africa'. Delegates from the North and South were in attendance. At the conference, President Chissano, the second President of Mozambique and FRELIMO noted that SAPs instituted by the World Bank had deepened the hardships of Mozambican people (Saul, 1991). He indicated that “the readjustment program must start showing results. Or we must take other directions”. However, he was unable to suggest what other directions were available. Chissano later said, “we don't see which other way. We are totally dependent on inputs from outside. If they are not forthcoming in the correct manner it is of no use” (Saul, 1991 p. 160).

David Plank (1993) succinctly noted the challenges faced by Mozambicans due to foreign aid and its resulting outcome – increasing dependence on the West and subservience of Mozambique.

Although the abject status of several African states is being characterized as a new form of colonialism, there are three fundamental differences between Mozambique's past and present situation. First the relationship that is now emerging between the country and its donors is less overtly intrusive than direct administration by a colonial power, but *its effects are more pervasive* (emphasis mine). ...The policy changes prescribed by the principal donors aimed to accelerate the

integration of Mozambique into the global market and to transform the domestic economy to this end. Beyond this, however, *the West's policy prescriptions implied dramatic social and political consequences, including the exacerbation of social inequalities, the aggrandizement of local and expatriate elites and the subversion of prevailing political arrangements (emphasis mine)*. Attempts by the World Bank and other agencies to remake the Mozambican state *in their own image* (emphasis mine), accompanied by their insistence on the reduction and redirection of public expenditure suggest the extent of changes that are in prospect.

Second, the relationship now being constructed between Mozambique and its donors is potentially far more durable than traditional colonialism. The country's subordinate status is currently rooted not in discredited ideologies of racial superiority, imperial destiny or Christian mission, but in the precepts of modern economy orthodoxy. Dominion is exercised not by the agents of a colonial power, *but by the technically sophisticated and politically disinterested economists (emphasis mine)* of the IMF, the World Bank and of bilateral aid agencies, whose prescriptions are determined not by parochial national interests but by economic analysis. Resisting the power of the major donors is consequently difficult, because Mozambique's subordination is portrayed as a natural consequence of global economic trends rather than an imposition by a specific colonial power.

Finally, the new relationship has no place for the reciprocal obligations that in principle characterize colonialism *The absence of formal political ties between Mozambique and its donors leave the Government powerless to refuse the policy prescriptions of the principal aid agencies, because the*

flow of funds must be maintained at virtually any cost

(emphasis mine). . . . The donors enjoy considerably more autonomy than they would if bound by the statutory obligations to traditional colonialism, while Mozambique is in some respects more dependent on them than it was on Portugal before 1975 (Plank, 1993 pp. 428-429).

Although Portugal no longer physically colonizes

Mozambique, Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana spoke about neo-colonialism as early as 1965. He wrote:

Faced with the militant peoples of the ex-colonial territories, imperialism simply switches tactics. Without qualm, it dispenses with its flags, and even with certain of its more hated expatriate officials. This means, so it claims, that it is 'giving' independence to its former subjects to be followed by 'aid' for their development. Under cover of such phrases, however, it devises innumerable ways to accomplish objectives formerly achieved by naked colonialism (Nkrumah, 1965).

President Nkrumah's words ring true in Mozambique. In 1996, only four partners provided 24 million dollars to Mozambique. By 2004, the membership grew to 15 members. Today there are 19⁶ members (MOU, 2009). In 2010 a total of 804.5 million dollars was pledged to Mozambique, an increase of 3,250% from 1996 (All Africa, 2009). The Mozambican government is currently dependent upon the G-19 for 50% *budget support* (EPAD, Norwegian, 2009). The support is limited to budget and does not adequately address poverty, capacity building or gender thus continuing to leave Mozambique in a weakened dependant state (Porter, 2005). Health and education sectors in particular are heavily reliant upon donor aid. Using the latest data available in 2007, 73% of the

6 African Development Bank, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom And The World Bank. Associate Members: United States Of America, United Nations. Ex-Officio Member: IMF

total health care budget was funded from external sources (WHO, 2008), leaving Mozambique in a weakened state to advocate for priorities they felt were pertinent to Mozambicans. Issues regarding girls and health care were/are certainly not on the agenda. The education sector receives 60% of its budget from external sources (Handley, 2009). “In addition to its strong dependence on the funds made available by the international donor and financial community (the financial gap constraint) Mozambique has a strong dependence on foreign expertise in all areas of the economy (a capacity gap constraint), which within government is usually provided in the form of technical assistance programs” (Warren-Rodríguez, 2007 p. 3).

Although the United States under US Law cannot provide direct budget support, both US and UN have been admitted into the G-19 group as ‘associate partners’. The US pledged 373 million dollars for sector projects. The 19 donors and funding agencies provided 471.8 million dollars in budgetary support. The group also pledged a further 332.7 million dollars in sector funding amounting to a total aid budget of 804.5 million dollars (All Africa, 2009). Donors shelled out critical financial aid to their former colonies in order to influence policies, but at an arm’s length (Alesina & Dollar, 2000).

By embracing the capitalist model, Mozambique acquired significant funds. International NGOs en masse emerged in all urban centers. Approximately 100 NGOs staked their claim in Mozambique by the late 1990s (Pfeiffer, 2003) at the same time the PRSPs were being introduced. The National Health Services received 50% of their on-going expenditures and 90% of their capital expenses from international donors. Monies from the international community came in the form of project aid. By 1996, there were 405 individual donor projects. With increasing international NGOs and donor projects, this resulted in a fully entrenched donor and international community relationship with the Government of Mozambique, much to the detriment of Mozambicans for whom monies and services continued to remain inaccessible (Pfeiffer, 2003).

The education sector for example, became a balancing act between the needs of donors and grassroots’ stakeholders, namely students and teachers. It

has been “characterized as ‘donor-driven’ and often inaccessible to the most important stakeholders, students. For example, evaluation of the educational sector is from an ‘accountability perspective’, that is, measurement of results or value for funds expended, the determination of costs and the assessment of efficiency” (Mario et al, 2002 p. 3). It is not from a student or quality of education perspective given that these evaluations do not include quality and relevance of curriculum, student retention, in particular retention of girls.

The influence of the international community on Mozambique’s health care is evident. Given that 73% of the total health care budget was being funded from external sources (WHO, 2008), salaries for doctors were capped at ~US\$460 per month and nurses earn ~US\$230. Doctors and nurses often needed to secure a second job to safeguard from a life of poverty. With these dismal salaries, the brightest students were obviously being discouraged from considering the medical field as an optimal career choice (IRIN, 2007a).

HIV&AIDS is another factor which has further taxed Mozambique’s weakened health care system. Life expectancy as a result of HIV&AIDS fell to 34 years of age, one of the lowest in the world in 2003 (Population Reference Bureau, 2003). According to John Hopkins University, the life expectancy is currently between 41 – 44 years of age. Three main reasons that have been cited for the rapid spread of HIV&AIDS in Mozambique: migrant labour force which emerged during the colonial period and is present today due to a poorly developed economy and educational system; deteriorated health infrastructure as a result of the violent civil war from 1982 to 1992; growing dependency on donors for aid resulting in increasing influence of donors on Mozambique’s priorities and policies (Collins, 2006). If health institutions do not have the capacity to provide quality basic health care, they are certainly not in a position to address complexities related HIV&AIDS.

Intellectual Colonialism

Fanon (2004) and Said (1979) were correct in their assessment of the continuing influence of post-colonization policies spear-headed by national elite which effectively allowed for the colonial agenda to continue permeating the lives

of Mozambicans. Through intellectual colonialism, former colonizers continue to influence and direct their ‘former’ colonies. Europe intellectually colonizes their former colonies through language, policies, teachings, frames of reference, methodological and theoretical perspectives that have been transferred to former colonial nations and touted as superior forms of knowledge without considering or understanding the wisdom of local knowledge (Fals-Borda & Mora-Osejo, 2003).

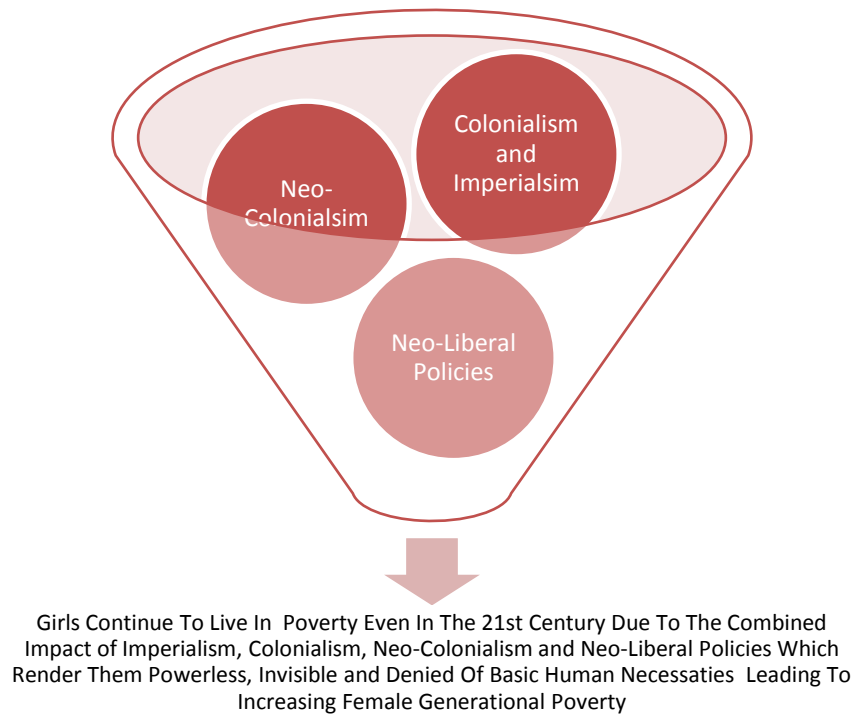
Intellectual colonialism accompanied by neo-liberal policies and teachings; frames of reference; methodological and theoretical perspectives from North America and Europe that have been transferred directly to nations in the South have noticeably neglected to factor in cultural nuances. This has resulted in tensions between local knowledge highly regarded and valued by elders in the community and external knowledge that has been imposed on the community through education and media. The outcome has been the paralysis of authentic capacity building and progress within Mozambique due to conflicting knowledges particularly related to critical ideas regarding what constitutes progress and development (Fals-Borda & Mora-Osejo, 2003).

It is also important to underscore that donors and not the Government are directing increasing aid efforts generally in Africa and specifically in Mozambique. The Government given its dependency on donors is “often afraid of donors”, particularly in cases like Mozambique when budget support is used towards civil servant salaries, including teachers and doctors (Porter, 2005 p. 4). If funds were to cease, the outcome would easily paralyze the functioning of the government (Porter, 2005). This powerful statement summarizes the extreme dependence that Mozambique has on donors and the international community with respect to finances and as a result continues to be dependent upon them for policy direction in the health and education sectors much to the detriment of girls living with poverty. Chapter 3 will continue the discussion related to the role of culture and policies in preventing girls from leaving a life of poverty.

As a way to summarize the concepts discussed in this chapter, I offer Figure 1 as a pictorial representation of the combined impact of policies

developed at various stages of Mozambique's history and its impact on girls living with poverty.

Figure 1: Impact of Differing Ideologies



One example to test the interconnectedness of these policies is the progress Mozambique has made with respect to low developing country (LDC). Mozambique at independence was regarded as being one of the poorest countries in the world. Not much progress could have been made within health and education sectors which are considered to be critical and necessary for development (WHO, 2008; UNESCO, 2007) given that 36 years later, despite different ideologies, Mozambique continues to rank as one of the poorest countries in the world (UNDP, 2010). A common linkage between the differing ideologies is a strong male-dominated cultural perspective.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, health and educational policies were analyzed as developed by colonists and neo-liberalists in order to demonstrate the interconnectedness between policies with differing ideologies. In particular, the role of a male dominated culture and its direct influence on decision makers, whether under colonist, independent or neo-liberalist law is demonstrated through health and education policies which continue to severely restrict girls from accessing and completing their education, as well as accessing quality health education, care and resources.

CHAPTER 3

GETTING THE CONTEXT PART 2

THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND POLICIES IN GIRLHOOD POVERTY

*“Girls are falling through the cracks. Families often lack the knowledge, means, or motivation to afford daughters equal treatment with sons. Governments and international agencies, for the most part, focus on children under five”
(Temin & Levine, 2009 p. 8).*

INTRODUCTION

As Tvedten, Paulo and Montserrat (2008) and others highlight “the existing patriarchal⁷ culture and masculinist social order is exceptionally strong in Mozambique” (Tvedten et al, 2008 p. 4). Due to a strong patriarchal culture and masculinist social order firmly entrenched in institutions, laws and policies along with pre-determined lower status of girls; girls, particularly girls living with poverty will most likely not be afforded the space to be heard within the family unit, society or by decision makers. Without being heard or understood, decision makers, institutions and community leaders will be unaware of the girls’ challenges in accessing a higher quality of life. With this in mind, this chapter will outline the role of culture in shaping the lives of girls living with poverty in Mozambique. As noted earlier, for this study, I have used the following definition which was adopted at the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico 1982. “Culture... is... the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group. It includes not

⁷ Political philosophy, philosophy of social science, ethics [from Greek pater , father + arche , rule] Originally, a social system centered around an extended family with a male as its leader (patriarch). For many feminists , patriarchy is the universally perpetuated male power over women and male aggression toward women. They claim that a patriarchal attitude or prejudice runs through all economic and social institutions. Societies are often patriarchal in the sense that the male half of the population uses various deeply embedded means to control the female half. A main concern of radical feminism is to uncover the roots of patriarchy and to reveal its various representative forms (Blackwell Reference Online).

only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 1982). It will begin with a discussion on girlhood and its importance towards health and intellectual development during the very early years of adolescence. This will be followed by a discussion highlighting five specific barriers or root causes preventing girls from participating in policy discussions resulting in their inability to demand quality health care and complete at minimum their secondary education. The chapter will end with a discussion on capacity building in relation to girls living with poverty.

At the very outset, I must state that there is a relative paucity of sex and age disaggregated data that pertains to girls during their very early years of adolescence in Mozambique. There is also a scarcity of writing about girlhood in Mozambique outside of the grey literature of UN reports which in themselves are important but perhaps not as robust in relation to making an academic analysis. Therefore, where I was unable to find gender and age disaggregated data specifically for girls between 5 and 15 years of age, I used children’s statistics in general. This points to limited research and programs targeting this age group, particularly in Mozambique and in turn unavailability of data as noted in ‘Girls Speak, A New Voice in Global Development’ (Greene et al, 2009). Where I was unable to find data related to Mozambique specifically, I used data for Southern Africa or Africa. I chose countries that had similar characteristics with Mozambique including a patriarchal culture and feminization of poverty.

SECTION 1 GIRLHOOD – CRITICAL YEARS FOR DEVELOPMENT

As highlighted in Chapter 1, poverty translates into inaccessibility to basic life-giving necessities which are critical during the very early years of adolescence. Given that early years of adolescence are essential precursors to health, education, vitality and longevity, I strongly believe that the key to unraveling the chain of ‘feminization of poverty and HIV&AIDS’ that paralyzes women may lie first in understanding what specific elements are present during very early adolescent years for girls which locks them into a life of poverty generation after generation. We need to uncover what specifically occurs during

their early years of adolescence as they negotiate access to quality health and education since this will form a blueprint of the quality of life they will be able to access and the opportunities that will be available for them during adulthood (Greene, Cardinal & Goldstein-Siegal, 2009).

Since 70% of those classified as poor are women (UN WOMEN; Tomlinson, 2002), then literature related to girls and poverty should consider what discriminatory systems exist in girlhood that have a negative impact on girls. Carol Bellamy, former Executive Director of UNICEF notes that “poverty causes lifelong damage to children’s minds and bodies, turning them into adults who perpetuate the cycle of poverty by transmitting it to their children. This is why poverty reduction must begin with the protection and realization of the human rights of children. Investments in children are the best guarantee for achieving equitable and sustainable human development” (UNICEF, 2000 p. v). It has long been argued that investments in children should begin with health and education. These two sectors have been identified as being fundamental towards eradicating poverty particularly for girls (Kelly, 2009; WHO, 2008; UNESCO, 2007).

For example, successful completion of education for girls has been correlated with reduced child mortality, improved health and nutrition for girls themselves and their succeeding generations. With increased education, girls are able to access better employment and eventually a higher quality of life (UNICEF, Mozambique, 2006). Even though education is a critical impetus required to reduce childhood poverty and inequality (May, 1998; Jung & Thorbecke, 2003; UNICEF, Mozambique, 2006), girls face numerous social and cultural barriers towards accessing and completing their primary education (Green, 2008; Justiniano, Nielsen, Xerinda & Oksanen, 2005). Barriers include lower status of women, inadequate number of female teachers, widespread sexual abuse at school and early teenage pregnancy (Green, 2008; Justiniano et al, 2005).

In addition to these barriers, one important perception remaining in poverty-stricken countries including Mozambique is that women are not considered to be breadwinners but are only seen as potential mothers. This restricted perception leads to the lower status of girls and women since they will

not be recognized for the essential role they play within the family unit. And with money being equated to status, girls and women will automatically be afforded a lower status. Because of their lower status, they will have a lower priority for education (Green, 2008).

It is not surprising that the majority of girls living with poverty today continue to be unable to complete primary education in Mozambique. For example, in 2007, only 8.4% of women between the ages of 20 – 24 had completed their primary education in comparison to 18.3% of men in the same age bracket. And only 7.5% and 1.8% of women between the ages of 30 – 34 and 40 – 44 years of age respectively had completed their primary education, whereas, 19.7% and 13.0% of men between the ages of 30 – 34 and 40 – 44 years of age respectively had completed their education. Mozambique has the lowest rate for primary completion among girls in Africa (Lloyd & Hewitt, 2007).

Health has also been identified as being critical for child survival and development. Poor health and poverty are strongly correlated (Sachs, 2001). “The conditions of a child’s birth and the environment in which the child spends the first few years of its life are critical in determining the survival, healthy growth and development of the child. In this context, access to health, nutrition, water and sanitation services are vital to children’s survival and development” (UNICEF, Mozambique, 2006 p. 72). It must be understood that despite the obvious value of these essential services, they are generally absent in the lives of girls living with poverty.

In Mozambique, one in every five children is either severely or moderately underweight (UNICEF, 2006). The early years of childhood are important in developing a foundation for quality health and education. It is important therefore to understand how neglect during these years meaningfully increases the chances of girls remaining in a life of poverty (UNICEF, 2008). The first eight years are critical in relation to complete and healthy cognitive, emotional and physical growth in children (Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Bradley, 1994; UNICEF).

Environment also plays an important role towards intellectual stimulation given that brain maturation and critical neural pathways and connections are

developed from birth into early childhood. Scientific evidence suggests that if the brain does not receive adequate stimulation during this critical window of time, it may be almost impossible for the brain to rewire itself later (Farah et al, 2006; Brown & Pollitt, 1996; Winick & Rosso, 1969). This is a critical statement as it underscores the vital role of formal education and stimulation during the early years of life (Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Bradley, 1994).

Another important fact that has an impact on the overall physical and brain health of a child is inadequate nutrition prior to birth and during the first few years of life. Early stress can impact memory and learning adversely and/or permanently (Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Brown & Pollitt, 1996; Kramer 1987; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; UNICEF). Poverty is a strong stressor in a growing child's life. Early childhood development is also intricately connected to maternal health. Good nutrition in the first few years of life enables the child to avoid and/or survive childhood diseases (Black et al, 2008; Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Brown & Pollitt, 1996; Kramer 1987; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; UNICEF). Notably, girls living a life of poverty are denied all of the above.

As noted earlier, authors Temin and Levine indicate that governments and international agencies for the most part focus on girls under the age of 5. A second focus on gender appears, but only when girls are 15 years of age (Temin et al, 2009). Girls between the ages of 6 and 14 remain invisible (Temin et al, 2009). The impact of poverty during these crucial years leaves an almost irreversible imprint on a child's ability to access a higher quality of life. At the age of 10, a girl's capacity for basic learning has been determined (Temin et al, 2009). By the time girls are 15, their body size, "reproductive potential and general health have been profoundly influenced by what has happened in their lives until then" (UNDP, 2004 p. 3). Providing the needed resources and services during the first 15 years of children's lives so that "individuals [girls] can fully develop their physical, mental, emotional, and learning capacities, is vital to helping individuals reach their full potential in life and escape poverty" (UNICEF, 2005 p. 6). In order "to break the cycle, children [girls] must be provided with the appropriate

food security, shelter, healthcare, education, public services (i.e. water and sanitation), and with a voice in the community” (UNDP, 2004).

Given this, girlhood should be considered as a critical juncture which provides or limits opportunities. The very early years of adolescence are part of a unique period which determines girls’ potential, through physical and neurological development, social norms and expectations, educational and work skills attainment (Jones et al, 2010). “Yet this remains for many girls and young women a period of deprivation, danger and vulnerability, resulting in lack of agency and critical development deficits, often with life-course consequences” (Jones et al, 2010 pp. 1-2).

Using the lens of gender to study childhood poverty would therefore go beyond the traditional economic indicators and access to health and education to consider the dissimilar roles and responsibilities of boys and girls and their impact in leading the greater majority of girls into a life of intergenerational hardship. Such a lens would also investigate agency, status and power relations in the family, community, societal and political realms (Turshen, 2008), as well as culture and differential access and formation of social capital. Understanding the unique factors that girls face in order to address poverty is critical since poor children (girls) become poor adults (women) (Minujin et al, 2006). Indeed, given that childhood is a unique period dedicated to the physical, mental, emotional, social growth and development (Harper & Marcus, 2000), it would be of great value to consider the negative impact of poverty on girls and how it specifically prevents them from ‘achieving (her) their full potential and ability to participate fully as equal members of society (UNICEF, 2005).

SECTION 2 THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND POLICIES IN GIRLHOOD POVERTY

In development related discussions, there has been a concerted effort to integrate culture within human development discourse. UNESCO took a lead on the subject from 1986 to 1997 (Perrett, cited in Gould & Marsh, 2004). In 1994, UNDP conducted an internal review of the role of culture in human development and concluded that: “ultimately this social and cultural context will influence how

people will respond to change and their interest and ability to participate in development. It will determine the extent to which women's empowerment, children's education, environmental rehabilitation, household food security, population management or other goals can be met. In other words, culture is a major factor in creating an enabling environment for change – or the reverse” (Perrett, cited in Gould et al, 2004 p. 24).

Despite acknowledging the critical role of culture in development, culture has not had a meaningful and real impact on human development thinking or policies. For example, “there are no cultural indicators within poverty, [gender] and human development indices which could illustrate how cultural factors are influencing development and poverty eradication” (Perrett, cited in Gould et al, 2004 p. 24). Without the inclusion of cultural indicators it is as if culture has no bearing on the choices available or denied to girls and women desiring to leave behind a life of poverty (Perrett, cited in Gould et al, 2004).

In this section, five main barriers, possible root causes will be discussed which prevent girls from leaving a life of poverty. Mozambique's strong patriarchal culture and masculinist social order, cultural practices, as well as policies developed within a culture that favours men plays an influential role in shaping these five barriers. They are as follows: 1) pre-determined lower status of girls; 2) lack of girls' voice in decision-making within the household and community; 3) lack of consultation by decision makers 4) unavailability of age and gender disaggregated data and 5) weak infrastructure designed to support girls.

Pre-Determined Lower Status of Girls

UNPF's report underscores the importance of an equal status for girls and women by arguing that “the war on poverty *cannot* be won unless greater efforts are made to give women equality” (United Nations Population Fund Report, 2005, emphasis mine). Inequality is the underlying factor related to private and public transmission of poverty between mothers and daughters. The public transmission of poverty is endorsed primarily through policies which disadvantage females. Policies which disadvantage females and reinforce their

inequality include the inability of females to transfer material, financial and environmental assets such as land, livestock, equipment and cash to younger generations of females. Public transmission of poverty is supported through policies which do not address unequal barriers to education and health care experienced by older and younger females (Harper, Marcus & Moore, 2003). Private transmission of poverty is endorsed primarily through culture. It includes cultural attitudes, “and other knowledge and traditions such as status, prejudice, norms of entitlement and value systems, survival strategies, kin group, political access” (Harper et al, 2003 p. 536).

Mozambique’s male-dominated culture (Isaacman et al, 1983) subscribes to the notion that women are of a lower status than men. The higher status of men in Mozambique is evident since only men have held political power even prior to colonization. The Council of Elders with a membership available to men only has held the most power within Mozambican society. They reinforced a culture that automatically relegated power to males over and above females. The Council of Elders claimed to not only hold power of the material world but only they have access to ancestral spirits and gods. Only they could for example, on demand ask for rain needed for agriculture (Isaacman et al, 1983). Notably, 80% of the Mozambican population relies on agriculture (CEDAW, 2007).

Even though Mozambique has a matrilineal culture in the north which is dominated by the Bantu population and is primarily a rural population, the powerful role of men is common throughout Mozambique. The predominant Tsongo tribe in the south follows a patrilineal⁸ system. The south gained prominence due to its economic trading relation with South Africa, as well as its political and economic hub in the capital city of Maputo. In either culture it is men that have the most important position. In a matrilineal society, it is the mother’s father or oldest brother that holds the power and not the mother or oldest sister. The subtle difference between the two systems is that women and children in the matrilineal system are the property of their own family because the husband has not paid a bride price to his wife’s family. In the patrilineal system, the wife

⁸ Relating to, based on, or tracing descent through the paternal line <a *patrilineal* society> (Merriam-Webster Onl-Line Dictionary)

and children belong to the husband and his family because the husband's family has paid a bride price or lobolo. In this system, the bride and children become properties of the husband. Polygamy became common as it represented the man's wealth and power and in turn his status. In this relationship, the man was in control politically and economically and was free to choose the number of relationships he wished to have. The women were given the responsibility of the house and time consuming chores related to agriculture like weeding (Tvedten et al, 2008).

In either situation, a patriarchal culture subscribes to specific cultural beliefs and expectations for girls and women. A patriarchal culture systematically shapes relations between boys and girls, along with expectations about behaviors considered to be appropriate for each gender. Along with the behaviors and expectations, a patriarchal culture influences gender identities and gender relations. These gender identities and relations in turn impact how males and females interact within the family unit, the community and society at large (Schalkwyk, 2000). As the lower status of females becomes accepted within Mozambique's male dominated culture, it ultimately gives rise to the inequality experienced by girls in their quality of life (OESU, 2001).

Gender scholars are increasingly coming to the conclusion that gender is not predominately a role or identity that is taught in childhood and reinforced through family relations. Instead, gender is institutionalized through social practices resulting in two significantly different categories, men and women, enabling social relations of inequality on the basis of that difference (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; Ferree, Lorber, & Hess 1999; Lorber 1994; Nakano, 1999; Ridgeway 1997; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin 1999; Risman 1998). The gendered inequality experienced by girls and women living with poverty is one such example which manifests itself in three main circumstances. The first is the lack of income which results in their inability to procure basic necessities including food, shelter and clothing. The second circumstance highlights the voicelessness and powerlessness experienced by girls in relation to institutions and the Government. The third is their increased vulnerability to adverse shocks

including social relationships and legal institutions (Tvedten, Paulo & Tuominen, 2010).

In many countries South East Asia and Africa, including Mozambique, the moment girls are born, they are automatically designated a lower status than their male counterparts. This pre-determined lower status is the greatest challenge faced by girls trying to exit from a life of poverty because it impacts their ability to have voice, agency and access resources that can enable them to increase their quality of life. Girls are restricted from participating in decision-making within their homes and society. And without voice and in turn agency, agency to challenge power relations, to access resources like education and health in order to improve their quality of life (Tvedten et al, 2008; Kabeer, 2003) it is all but impossible for girls living with poverty to access a higher quality of life. For example, girls in Ethiopia are more likely to experience food insecurity than boys. One reason is because boys are more likely to be employed outside of the home than girls. As such, boys can use their financial resources to purchase food (Hadley, Lindstrom, Tessema & Belachew, 2008). Boys also enjoy the support of their families. It is not uncommon for boys to receive a small amount of money to purchase food. A similar option is not available for girls (Mains cited in Hadley et al, 2008). Notably, Ethiopia also endorses a patriarchal dominated cultural mode (Hadley et al, 2008).

A patriarchal culture strongly shapes the status of girls and women that can be seen through pre-determined roles and responsibilities for girls as noted in the Ethiopian example provided. Notably, all the roles and responsibilities for girls do not have an attached financial value (OESU, 2001). These roles and responsibilities are all also labour and time intensive and increasingly shape day to day life as girls enter adolescence (Temin et al, 2009). For example, with girls' roles and responsibilities exponentially expanding during adolescence, which impacts the amount of time she can set aside to develop her potential through regular attendance in school, girls face what is termed as 'time poverty' (Jones et al, 2010). Current data is limited, but existing evidence notes that the allocation of time is highly gendered around the globe, particularly in households facing

poverty (Blackden & Wodon, 2006). A number of studies have concluded that girls' have significantly more responsibilities in domestic and caring for family which results in lower levels of participation in education and leisure time (Delap, 2000; Hsin, 2005; Kabubo-Mariara & Mwabu, 2007). The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that, worldwide, "10 percent of girls aged 5 to 14 years old perform household chores for 28 hours a week or more, and that this is approximately double that of the proportion of boys expected to undertake the same amount of domestic work. Regional variations between the burdens of household chores are pronounced, however the difference between girls and boys work is greatest in Africa, at 44 percent, followed by Latin America at 29 percent and lastly Asia and the Pacific at 8 percent" (ILO, 2009 p. 38).

Parents in Mozambique and elsewhere still feel that there is more value in educating a son, since they presume that a son will care for them in the future, whereas a daughter will be married into another family (Greene et al, 2009; Roby, Lambert & Lambert, 2009). As a result, girls also experience 'son bias' (Jones et al, 2010). This is a perception that has been reinforced by culture. In Mozambique, although there has been a slight increase in girls attending primary school, secondary school still remains a distant dream (Roby et al, 2009; Tvedten et al, 2008). Even though "education and access to information is a key element in gender equality and the empowerment of women" (Tvedten et al, 2008 p. 21), education, even primary education continues to remain a barrier for Mozambican girls living with poverty (UNGEI; DFID, 2006 & World Bank, 2005b). Mozambique is currently among the 28 countries at risk of not achieving gender parity in primary education before the year 2015 or even 2025 (UNESCO, 2007).

From a global perspective, gender equality and women's empowerment are seen to be pivotal factors in the alleviation of poverty. Notably it was during the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action that focus of empowerment specifically included the perspectives of girls indicating that "they often experienced even lower status than women or boys" (Worthen, cited in Worthen, Veale, McKay & Wessells, 2010, p. 2). The challenge lies in who and how empowerment is

defined. Within the development sector, empowerment has been regarded as an outcome, process or a combination of both (Worthen et al, 2010).

Gender equality and empowerment is included in the MDGs, however the indicators used to monitor progress for gender equality and women's empowerment are fairly limiting: 1) close the gender gap in all levels of education; 2) increasing women's share of wage employment in the non-agriculture sector; and 3) increasing proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments. In order to approach empowerment from a more holistic perspective, it would have been important to include land ownership, authentic decision making ability in national parliaments, as well as increasing political representation at local levels which would probably result in higher impact related to women's empowerment and status (Langford, 2010).

Without proper implementation and key success indicators, progress towards women's empowerment can be limiting. If we consider politics, even in countries like Mozambique and South Africa which have achieved 38% and 33% seats for women at the national level respectively (Kiamba, 2008), "women have been marginalized because men monopolize the decision making structures and are in the majority. One underlying problem for women has been the difficulty in dealing with the inherent patriarchal structures that pervade the lives of people, the processes of state and the party" (Nzomo, 1997 p. 240). "In many societies, women are still assigned a secondary place by the prevailing customs and culture. Examples abound of efforts that have been made to include and involve women but for the most part, these are superficial changes (such as minimum quotas of 30% women are introduced by certain parties, or the constitution is changed to allow for representation by women, as in Tanzania). However, on careful examination it becomes evident that implementation is lacking" (Kiamba, 2008 p. 15). Without proper implementation, it will be all but impossible for girls to achieve equality and in turn have the opportunity to exit from a life of poverty. Hence, gender inequality remains as a significant barrier for Mozambican girls desiring to leave behind a life of poverty.

Absence of Girls' Voice in the Home and Community

The absence of girls' voices within the home and the community manifests itself in several ways. It begins with gender discrimination with respect to access and control over resources and assets. Research has demonstrated that without girls' ability to access resources and assets, it increases their vulnerability and ability to leave a life of poverty. Without voice and agency, girls are unable to accumulate assets and pass them onto their daughters. And as women fail to accumulate assets, they pass on their poverty status and their invisibility to their daughters (Bird, 2007).

Girls and women's rights are "still largely abrogated by customary and/or religious laws and practices that exist concurrently with statutory law and are simultaneously applied" (OESU, 2001 pp iii). Therefore, the poverty experienced by girls appears in various development dimensions including education, health, domestic and formal markets, access and control over resources, as well as participation in the political arena (OESU, 2001). UNGEI, a key girls' initiative confirms that despite progress made in addressing issues related to gender, numerous obstacles remain towards achieving gender parity and equality including gender socialization (UNGEI, 2010).

Lack of voice can also be manifested through lack of identity. Girls living in poverty are often excluded from acquiring an independent identity through birth registration (Jones et al, 2010). In many countries, boys are registered in greater numbers than girls. For example, in Peru of the children not registered, 56% were girls. In China, 70-80 percent of unregistered people were females (Plan, 2009). In sub-Saharan Africa, only 54% of births are registered in urban centers and 32% in rural centers (Plan, 2007).

In Mozambique, a Plan of Action on Birth Registration was developed in 2004. Before the Plan of Action, only *six percent* of babies under five were registered. After the Plan of Action, 39 percent of babies in urban centers and 28 percent in rural areas have been registered (UNICEF a). Even though the Plan of Action was developed as recently as 2004, the data presented has not been age and gender disaggregated; therefore it is not possible to confirm what percentage

of babies registered were girls and in particular girls living with poverty. Also of importance is the fact that the Plan of Action did not extend to girls between 5 and 15 years of age, thus leaving these girls without voice and visibility. The main reason cited by parents for lack of registration is access and cost (UNICEF a). It is a major oversight that the data related to identity cards has not been gender disaggregated given the significant vulnerabilities attached to unregistered girls including child marriages, child trafficking, girls being commercially sexually exploited, in addition to be denied access to grade 7. As a young girl becomes a young woman, without a birth certificate, she is ineligible to open a bank account, access credit, vote, stand for office and work within the formal sector (Plan, 2007).

In Mozambique, girls without an identity card remain invisible and without voice. In addition to the barriers outlined above, Mozambican girls without a birth certificate cannot access social services. They also cannot continue with her education *past grade five*. Earlier, the critical role of education in alleviating poverty for girls was underscored (Kelly, 2009; UNESCO, 2007). Unregistered girls are also more vulnerable to abuse, sexual exploitation, early marriage, hazardous child labour, military conscription, imprisonment in adult facilities and prosecution as an adult. More importantly given Mozambique's high rate of HIV&AIDS, girls need a birth certificate to inherit the estate of a deceased parent (UNICEF a).

Lack of voice also emerges as girls are increasingly physically and sexually violated (Roby et al, 2009) without any legal repercussions against their male perpetrator (Tvedten et al, 2008). Three times as many girls are kept home from school because caregivers' wish to keep them from harm's way (Roby et al, 2009). Physical and sexual violence against girls results in long-term and often irreversible physical and psychological harm (Jones et al, 2010). It results in unwanted pregnancies and risky abortions. When girls continue with their pregnancy, they are prevented from completing their education. If they wish to continue their education, the only option available to them is night school. However night school is not a solution given the distance of the school, as well as

the reality that roads are not well light, thus putting girls in danger. Without developing their intellectual capacity, “it deprives girls of their human capabilities as well as their agency – suppressing their voices, constraining their choices and denying them control over their physical integrity and future. It also increases girls’ risk of sliding into, and remaining trapped in, chronic poverty” (Jones et al, 2010 p. 69).

Given the male-dominated culture, it should not be surprising that Mozambican girls face a high rate of sexual abuse and harassment (WLSA 2008). Violence has been identified as a serious problem for Mozambican girls and women (Tvedten et al, 2008). Just the threat of violence succeeds in ensuring that women remain silent. Their silence leads to their increased vulnerability. In a recent study, 22 percent of Mozambican girls did not consider forced sexual intercourse as abuse. Thirty-five percent did not consider sexual harassment as abuse (Tvedten et al, 2008). The actual figure of girls experiencing sexual abuse or harassment in schools may be much higher given the definitions of abuse and harassment used by Mozambican girls.

Schools are presumed to be safe spaces. Teachers play an important role in the life of students. A teacher’s early support, enthusiasm and belief particularly in the female child and her ability to master and excel in her education, plays a pivotal role in how the girl perceives herself (Greene et al, 2009). But, given that it is teachers that are perpetuating sexual violence on girls, teachers continue to reinforce the lower status of girls and highlight their sense of powerlessness even within what is presumed to be a safe place – school. This is particularly concerning for rural parents where teachers’ actions are not met with strict discipline (Roby et al, 2009). School related violence undermines girls’ ability or willingness to attend school while simultaneously increasing their chances of HIV&AIDS (Salter & Schechtman, 2007).

As recent as 2005, the Mozambican Education Sector Plan identified safety for female students as a major issue. It also noted that female students were particularly vulnerable in a predominately male environment. It further highlighted practices of exchanging sex for grades. In a 2007 review of 10

educational sector plans in Africa related to school based violence, it is evident that Mozambique has not made much progress towards combating school based violence for girls given that it was awarded a C grade. From a maximum number of 48 points, Mozambique received 25. The points were awarded based on the country's awareness of violence; infrastructure reform, stakeholder involvement; curriculum reform and school personnel (gender, training violence councillors) (Salter et al, 2007). Jonathan Mann, Director of the World Health Organization's Special Programme on AIDS highlights the essence of the issue when he said "the central [AIDS] issue isn't technological or biological: it is the inferior status or role of women. ... When women's human rights and dignity are not respected, society creates and favours their vulnerability to AIDS (Global AIDS Alliance, 2006 p. 1)

The lack of 'voice' and lower value placed on girls is exacerbated through child marriages. Child marriages are a result of poverty and cultural tradition in Mozambique. Rural parents often refer to the proverb "educating a girl is like watering a flower in another man's garden" (Roby et al, 2009 p. 348). Notably, it is only young girls that experience child marriages and not young boys. The underlying factor enabling child marriages is the girls' lower status, as well as their lack of power and engagement in decision-making (Tvedten et al, 2008). In 'Girls Speak, A New Voice In Global Development', the girls engaged in the study used the example of child marriages to demonstrate the lack of power they had over their own lives as a direct result of their gender. They focused overwhelmingly on the negative impact of child marriage which resulted in: their inability to complete their education; early pregnancy; the end of childhood and also exploitation. The girls in the study emphasized that they wanted to be involved in deciding the age they would marry and give birth (Greene et al, 2009). Although girls from Mozambique were not engaged in this particular study, their lack of voice and lower status along with the high rate of child marriages leading to increasing poverty and decreasing agency, it can be inferred that if a similar study were to be conducted in Mozambique, Mozambican girls would also come to the same conclusion noted above.

Given Mozambique's strong patriarchal society, it is not surprising that girls in Mozambique face one of the highest rates of girl-child marriage in the world (MISAU 2003, UNICEF 2006). Eighteen percent of Mozambican girls are married before the age of 15 and 56 percent before the age of 18 (Tvedten et al, 2008). Girl-child marriages are endorsed by culture, reinforced by the girls' lower status along with a higher financial need by the girls' family. With girls marrying much older men and the higher probability that he may already be infected with HIV coupled with her biological make-up and vulnerability to sexual and physical violence, this leaves girls increasingly vulnerable to HIV (Temin et al, 2009).

In the previous chapter, noted barriers that were present for girls within the health and education sectors were due to the strong influence of a patriarchal society. As noted earlier, men in Mozambique even today predominately control positions of power locally and nationally. Men are also overwhelmingly able to acquire better employment opportunities and in turn higher income. It is also men that primarily have access to better education and health opportunities. Finally, it is still men that control land (Tvedten et al, 2008), even though a law was passed in 1997 entitling women to land ownership. The traditional courts used by majority of women residing in rural areas only recognize the man as being the head of the household and thus having rights to land ownership (Kimani, 2008).

In 2005, the Gender Unit within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (now Ministry of Agriculture) participated in developing a strategy to address four main gender related concerns – “access to markets; financial services, technology and natural resources” (Gallina & Chidiamassamba, 2010 p. 9). The Gender Unit was charged with the responsibility for supporting and monitoring the implementation of the strategy. The implementation of the strategy was however never evaluated. In 2010, the Directorate of Land and Forestry prepared a proposal advocating for the joint ownership of land by both spouses. The proposal was not approved (Gallina et al, 2010). With numerous attempts made by women to claim what has been rightfully theirs even in law, it may be that a male dominated culture which shapes Mozambican society remains

as the predominant obstacle for girls and women to have their voices heard and their rights respected. It is true that culture, even a male-dominated culture, is not an untouchable and permanent fixture, but it is always evolving and being challenged and constantly re-shaped by human interaction (Rao & Walton, 2004). However, change regarding a perspective that has been deeply entrenched for over four centuries will likely take time and in the meantime, girls' voices will remain unheard.

Lack of Consultation by Decision Makers

A third critical root cause which prevents girls from leaving a life of poverty is lack of consultation by decision makers. Active and consistent “participation lies at the core of democracy and justice” (Torri & Fine, 2006 p. 269). Participation according to Torri and Fine refers to partaking in all aspects of decision making which governs an individual's quality of life, the quality of life of within their community, as well as the type of social policies and practices which will govern their quality of life (Torri et al, 2006). Participation in decision making also provides space for girls to contribute towards new knowledge. Without their voice, they are denied the opportunity to contribute towards the creation of new knowledge.

Scholars including Gloria Ladson-Billings (2000) and Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998, 2000) have asked whose knowledge counts and whose knowledge is discounted? Developing relevant and effective policies can only be possible if beneficiaries are being consulted in identifying their strengths, challenges and ideas for solutions which essentially results in the creation of new knowledge. Amartya Sen, a Nobel Prize winner for Economics, highlights the importance of engaging individuals who live in the multi-faceted world of poverty daily. Speaking at the Network of Policymakers for Poverty Reduction, an Inter-American Development Bank initiative Sen underscored that “human beings are thoroughly diverse.” “You cannot draw a poverty line and then apply it across the board to everyone the same way, without taking into account personal characteristics and circumstances” (Sen, 2003). What Sen highlighted is that poverty is not a homogenous experience and therefore requires the engagement of

girls and women in order to understand how poverty specifically and intimately impacts their lives. UNDP argues that in order “to break the cycle, children [girls] must be provided with ... a voice in the community (UNDP, 2004). And in order to understand the role and impact of social institutions, policies and culture, girls who have intimate knowledge regarding the role of such institutions, policies and culture in their lives must be heard, particularly when girls’ experiences with poverty are multi-dimensional and intersect with other forms of social exclusion including ethnicity, disability, sexuality or spatial disadvantage (Jones et al, 2010).

Given that poverty is experienced differently (Sen, 2003), definitions play a significant role towards developing relevant vision, policies, and strategies along with appropriate allocation of resources towards the eradication of poverty for girls. Even with the acknowledgment of feminization of poverty, a definition does not exist which has been developed solely by girls highlighting her experiences with poverty. The debate therefore continues regarding the reasons for poverty and how to measure it (UNICEF, 2005), particularly from a girls’ perspective.

The Government of Mozambique’s definition of poverty as outlined in ‘Action Plan For The Reduction Of Absolute Poverty (PARPA), states that poverty is as a result of “the inability of individuals to ensure for themselves and their dependants a set of basic minimum conditions for their subsistence and well-being in accordance with the norms of society” (GdM, 2001 p. 10). In this definition which was developed in consultation with numerous international partners, it appears that poverty is only as a result of people being unable to provide for their families. The role of culture, institutions, government, donors, NGOs and corporations do not appear to have a role in enabling poverty in this particular definition even in the case of feminization of poverty. The current Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper PARPA II 2006-2009 (Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta), has redefined poverty as the “the impossibility, owing to inability and/or lack of opportunity for individuals, families, and communities to have access to the minimum basic conditions, according to the

society's basic standards" (GdM, 2006 p. 8). Basic standard of living would include health and education. In the current definition, lack of opportunity has been added. However, what remains absent is the inclusion of girls' voices and an understanding by decision makers as to the specific barriers which prevents girls from leaving poverty.

Unavailability of Age and Gender Disaggregated Data

A closer look at current international legal and human rights frameworks like UNCRC or CEDAW shows that girls and female adolescents do not appear as distinct and separate categories. Without a separate and distinct category for girls and female adolescents, data will not be gathered which will reflect their different stages of development and in turn the unique barriers that emerge during different stages of life in relation to poverty. When data is presented as 'children' or 'women', the assumption is that women or children are one homogenous group who experience poverty in a similar manner. Given that the life of a human being is constantly being shaped and re-shaped as a result of culture and environment, it is safe to presume that poverty related experiences will be distinctly different even between girls and female adolescents.

Legal instruments have overlooked the diverse experiences of girls and women by developing one rank, like the Gender Development Rank (GDI). The GDI has been designed to determine the progress that a country has made in relation to status of girls *and* women. This rank measures a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living for girls and women (WEF, 2005). This rank presumes several things. It presumes that progress made by girls and women will be homogenous. It also presumes that the barriers that exist in accessing health and education will be as a result of similar elements for both girls and women. It also neglects to include the role of culture in relation to the status of girls and women. The rank also does not include a measure for changes in attitudes and beliefs among men and women in relation to the status of girls and women.

The MDGs document is regarded as one of the most important documents guiding the eradication of poverty. However, even with the MDGS, the

international community and Governments have made limited reference to adolescent girls. From the 19 indicators related to health, in the MDGS, only four pertain to young people and only one focuses on girls. “There are three indicators for MDG 6 on HIV/AIDS which measures young people’s HIV/AIDS knowledge, infection rates among 15-24 year olds and risks facing orphans” (UN 2008a in Temin et al, 2009 p. 10). One indicator for MDG 5 which focuses on universal access to reproductive health is the birth rate among girls ages 15 to 19 (UN, 2008). Notably the role of culture is absent.

Other obstacles for girls living in poverty include denial of basic health care, health education, resources and appropriate nutrition (Greene et al, 2009). President Nancy Birdsall of Center for Global Development notes that “girls’ health, in particular, influences their chances for educational attainment and productivity in employment, and has well-documented impacts on the wellbeing of their children” (Temin et al, 2009 p. xiii). Temin and Levin (2009) highlight that girls’ poor health is predominately as a result of social forces and not biological ones (Temin et al, 2009).

With health being a precursor to a higher quality of life, it demands that there should be increasingly more access to gender and age disaggregated data particularly given the feminization of HIV&AIDS and poverty (Tvedten et al, 2008). Without age and gender disaggregated data, adolescents are treated like mini adults. For example, programs that have been developed for adult women have simply been transplanted and used for adolescent girls without considering their unique needs. The use of contraceptive for adolescent girls is too often “junior family planning” which is standard family planning unmodified for young women and girls—limited in its effectiveness and reach. Many programs that have been designed specifically for adolescent girls do not provide information regarding usage by sex and age, making it difficult to assess the effectiveness of reaching targeted beneficiaries (Temin et al, 2009).

The value and necessity of participatory research in gathering age and gender disaggregated data, as well as a deeper understanding of the role of culture for girls living with poverty cannot be underestimated. Such research provides us

with increased insight into the intimate barriers faced by girls living with poverty. In Mozambique's rural areas, girls face a conflict between school, social and cultural expectations based on gender. This includes initiation rites and bride price. The girls' bride price is significantly reduced if she becomes pregnant before she is married. Mothers and fathers opt to remove their daughters from school in order to prepare her for her gendered responsibilities and to ensure that they are able to garner the highest bride price for their daughter. In the semi-urban area, the conflict is between school and modernity. When the girl reaches puberty, she undergoes a 3-4 week initiation ceremony to mark her transition into adulthood. During the initiation period, she is taught her gendered responsibilities including how to be a good wife. Since she considers herself to be an adult and views school to be for children, she focuses her attention on money (Tvedten et al, 2008). Additional research is needed which continues to highlight the influence of culture on girls ability to complete their education and exit from a life of poverty.

Lack of Infrastructure to Support Girls Capacity Development Leading to a Higher Quality of Life

A strong political infrastructure is essential towards implementing laws, policies and strategies that can directly benefit girls from exiting a life of poverty permanently. One important Ministry which has been dedicated to girls is the Ministry of Women and Youth. The Ministry of Women and Youth has been developed primarily to advocate for the rights of girls and women. The reality is that the Ministry of Women and Youth tend to be underfunded which results in weakened advocacy and piecemeal approach to addressing issues related to adolescence (Temin et al, 2009). This is clearly an issue related to policy and political will. It is also the influence of a male-dominated culture.

In Mozambique, the Ministry of Women and Social Action (MWSA) is responsible for leading the coordination of Gender Units in the following Ministries: Education and Culture; Health; Agriculture, Women and Social Action; Youth and Sports; Defence; Interior; Mineral Resources and Energy; Science and technology Fisheries and Foreign Affairs. In addition, the MWSA is

charged with execution of policies and advocacy to ensure the interests of women are taken into consideration. Unfortunately, over the last few years, MWSA has been rendered ineffective due to its demonstrated inadequate capacity to lead and monitor the government's policy in this area (Tvedten et al, 2008).

Lack of political will and commitment by the Government towards gender issues has been cited as two of the critical reasons why MWSA remains ineffective. The Government's lack of will is demonstrated through budget underfunding earmarked for MWSA and on-going dependence by MWSA on external aid. Of critical importance is the fact that strategies and policies related to adolescent girls are managed by the international community. This means that the Mozambican Government is currently unable to take the lead in addressing issues related to Mozambican girls and youth (Tvedten et al, 2008). As a result, without political will and support from the Mozambican Government, barriers experienced by girls living with poverty will continue to remain unaddressed at the level of decision makers.

SECTION 3 WHAT TYPE OF CAPACITY BUILDING IS PREDOMINATELY OFFERED TO GIRLS LIVING WITH POVERTY?

Capacity building first emerged within the development sector in the 1950s solely in relation to institutional development (Lusthaus, Adrien & Perstinger, 1991). 'Former' colonizers introduced newly independent developing countries to institutional development in order to manage their (colonizer's) public investment through public sector institutions. Colonizers focused solely on institutional capacity building, even though human and institutional capacity building are interconnected. Colonizers maintained control over the institutional capacity building process by importing their institutional development models into newly independent countries (Lusthaus et al, 1991).

Despite the interconnectedness between institutional and human development, donors including 'former' colonizers and the international community have continued to focus predominantly on institutional development in Africa since the 1950s (Mutahaba, Baguma & Halfani, 1994). In Mozambique, as elsewhere in Africa, the emphasis for the past 60 years has been

on government capacity building. However, not much progress has been made in developing the capacity of Government institutions. As recent as 2008, the UN underscored institutional capacity development as Mozambique's five main challenges towards addressing poverty (UN, 2008). The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) report on July 2010 underscored the limited action that had been taken to date with respect to gender mainstreaming, a major component of institutional capacity building (IFAD, 2010). IFAD also noted the continuing weak "reality about the actual capacity of existing potential partners in terms of the skills and expertise" (IFAD, 2010 pp lvi). IFAD here was referring to the capacity of private organizations and civil society to implement poverty related strategies (IFAD, 2010).

Even today, little has changed in Mozambique with respect to institutional development, but much has changed regarding increasing financial and technical dependence on international donors. Today, the majority of African countries including Mozambique are increasingly dependent on the international community for financial and resource support, but still have weak institutions due to poor capacity. The Mozambican government remains dependent on 19 countries and multilateral organizations, otherwise known as the G-19 for *budget support*. Combined, the G19 provide 50% of budget support for the Mozambican government (EPAD, Norwegian, 2009). Notably, the support is limited to monetary and does *not* address capacity building, thus continuing to leave Mozambique in a weakened dependant state (Porter, 2005). The donors and not the government are directing the increasing aid efforts. The government given its financial and intellectual dependency on donors is "often afraid of donors" (Porter, 2005 p. 4), particularly in cases like Mozambique when the budget support is used towards civil servant salaries. If funds were to cease, the outcome would easily paralyze the functioning of the government (Porter, 2005). The challenge lies therefore in developing human capacity while institutional capacity is weak, particularly in health and education, two key areas required for human development.

Capacity building is also an elusive term that has diverse interpretations and definitions within the development sector that is reflective of the organization's goals and objectives. For example, UNDP defines capacity development as "capacity is the ability of individuals, institutions, and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner. Capacity development is the process through which the abilities to do so are, strengthened, adapted and maintained over time" (UNDP, 2006). Concern Worldwide on the other hand views capacity building "as an approach to programming which emphasizes enabling and strengthening individuals, groups, organizations, networks and institutions to increase their ability to cope with crisis and to contribute long-term to the elimination of poverty" (Concern, 2001 p. 3).

In the definition of capacity building offered by Concern Worldwide, the focus is on building capacity in order to eliminate poverty, whereas UNDP's focus is individuals, institutions and society's capacity, but it does not indicate ownership, that is, will capacity development occur from a bottom-up perspective or top-down? The subtle yet important difference in the goals of capacity building included in the definitions will dictate the approach and key success indicators adopted in developing capacity as outlined by UNDP and Concern Worldwide. These two definitions are representative of the many other capacity building definitions found in the development literature. Notably, what is also missing in both these definitions is a holistic approach to capacity building that will address the multiple capacity building related challenges faced by vulnerable population groups, including girls living with abject generational poverty, desiring a higher quality of life free from poverty.

In reviewing literature related to poverty and capacity building, (Roby et al, 2009; Handley, Higgins, Sharma, Bird & Cammack, 2009; Baser & Morgan, 2008; Kelly, 2009; Gibson, 2004; Elliott, 1999), what emerged was a continuing focus on institutional capacity building. With specific respect to girls living with poverty, education has been regarded as the key to enabling these girls to exit from a life of poverty. Sentiments equivalent to "education is perhaps the strongest protective factor in reducing the risk of child poverty, especially for

girls” (Roby et al, 2009 p. 342) have been concluded by numerous researchers and United Nations organizations including UNICEF and UN Women. The challenge lies in the absence of a comprehensive capacity building strategy that focuses solely on girls facing a life of poverty during their very early years of adolescence. A capacity building strategy that is needed will address the multiple barriers that persist in these young girls lives including social, cultural, political, and economical.

For example, in an important document entitled ‘Poverty And Poverty Reduction In Sub-Saharan Africa: An Overview Of The Issues’ in relation to girls and women, issues regarding health, education and inequality are raised, but there is no mention of the role of culture in barring girls from entering or completing their education (Handley et al, 2009). In another key report focusing on adolescence ‘State Of The World’s Children 2011 – Adolescence Age Of Opportunity’, the report notes that barriers for girls in realizing their full potential include lack of protection with respect to abuses as child marriage, early sex, violence and domestic labour (UNICEF, 2011). However, a comprehensive capacity building strategy focusing on girls, including their voices does not appear in the report. Plan’s ‘Because I Am A Girl’ 2007 report notes “that girls and young women need to be given the opportunity to secure their human rights. While they are marginalised, they will have little capacity, courage, and confidence to participate in decisions about their lives and about the society in which they live” (Plan, 2007 p. 18). However, in the absence of a multi-stakeholder and multi-sector approach to addressing capacity building for girls living with poverty, empowerment and gender equality which are critical for sustainable capacity building will remain out of reach for these girls. Chronic Poverty Research Center’s 2010 report ‘Stemming Girls Poverty’ on the other hand acknowledges the political, social and cultural influences on girls capacity to develop their potential. However, it does not address the structural aspects of poverty (Jones et al, 2010). In the absence of a holistic, multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach to capacity building focusing on girls living with poverty, girls will continue to be marginalized.

CONCLUSION

Girls continue to face six significant barriers which prevent them from leaving poverty - 1) pre-determined lower status of girls; 2) lack of girls' voice in decision-making within the household and community; 3) lack of consultation by decision makers 4) unavailability of age and gender disaggregated data; 5) weak infrastructure designed to support girls and 6) capacity building policies and strategies that are not focused on very young adolescent girls that also consider multi-sector and multi-stakeholder solutions. In addition, data related to poverty predominately focuses on children as one category, thus there is not enough research which provides data disaggregated by age and gender. If specific barriers can be identified that exist for girls in all the main age groups during their early years of adolescence, then the impact of the five barriers identified may be better understood as the girls transition between early and late years of adolescence. This can only occur through constant and consistent engagement of girls in holistic related research related to poverty. The voices of girls living in poverty must reach academics, civil society as well as decision makers in order for them to have a realistic opportunity to leave a life of poverty permanently.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

In order to address the needs of girls living with poverty, we need to start the entire process with her. We must engage and listen to her (Greene et al, 2009).

INTRODUCTION

“A [research] paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs ...It represents a worldview that defines for its holder, the nature of the “world”, the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts ...” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 pp. 107 - 108). Ontology, epistemology and methodology bring to life research paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

“Ontology reflects beliefs about the nature of reality (is reality an objective phenomenon that holds truth or is reality virtually constructed through social, political and gendered meanings); epistemology refers to beliefs about the preferred relationship between the researcher and the researched in accessing knowledge (should we remain objective and removed from what we study or should we get immersed in it); and methodology refers to approaches we use for collecting information about the world (should we manipulate and measure variables in order to test hypotheses or should we search for meaning in words and behaviours)” (Samdahl, 1999 p. 119).

Our lived experiences particularly in our capacity to negotiate power, participate in the creation of new knowledge and chart out the course of our quality of life shapes and influences our ontological and epistemological view of the world. The lens used to see and analyze our lives and that of others then forms our perception of reality. Our capacity to create agency, that is to shape and take control over our lives is also integral to our sense of reality (Freire, 1970; Kincheloe, 2005). This chapter will focus on the use of participatory methodologies to create new knowledge developed by girls living with poverty who have traditionally been silenced. It will include the role of photo-voice in

engaging the girls. This will be followed by an introduction to the girls, research setting and method used to gain insight into the strengths, challenges faced by these girls in accessing a higher quality of life, as well as their ideas for solutions. A discussion on data analysis will follow. The chapter will end with an overview on transparency, trustworthiness and dependability of data acquired in the study.

SECTION 1: PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Development studies and poverty research has been dominated by quantitative studies which utilizes “an approach that frames questions of social understanding as essentially questions of measurement” (du Toit, 2005 p. 1). Dominant approaches used to understand chronic poverty focus on objectivity thus directing “attention away from *structural* aspects of persistent poverty” (du Toit, 2005 p. 2). Without considering the structural aspects of poverty, we do not concede that structural poverty is influenced by culture, identity and agency. Also, quantitative studies propose that qualitative data is required simply as an add-on measure to quantitative data (du Toit, 2005).

Participatory qualitative research is an evolving methodology. For example, Robert Chambers, work on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) (See Chambers, 1994; Chambers, 1997) received strong support from NGOs and national and international development agencies with its focus on local knowledge and in enabling people to take over their own development (Kapoor, 2002; Adley, 2004). However, Chambers work also received strong criticism in enabling the dominant voice to prevail since PRA emphasized debate and consensus within the public and not private domain. This particularly disadvantaged women whose status was second to men, and who were expected to remain invisible in the public domain. The opportunity for women therefore to raise issues of inequality or violence perpetuated by men would be nearly impossible in a public domain favoured by PRA (Kapoor, 2002; Cornwall, 2003; Adley, 2004). As a result, women’s voices were largely absent (Mosse, 1995).

With the continuing influence of PRA within NGO, national and international development circles (Kapoor, 2002), the 1990s witnessed strong

criticism for participatory methodologies having excluded the female voice. Maguire (1996) and others noted that “gender was rendered invisible by supposedly inclusive terms such as the people, the oppressed, the campesinos, or simply the community. Comparison of separate accounts of the same projects revealed that, in many cases, the community; was actually only the male community” (Maguire, 1996, p. 111). In fact, it was only when participatory methodologies focused primarily or solely on women, that outcomes reinforced the voices, agency, needs, strengths and ideas unique to women (Maguire, 1996). Maguire also pointed out that “many male biases were implicit in the written participatory research accounts” (Maguire, 1996, p. 111).

The 1990s were important years for mainstream development and participation. This decade brought about a marked departure from traditional development discourse through the re-adoption of participation and inclusion of people in mainstream development (Williams, 2004).⁹ With funders promoting participation, partnering governments and international development agencies readily incorporated participation and empowerment of the people by including grassroots participation in their official aims and objectives (Williams, 2004). Hence the emergence of participation as a ‘buzzword’ in mainstream development discourse (Cornwall & Brock, 2005).

In 2001, World Bank officially moved participation from ‘margins to mainstream’ by undertaking a massive project entitled ‘Voices of the Poor’. ‘Voices of the Poor’ interviewed individuals living in poverty in over 100 countries (Williams, 2004). ‘Voices of the Poor’ was used as a pivotal document highlighting the importance of grassroots participation. Participation was used as World Banks’ center piece in its annual 2000/2001 report. However, in the 2006 report, participation was conspicuously removed from their annual report (Cling, Razafindrakoto & Roubaud, 2005). Critics observe that ‘Voices of the Poor’ served as a pivotal document authored by a leader in mainstream development

⁹ Community based development has been documented in India since the time of Ghandi and emerged in Latin America and Africa through the efforts of Freire in the 1950s and 60s. As a result of the successes by Ghandi and Freire, USAID spread participatory in the 1950s to more than 60 countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. In the 1960s, USAID funding abruptly ceased for participatory led initiatives (Mansuri & Rao, 2003).

which appeared to purposefully dilute the original meaning of authentic participation. That is authentic participation which results in the contribution and translation of knowledge into action by the common man [girl / woman] leading to positive and relevant social change for and by the people as outlined by Freire (1970) and Fals-Borda (1995). The World Bank in 'Voices of the Poor' hijacked the term participation and watered it down to where the common man [girl / woman] was simply heard and no resulting social action occurred (Malaluan & Guttal, 2002).

Critics of mainstream development advocated that simply "being involved in a process is not equivalent to having a voice" (Cornwall, 2008 p. 278). They emphasized the notion that working *with* the people and not *on* the people (Fals-Borda, 1995) is critical to achieving authentic participation and enabling relevant social change. Along with authentic participation, importance of knowledge and meaning making particularly among oppressed and marginalized peoples and communities (Freire, 1970) is being disregarded, in favour of donors and international NGOs focus on *scaling up participatory projects* (Hartmann & Linn, 2008) without considering authentic and on-going dialogue, two critical premises for participatory related endeavours.

Although a great deal of discussion focused on individual rights and participation, more often than not children and girls in particular have primarily been left out of the equation. The unavailability of girl-centred approaches in development policy and planning can be attributed to the marginalized voices of girls left out of the political processes. The inclusion of a participatory research agenda would provide decision makers with an appreciation of girls' ideas, experiences, and aspirations. It would also provide girls with an opportunity to voice their ideas for solutions which directly impact their quality of life (Lolichen, 2006). As Kellett accurately points out "children observe with different eyes, ask different questions – they ask questions that adults do not even think of - have different concerns and have immediate access to peer culture where adults are outsiders. The research agendas children prioritise, the research questions they frame and the way in which they collect data are substantially different from

adults and all of this can offer valuable insights and original contributions to knowledge” (Kellett, 2005 p. 8).

Children have been recognized as being social actors in their own right and as such have elevated the agenda towards research ‘with’ children thereby increasing the probability of children being regarded as co-researchers (Jones, 2004; Nieuwenhuys, 2004). However, tensions remain as to how participatory qualitative research is actually implemented given that participatory research as noted has emerged within different organizations dedicated to diverse ideologies and interpretations of participatory research concepts and goals (Peets & Watts, 1996). What has been particularly contentious is the definition used for participation in relation to social change, empowerment, as well as new knowledge and meaning making (Peets et al, 1996). Consequently, the actors involved in the creation of knowledge also differed widely. Some organizations, often grassroots NGOs or ‘radical’ NGOs sought to ensure that people were actively engaged in creating new knowledge and meaning making which is one of the key principles of participatory research - refuting intellectual colonialism (Fals Borda, 1979). As a result of this key principle, participatory research is considered to be “the enlightenment and awakening of common people” (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991, p. vi).

Others like the World Bank noted above, defined participation as simply information giving which they believed would lead to empowerment. In the case of the World Bank, massive grassroots level ‘consultations’ were undertaken and recorded often to disguise the decisions already undertaken prior to the consultation (Cornwall, 2008). The approach taken by the World Bank negated participatory research’s purpose of “returning to ordinary people the power to participate in knowledge creation, the power that results from such creation, and the power to utilize knowledge” (Maguire, 1987, p. 39). As seen, the understanding of the location of power and how it can be influenced or shaped along with how power relationships impact authentic participation (Smith, 1999) varies significantly among researchers, grassroots NGOs, ‘radical NGOs’,

international NGOs and funders using participatory research particularly with vulnerable populations.

Creation of knowledge is the hallmark of empowerment. Numerous research studies have acknowledged the essential role of effective participation which leads to some form of empowerment. It also results in a more equal sharing of power between those that predominately have access to power and those that are traditionally barred from having power (Lane, 1997; Nelson & Wright, 1997; Paul, 1987; Patel, Bolnick & Mitlin, 1998). However, girls, especially girls living with poverty are often not consulted or even asked to participate in civil society, nor in research that is about their lives.

Dominant narratives in many societies throughout the world hold the view that children are not able to participate in making important decisions that affect them. Challenging that perspective is the empowerment approach (Rappaport, 2000) which encourages us to “question these dominant narratives and to seek out alternative stories that challenge assumptions about children’s capacities” (Rappaport, 2000 p.5). Another growing area of research known as the sociology of childhood (Langhout & Thomas, 2010) nudges us to “listen to children’s perspectives and view children as experts in their own lives. Children’s expertise can be cultivated by teaching them specific skills. Participating in research, for example, can help them gain more control of the resources that affect their lives. Children, therefore, can become advocates for themselves and others” (Langhout & Thomas, 2010, p. 64). Participatory research has great potential for marginalized girls who have normally been silenced to develop a sense of self by offering their unique perspective of their lives, community, challenges and strengths. And in the process of participating in participatory research, they can have the potential to become leaders within their own communities (Mathews, Mathews & Mwaja, 2010).

People, power and praxis¹⁰ are the three key fundamentals of participatory research (Finn, 1994). As Brown (1985) argues, participatory research is people-

¹⁰ Praxis has been considered the process of making theory into history, but more specifically clarified by Gramsci as putting thought into action (Watson, 2003).

centered since the knowledge created responds to people's life experiences (Brown, 1985). Power is central to any form of research. However participatory research remains conscious of how power is created, who creates and has access to it and how power is interpreted. Power is the foundational element towards the construction of our reality. Knowledge is power. Knowledge in turn verifies the truth and is thus translated into power (Foucault, 1980). Praxis is the third arm of participatory research. It reinforces the importance of translating research into action.

In participatory research, data are not collected purely to generate facts. It is in fact an opportunity for both the researcher and participant to learn about oneself. Since the participants are acknowledged as experts over their own lives, through participatory processes they recognize their capacity to become self-sufficient learners (Wang & Burris, 1996; Sohng, 1995). There is no right and wrong way of undertaking participatory research since the objective is for the participants to learn about themselves (Sohng, 1995).

Research has acknowledged that "powerlessness is a form of poverty and a major cause of poverty. The distribution of power is therefore a highly relevant topic for poverty reduction debates" (Eberlei, 2007 p. 1). Participatory research addresses this critical issue by consciously giving 'voice' and 'space' to participants by questioning the relevance and importance of knowledge acquired, the power relationship between the researcher and participant, and the stance of the 'objective researcher'. Among academics it challenges conventional ideas about what is described as useful knowledge, in particular who can produce knowledge and also who can hold knowledge (Hobbiss, Calvert & Collins, 1998). Participatory research encourages "participants in the process of their own the inquiry. They are involved authentically in making major focus and design decisions. They draw and apply conclusions. Participation is real, not token" (Patton, 2002 p. 185).

Participatory research is about "letting go of one's own power" as a researcher, or "sharing the power that one already has" (Ramsden & Cave, 2002 p. 548). Equality between participants and researchers is the focus, particularly in

relation to the research process (Cave & Ramsden, 2002), knowledge and meaning making (Freire, 1970). Participatory methodologies successfully provide agency and an audience, as well as opportunities for voice for those that have been silenced (Lundy, 2007). Most importantly, participatory methodologies creates the opportunity for individuals who have otherwise been invisible to see themselves as active citizens, learn skills related to engagement, rights, planning, understanding outcomes, as well as developing observational and analytical skills (Tika, 2009).

Participatory research and the potential impact it can have on decision makers is directly influenced by multi-national corporations and organizations like IMF and World Bank. These organizations and corporations are dominant players in endorsing policy changes and implementing recommendations that directly impact the quality of lives of girls living with poverty. Citizenship plays an important role in either encouraging or preventing involvement of citizens within various decision making structures. There are many forms of citizen participation endorsed by governments, international and national, as well as multi-national corporations and organizations. These range from tokenism to actual citizen control (Bowen, 2007).

Participation which has been endorsed by government and aid agencies has emerged as a double-edged sword. At the root of participation is a shift in power. Thus, participation has resulted in increased access and power over resources and opportunities to influence key decisions by community members. This has resulted in the reduction of bureaucratic red tape (Mitlin & Thompson, 1995). But, participation has also been used by governments and donors to “justify and reinforce inequitable social relations of power” (Mitlin et al, 1995, p. 232).

From the 1990s until today, we have observed development and aid agendas increase their focus on participation at least on paper, linking it directly to its impact on relevant development strategies. Development and aid agencies have significantly increased their time and resources towards participatory research activities. In retrospect despite ‘action’, the inclusion of participatory

methods has merely been a public relation exercise and seen as a politically correct tool that has not been taken seriously, but noted in all documents. Quantitative results are still being touted as serious results. Qualitative research continues to be the poor second cousin and participatory methods the politically correct term of the day (Chambers & Mayoux, 2003).

Hence, “the challenge for participatory research researchers who are serious about social change [is] to think through how to effectively provoke action by research that engages, that reframes social issues theoretically, that nudges those in power, that feeds organizing campaigns, and that motivates audiences to change both the way they think and how they act in the world” (Cahill & Torre, 2007 p. 205).

Despite challenges faced by researchers utilizing participatory methodologies, it has been recognized that a participatory approach to research stands apart and adds considerable value towards hearing the voices of those that have been silenced (Reason, 2004). It has also been pivotal in providing agency for groups that have been marginalized including girls facing a life of poverty. Participatory methods, as I argue below, are integral in the creation of knowledge by disenfranchised groups (Maguire, 1996), thus providing researchers with deeper insight particularly into complex issues like poverty.

SECTION 2: PHOTOVOICE AS A PARTICIPATORY VISUAL METHODOLOGY – REVEALING THE WISDOM WITHIN

Participatory qualitative research has been used in the past few decades to provide greater insight into the lives of vulnerable populations by directly engaging and learning from often silenced groups. It is a process that allows for, in du Toit’s words, “re-imagining and re-framing of the way in which inequality and poverty are conceptualized in the first place” (du Toit, 2005 p. 2). There are a number of researchers who have explored the use of participatory qualitative research with children and young people in sub-Saharan Africa. Pattman and Chege (2003) for example use a variety of participatory tools to hear the voices of children and gain insight into their understanding of gender and HIV/AIDS.

Qualitative methods which rely on verbal or written competence particularly when used with marginalized groups can be limiting with respect to the emotional and symbolic aspects of individual's experiences and media-related modes of expression. In response, researchers have developed a range of visual approaches. For example, Moletsane, Mitchell, Smith and Chisholm (2008) consider the use of photovoice and participatory video in working with girls in Southern Africa. Video-making referred to as collaborative or participatory or indigenous or community video is a useful tool for inquiry given its fluid presentation that the participant wishes the viewer to explore and also reflect upon (Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell, Walsh & Weber, 2007; Mitchell & Weber, 2007; Moletsane, Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Buthelezi & Taylor, 2009). Other participatory methodologies include popular theatre which has been used to engage communities using indigenous dance, songs, poetry and drama to examine and reflect on their challenges for many generations throughout the world¹¹. These visual participatory methodologies aim to shift the balance away from the written or spoken word to visual or multisensory methods, thereby increasing the probability of a wider range of children to participate in research (Davis, Watson and Cunningham-Burley, 2000).

In my study, I focused on the use of photovoice – a tool that has been successfully used in diverse research and throughout many countries in the world (see also Wang & Burris, 1994; Wang, 1999; Wang, Cash & Powers, 2000; Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell, Stuart, Moletsane & Nkwanyana, 2006; Moletsane, de Lange, Mitchell, Stuart, Buthelezi, & Taylor, 2007). Photovoice is a term coined by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris in 1992. It is a participatory visual tool used to enable relevant and meaningful social change by placing the camera in the hands of the people and asking them to record their lives, experiences, strengths and challenges (Wang & Burris, 1994; Wang, 1999; Wang, Cash & Powers, 2000; Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell, Stuart, Moletsane & Nkwanyana, 2006; Moletsane et al,

¹¹ For examples of popular theatre, please see the use of popular theatre in Tanzania in relation to HIV/AIDS (Mabala & Allen, 2002) and in Bangladesh in relation to reducing social stigma in relation to poverty and build social capital (MAZI, 2008).

2007). The uniqueness of photovoice lies in the acknowledgment that ‘people are the experts of their own lives’ (Freire, 1972; Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004). Photovoice has been an effective tool particularly for people with “lower literacy skills and little access to resources to communicate their life experiences, expertise, and knowledge to the world” (McAllister, Wilson, Green & Baldwin, 2005 p. 619).

There are three main objectives of photovoice: “to enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns; to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs; and to reach policymakers” (Wang & Burris, 1997 p. 369). Step one involves the participants taking photos. This is the first stage of empowerment. Step two focuses on participants choosing the most relevant photos that depict their community and/or individual strengths and challenges. This is another stage of empowerment. Step three focuses on contextualizing the photos – telling the story. This is an important stage of empowerment that is greatly influenced by critical thinking, reflection and analysis. Step four focuses on codifying the issues. It provides the participant with the space to develop agency, consider relevant solutions to the issues identified, reflect on what can be done at the community level and what will need the support of external stakeholders (photovoice).

Photovoice is informed by feminist (Saraceno, 2010; Wang, 1999) and post-colonial theories (Smye et al, 2009), thus enabling it to have a more holistic approach to data collection, analysis and recommendations. It has been influenced by Paulo Freire’s pedagogy related to critical consciousness, feminist theory and empowerment. Freire acknowledged that photographs can be used by communities as reflective tools (Freire, 1972).

Wang and Burris developed photovoice as a way to enable rural women in China, to influence policies and programs that affected them. Reflecting on their work with rural women of Yunnan Province, Wang and Burris identified photovoice as a useful needs assessment tool because it “provided a creative and appealing method by which village women and several Women’s Federation

cadres could document the health issues of greatest concern, communicating them to policymakers, donors, program planners and implementers, line agencies, the provincial and county guidance groups, and their own communities” (Wang et al, 1994, p. 178).

Photovoice also “explicitly focused on other forms of empowerment through participation” (Wang et al, 1994, p. 178). The women in their study documented their daily lives and used these experiences as an “educational tool to increase their individual and collective knowledge about women’s health status and to empower women to mobilize for social change” (Wang et al, 1994, pp. 178-179). Through their own increased critical awareness of their lives and their ability to communicate their unique health related challenges to decision makers, the women were able to influence women’s health priorities in the province’s hardship rural areas. This was because the policy makers were “exposed to the community and to issues that may otherwise be hidden from view” (Chilton, Rabinowich, Council & Breaux, 2009 p. 75). Wang, Burris and Ping underscore the importance of photovoice by highlighting how images can indeed “educate, inspire and influence decisions” (Wang, Burris & Ping, 1996 p. 1392).

The entire photovoice process also highlights that the most powerful learning comes from “seeing for ourselves”. Photovoice encourages individuals particularly those without agency to “reflect on photographs that mirror the everyday social and political realities that influence their lives” (Wang, Yi, Tao & Carovano, 1998). As a result of this process, photovoice produces data that is authentic to community experience and action (Hergenrather, Rhodes & Bardoshi, 2009).

The power of photovoice in enabling social change has been highlighted in various studies. Wang et al (2000) used photovoice to enable men and women living in a shelter in Ann Arbor, Michigan to document their strengths and challenges through the medium of photographs to capture their everyday work, health and life conditions. Many of the participants spoke about the importance of photovoice in enabling them to become visible within their community outside of their shelter. The photographs along with the presentations made by the

participants to the public, including policy makers, as well as follow-up print media enabled the homeless people to tell their own stories and communicate their strengths and challenges. Without the use of photovoice, there would not have been documented evidence depicting their lives, challenges and strengths which in turn engaged several hundred people including policy makers, researchers, journalists and the general public (Wang et al, 2000). Photovoice allows people, through their visions and words, to become the agent in “assess[ing] real local needs” (Wang et al, 1997, p. 370).

Photovoice has also successfully ‘disrupted silences around gender’ by bringing forth challenges related to gender-related sensitive issues including violence, abject poverty and HIV&AIDS (see also Wang et al, 1994; Wang, 1999; Wang et al, 2000; Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell et al, 2006; Moletsane et al, 2007). Photovoice has allowed “participants to engage with themes and concerns that are not easy to put into words but which, once expressed visually or artistically, can pave the way for further reflection and for taking action” (Mitchell et al, 2006). Not only do images have the power to disrupt and ‘excavate’ silences (Brink cited in Mitchell, Walsh, & Moletsane, 2006, p. 103), ‘they also create imaginative spaces for change’ (Mitchell et al, 2006). Using simple prompts like “feeling safe” and “feeling not so safe” youth in Swaziland were encouraged to take photographs depicting each feeling. What could have easily been missed if photovoice had not used was the overwhelming “not so safe” feeling evoked by girls in relation to toilets (Mitchell et al, 2006). The girls voiced strongly that “you could be raped in the toilets, there is no privacy and hence they are dangerous, or they are dirty and unsafe or there were in such a bad state that you had no privacy and could be attacked” (Mitchell et al, 2006 p. 5).

Photovoice has also been effective in gaining insight into complex issues like abject poverty, violence, gender and HIV&AIDS. Photovoice brought to surface issues that might not have been conveyed as effectively. In one of the images a participant visually depicts suicide as a result of the stigma attached to HIV&AIDS. The image powerfully communicates a strong sense of helplessness among the youth. “The absence of hope, arguably the most critical absence,

shatters the notion of an idyllic carefree childhood” (Moletsane et al, 2007). The power of photographs is in “their being material realities in their own right, richly informative deposits left in the wake of whatever emitted them, potent means for turning the tables on reality- for turning it into a shadow” (Wang et al, 1997, p. 370).

Lykes, Caba, Chávez, Laynez, Ruiz and Williams (1999), worked with women in war torn Guatemala. The women in the study used photovoice to record their experiences with violence and the impact it had on their lives. Despite the ‘heaviness’ of the topic, the women were committed to the project often returning home to long hours of chores. However their motivation appeared to be the enjoyment they found in recording their experiences through photographs. As they exchanged stories and supported one another, the space they created transformed into a space for healing. The photographs became the tool with which sequences of events were recorded and data analyzed. The women’s social capital increased meaningfully through mutual bonding from shared experiences and goals.

Ewald’s work with children from all corners of the world has produced powerful images. She found that by placing the camera in the child’s hands, it inverted the inherent power imbalance between adult and child, as well as researcher and participant. Ewald’s focus on the importance of hearing the child’s voice resulted in her understanding that “people’s conceptions of children are very far from who children actually are. Because they don’t speak for themselves, there are so many stereotypes” (Ewald cited in Hamilton, 2000). Photovoice reinforces that one must not fail to consult or involve children and young people because of an assumed innocence, particularly when they are leading adult lives, shouldering adult responsibilities. To do this would be “patronizing and it does not take into account their experiences or competence in making difficult decisions” (Willow, 1997, p. 12). In working with children, Ewald found that children all around the world raised serious issues and common themes related to race, religion, gender, enculturation and language. Children also recreated violent images which were often unsettling for the adult eye. Ewald

found that literacy through visual imagery became the basis for sharing culture and community across different societies (Copeland, 2003). “It is a method that enables people to define for themselves and others, including policy makers, what is worth remembering and what needs to be changed” (photovoice).

This section has addressed the question ‘why photovoice?’ and later in this chapter I draw on the work of Pink (2001) and others on critical issues related to working with photo images. The section above is meant to address the question ‘why photovoice?’ Photovoice is of course not meant to be regarded as some sort of panacea to all the challenges of research with participants. Mitchell (2011), for example talks about some of the ethical issues (who can be in the picture?), along with issues of ownership. But perhaps the greatest challenge relates to a misguided expectation that something like ‘take a picture’ is going to solve structural inequalities. As I explore in Chapters 6 and 7, clearly there is a need for modest expectations of a research tool.

SECTION 3: FINDING AND MEETING ‘THE’ COMMUNITY

Gaining entry into a community in a foreign land is no easy feat. It is even more challenging when the community you wish to gain access to speaks a foreign language, does not have a prior relationship with McGill University or the Canadian Embassy located in Maputo. I began my journey by approaching several established international NGOs and donors due to my expected level of comfort with them, in particular a common language – English, their recognition of McGill University and its prominent role in academic research. I also selected these international NGOs and donors because of their ability to take participants’ ideas to the next level where policy decisions are being made. As noted earlier, donors and international NGOs play a prominent role in decisions made within the development sector in Mozambique. I wanted to establish buy-in as early as possible in order to ensure that important stakeholders would hear the girls’ voices and ideas for solutions. I also wanted to be strategic in ensuring that the girls’ voices would go beyond the research and into the policy realm in an efficient manner.

I received positive feedback and support from two organizations in particular; however their one condition was that I would need to turn over my data to them once I completed the research. I was not comfortable with this option. I strongly felt that any data collected by me would be as a result of trust and collaboration I would have established with the girls. Hence I could not betray the girls' trust by handing over data to an 'outsider'; an outsider that would not have met and learned from the girls and critically understood the context of the data.

A third global NGO also expressed their support and interest in the research; however their projects were all located in the province of Pemba, an expensive plane ride from Maputo city. My motivation for staying in Maputo was to have regular and consistent contact with the girls in order for me to gain deeper insight into their lives, as well as potential decision makers who would be able to address the barriers raised by the girls through the study. Given the distance of Pemba from Maputo, it would severely restrict the length of time and frequency in meeting with the girls.

I next turned to grassroots NGOs based in Maputo city including Foundation for Community Development, a prominent grassroots NGO founded by the former First Lady, Graca Machel. I narrowed down the number of grassroots NGOs to a few that had a strong presence within the development sector and an established relationship with donors and international NGOs. I recognized that a prominent grassroots NGO would also be able to influence policy decision makers. Grassroots NGOs were certainly supportive, but given their involvement with multiple projects, enormous time required to prepare multiple reports for donors and Government, they did not have the resources or infrastructure to support a foreign researcher with access to their communities. I worked with one in particular that had substantial connections with policy makers for three months before realizing that they would not be able to support me with my research despite their enthusiasm.

I was considering the Pemba option when I stumbled upon an introduction to a school that was only 15 minutes from Maputo city. Although the medium of

instruction for the school was in Portuguese, my contact with the school was through the Head Teacher, a Mozambican who spoke several languages including English.

‘The Community’

The all-girls’ school and community where the study was situated is a peri-urban community approximately 15 minutes from the capital city of Maputo. The school is surrounded by apartment buildings. The apartments are in need of repair and a good coating of paint. The condition of the apartment buildings is reflective of the challenging economic circumstances being experienced by students and their families. The families face a poor quality of life as a result of multiple challenges related to abject intergenerational poverty.¹² Many of the homes are headed by grandmothers. Grandmothers are the predominant caregivers for two main reasons according to the girls in the study: mothers continue to live in the provinces with limited resources or mothers have passed away for unknown reasons.

Many of the girls and their siblings have moved into the community to live with their grandmothers or other relatives, after having lost one or both parents often to HIV&AIDS. Sometimes, they also move from other provinces without having any relatives living within the community in order to find better job prospects; some as young as 10 years old. These girls experience a challenging life including death, loneliness and responsibilities that should be reserved for an adult, but ones they have shouldered since a tender age.

The school is supported by an Italian church community and provides grade 6 – 12 education. The Head Teacher and some of the teachers live in the adjoining building to the school. The condition of the school is in direct contrast to its surroundings. Once you enter the school, you are immediately drawn to its dignified space. Everything is pristine. The building is kept in an orderly manner. The walls are painted in colourful murals. Plants are kept in make-shift potholders creatively made from tires painted in bright colours and designs. There

¹² Although I was not able to gather specific data on the community, our discussions with the school personnel and of course the girls themselves indicates high levels of unemployment, female-led households which tend to have lower incomes, and illness.

is ample play space for younger and older children and even a shaded space for hot summer days. The school has a colourful playground for young students complete with slides and monkey-bars.

The physical condition of the school is also in direct contrast to the government schools I had visited in Maputo city. The government schools have broken windows and doors, not enough chairs and desks, and a run down play space if any. The school buildings are also in need of a paint job. The government schools appear to be more chaotic – probably due to the number of students in relation to classrooms and teachers. But, the school attended by the girls is a dignified space and similar to the private schools I had visited in the city.

The school has a morning session for four and five year olds¹³ and an afternoon session for girls attending the special three-year program. The girls I worked with were part of a three year program. The three-year program is designed for girls who have either never attended school or have had the opportunity to attend school, but have not mastered reading, writing and mathematics. The majority of girls range from 10 to 14 years of age. However, there are no age restrictions. The school is well received by the community and has a long waiting list.

During the first year of the three-year program, girls commencing their education for the first time receive practical life skills training along with regular academic courses. The girls' life prior to attending this school has been in a constant state of 'survival mode'. They lived in extreme poverty in rural provinces with little opportunity for change. Upon their arrival to the school, the girls are first taught how to share, treat each other respectfully, develop common values and ethics including the importance of not stealing, as well as the importance of education in enabling their lives to change. They are also taught

¹³ The morning session for the younger children has approximately 35 – 45 students per class. The classrooms are also spaces of dignity. All the students appear to be well disciplined. The teachers use simple 'cues' like a bell that would ring at the end of recess. All the students immediately put away their toys and return to their classrooms, even the younger ones. The students appear to really enjoy being at school. It seems that they are looking forward to returning to their respective classrooms. All the girls are dressed in their uniforms, wearing shoes and/or slippers with hair that is neatly kept. The affection shown by the teachers and Head Teacher towards the students is easily visible.

the importance of keeping their space clean and tidy. The teachers in turn provide the girls with love, support and encouragement. The girls' first language is predominately Changani. In the first year, they are taught Portuguese along with academic courses. The school works tirelessly in providing a safe environment that enables girls to learn, laugh, trust and develop friendships.

The first year classroom is very basic physically. It has rows of benches for the students. The teacher has a small desk at the front of the classroom with a blackboard. The second year classroom has desks and chairs. I asked the Head Teacher how students work together given their diverse ages. She did not see it as a problem since everyone had the same goal and shared similar life experiences. She also spoke about the Church and its central role at the school and in the girls' lives.

In the second and third year, girls are more focused on their academic courses. Practical courses like HIV&AIDS and First Aid are also taught. Upon completion of the third year, the girls write an exam. If they successfully pass the exam, they are able to continue their education at the sister school which offers grade 7 to 12 education.

The sister school is a large school with a beautiful library, large classrooms, covered basketball court/assembly area, as well as space dedicated to the Church. The school has a computer lab and a sewing center which is open for community use. The caregivers, mostly grandmothers are encouraged to attend computer and sewing classes in order to improve their economic opportunities. During the holidays, students spend half of their vacation at school learning basic economic skills like sewing, while the second half is spent at home or visiting family including their mothers who often remain in their home provinces. The Head Teacher noted that the school chooses to keep girls occupied with extra-curricular related activities especially during the holidays in order to prevent the girls from getting pregnant. In prior years, several of the girls would return to school pregnant, particularly after the long holiday period in December.

The greatest frustration of the school is in their inability to address abject poverty in a sustainable manner. The changes they provide at the school are

significant resulting in increased confidence, opportunity for girls to complete their education, but even then abject poverty continues to follow them throughout their lives. The school is keen to better understand challenges faced by girls that prevent them from accessing a higher quality of life. The school is also anxious to learn about solutions proposed by girls resulting in sustainable, relevant and meaningful capacity development leading to a higher quality of life¹⁴.

Ten girls between the ages of 10 – 14 years of age were selected from Year 2 and 3 of the program by the Head and Class Teacher. Since girls in Year 1 were just in the process of learning the Portuguese language, the Head Teacher felt that their ability to be engaged and contribute in Portuguese would be limited. The study began in mid July 2009 and finished mid December 2009. The Head Teacher together with the girls explained the study to the caregivers. All caregivers were also provided with a translated copy of the study, along with consent forms. I met with the girls mostly twice a week, once during the weekday for two hours prior to their afternoon school session and then on Saturdays. All the meetings took place at the school. We did not meet during school holidays.

About Language and the Politics of Translation

One my greatest challenges in conducting research in a foreign language was in learning to have implicit trust in my research assistants to accurately convey my thoughts to the girls, as well as in their interpretation of what the girls were sharing with them. Prior to meeting the girls, I had already taken a basic Portuguese language course in Maputo. I was therefore able to understand about 80% of what was being discussed between the girls and research assistants.

Even though the research assistants were engaged in a dialogue with the girls, I wanted to let the girls know that I was present and really cared about what they were saying. I discovered that body language is universal. By being an observer I could watch the body language of the girls and anticipate the type of follow-up questions that would lead to a deeper understanding of the issues being raised. Whether it was a giggle, a girl who suddenly stares down at her feet, or

¹⁴ Personal conversation with Head Teacher.

visibly stiffens, these cues which I may have missed had I been participating in the dialogue also contributed to my ability to gather richer data.

In order to ensure the accuracy of the data, Sarah and Michelle (pseudonyms of the two research assistants) verified all data with the girls at the beginning of every session. For example the notes transcribed from session 2 included the following:

Beatrice: *“I first heard about HIV/AIDS here at the school. I know that AIDS does not have a cure. You can get AIDS through syringes, blood transfusion and tattoos”*.¹⁵ When we consulted with Beatrice at the following session, she explained that *“tattoos were slang for drug related marks on your body”*.

During the verification process, girls often added additional thoughts. The reasons for adding new ideas or expanding upon ones they had already raised varied. Sometimes the girls did not get a chance to finish their thoughts during the discussion if another girl interjected with her thoughts. Or, the quieter girls were often overshadowed by the more boisterous voices. For example, notes transcribed from session 12 included the following:

Carla: *“In order to have improve our health, it is important for animals and people to live separately”*.

In the follow-up session, when we verified Carla’s comments, Carla added the following.

“ When children play in the same space as animals, children get sick because they walk without shoes in the dirt that is mixed with animal feces. There isn’t water close to the areas they play in, so when they put their fingers in their mouth, they often get sick. Animals should stay in separate areas from people”.

Although an entire language cannot be accurately translated into another language without losing something in the process of translation, we took all the necessary steps to ensure that we had captured the ideas of the girls as accurately

¹⁵ All data taken from the study will appear in italics.

as possible. We verified the data for accuracy and to ensure that we had captured the essence in the translation.

Meet the Girls - The Protagonists of This Study

The protagonists of this study were Anna, Beatrice, Carla, Fatima, Joana, Patricia, Paula, Rosa, Rita and Yolanda¹⁶. Carla was 10 years old. Joana, Patricia and Yolanda were 12 years old. Anna, Fatima and Paula were 13 years of age. Beatrice, Rita and Rosa were 14 years of age. Even though they attended school together, only two of the 10 girls were friends outside of the classroom prior to working together in the study. During the course of the study, the girls developed stronger relationships among and between them. Even though not all of them developed friendships beyond the study space, they developed respect for each other's ideas and thoughts. When they debated with one another, it was always done in a respectful manner.

Ethics

I applied for and received ethical consent from McGill University. (See Appendix A for Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans). Voluntary participation is a critical component of McGill's Ethics and Review Certificate. During my first meeting with the girls, I stated at several different points their voluntary participation in the study. I emphasized that they were free to leave the study at anytime, refrain from responding to a question they were uncomfortable with or return to the study when they felt comfortable. Due to the participatory nature of the study, I viewed consent to participate as an open-ended process. I consistently emphasized to the girls that their participation was voluntary. I depended on developing a relationship with the girls in which ethical regard for the girls was paramount at each session and was thus an on-going process.

The caregivers provided consent for their girls to be involved in the study. The issue of working with the visual (photos and video) was of particular concern. Although I had received consent from the caregivers and the girls, I wanted to ensure that I met my responsibility towards the girls with respect to protection and

¹⁶ The girls' names have been changed in order to protect their identity.

wellbeing. Thomas and O’Kane (1998) highlights how “confidentiality is an issue in every case, as is the question of how to deal with disclosure of information which makes the researcher concerned for someone's welfare.” (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998 p. 337). Morrow and Richards (1996) underscore that “the biggest ethical challenge for researchers working with children is the disparities in power and status between adults and children” (Morrow & Richards, 1996 p. 98).

I considered blurring their facial images. However, in line with Pithouse and Mitchell’s (2007) of ‘looking at looking’, I felt that it was important to show their facial expressions whether it was an expression of joy or burden. I felt these facial expressions added meaningfully to the data and would have an impact on the reader, whether in recognizing the strength exhibited by the children or in the despair they carried every day facing a life of poverty.

As per McGill’s Ethics and Review Board, it is important to anticipate and safeguard the girls in light of moments which may be emotionally upsetting. Through the use of participatory methodologies, I anticipated developing a close working relationship with the girls. Given the sensitive topic of poverty, I expected there to be moments of engagement that might be emotionally upsetting for the girls which clearly came to fruition during the six month study. I assessed each situation in order to identify whether the girl could benefit from counselling. The challenge in Mozambique however is finding qualified counsellors. In the absence of counsellors, I had prepared the research assistants that we would jointly provide the girls with as much time and space needed to express their issues of concern ranging from a sick parent to an auntie in jail to hunger. Due to the nature of their concerns, I assessed that the girls were not in any imminent danger. The girls appeared to find comfort in having their concerns heard.

SECTION 4: METHOD

Sessions 1 - 2: Introductions

At the first session, the study was discussed in greater depth with the Head Teacher whom I regarded as the study’s gatekeeper in order to secure her support. The Head Teacher expressed her enthusiasm and commitment towards the study.

She shared with me her frustration regarding the girl's inability to improve their quality of lives despite the education provided by the school. She felt the barriers girls faced in accessing a higher quality of life included lack of diverse work opportunities, culture and ability to access higher education. When I asked if she felt that poverty was a systemic issue, she indicated that she was not sure it was.

Considering that girls needed to strengthen and diversify their social capital in order to improve their quality of life, I asked the Head Teacher if she thought the school could have other roles that would lead to the alleviation of abject poverty in addition to providing education to the girls. She was unsure of alternative roles for the school apart from providing education. I flagged the Head Teacher's response in my notes as I felt it would be important to have a longer conversation with the Head Teacher regarding the role of schools in enabling girls to access a higher quality of life. I considered that it would also be important to revisit this question with other decision makers including private and government school leaders, NGOs, government institutions, as well as community leaders.

The second session focused on meeting the 10 girls selected by the Head and Class Teachers. Five of the girls were from Year 2 and five from Year 3. The girls were introduced to the study, their role as researchers and contributors to the study, as well as the use of art and photography in recording their ideas and thoughts. It was evident that the opportunity to work with a camera immediately captured the girls' attention and commitment to the study. Since the selection process was undertaken spontaneously by the Head and Class Teacher, the initial meeting with the girls was only for one hour.

When working with children, "appropriate research strategies, in both methodological and ethical senses, need to be thought through very carefully" (Sibley 1991 p. 142). Using traditional positivist methods like questionnaires are not effective methods in allowing an adult researcher to better understand the life experiences of a child (Baker, Panter-Brick & Todd, 1996). Questionnaires do not allow for any interaction between the adult and the child and as such power and control remains with the researcher. Therefore, in working with the girls, I

sought to use methods that would allow for maximum interaction, provide me with an effective platform to learn from the girls and enable the girls to navigate the conversation. And most importantly, the power to direct and develop new knowledge and meaning making needed to be with the girls (Freire, 1970). In order to keep the girls engaged and limit the boredom factor, it was important that I employed a variety of methods (Hill, 1997). The child-friendly and participatory methods I used in this study were: drawing, photovoice, focus groups, semi-structured qualitative interviews, informal conversations and reflection pieces (Young & Barrett, 2000).

Sessions 3 - 5: Working With Drawings – “Defining Poverty From The Girls’ Perspectives’

In my review of the second session, I noted that the girls had been very quiet and shy to voice their thoughts. In order for the participatory aspect of the study to be successful, it was important for me to build rapport with the girls that was respectful and genuine (Punch, 2002; Harden et al, 2000). Therefore, I designed the third session in a more structured manner with the hope of facilitating conversation among the girls and possibly even between the girls and me. I discussed with the Head Teacher the three questions I wish to present to the girls.

Question 1: Define poverty

Question 2: Describe your perfect life.

Question 3: What is needed in order to achieve your perfect life?

I also decided that there would be great value in comparing the girls’ responses at the beginning and at the end of the study. In comparing the girls’ responses, it would provide me with important data to see how or if their ideas related to the three questions had changed or remained the same.

I introduced the girls to the study by using a drawing activity they would be familiar with, a tool that would be both practical and child-friendly. I used drawings as an entry point to working with the girls and not as data. Drawings, like photographs have been regarded as powerful communication tools (Andersson, 1994). I asked the girls to respond to the questions by drawing their

responses. I thought this was an appropriate choice since drawings are increasingly being used as tool to gain insight into girls' lives and their experiences (Veale, 2005). They can be used as an effective tool for the girls to visually depict their life experiences regardless of their linguistic ability (Chung, Hallman & Brady, 2005). Drawings are also a low cost activity (Chung et al, 2005). Another advantage of using drawings is that it provided the girls with the opportunity to think about what they wished to include or exclude when responding to the questions pictorially. It also provided the girls with an opportunity to add or subtract to the image which resulted in having more control over the end product then for example they would have had in an interview situation where responses would be more immediate (Shaver, Francis & Barnett, 1993). As the girls began to design their responses, it became evident that the images they created were as much a discovery for me as it was for their peers and even themselves (Andersson, 1994).

While the girls drew their responses, the Head Teacher and I conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews. I drew on work related to gendered interviews which seeks to “circumvent the traditional interviewing paradigm...embedded in a masculine culture and stressing masculine traits...” (Oakley, 1981 p. 51). In traditional interviewing, the interviewer disengages from the respondent, as such there is no intimacy since reciprocity is not a primary objective of the interview process (Oakley, 1981 p. 49). The question of voice that is how authors express and write the stories, data that is included and excluded, whose voice is represented and absent – these remain at the forefront in gendered interviewing (Hertz, 1997).

Semi-structured interviews are also considered to have a high degree of validity since the girls raised issues that were important to them with little direction from me or the Head Teacher (Kvale, 1996; Bryman, 2008). Qualitative interviews have also been regarded as the “centrality of human interaction for knowledge production” (Kvale, 1996 p. 14) due to the interview format which allowed for reciprocity to be built between the researcher and participants. It also

provided for a platform in which both can make meaning of a situation (Harrison, 2001; Eide & Kahn, 2008; Roland & Wick, 2010).

I had three main objectives in selecting a semi-structured interview format. My focus was to gain knowledge from the girls, gather data and build rapport with the girls (Kvale, 1996; Bryman, 2008; Fontana & Frey; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). With respect to gathering data, my aim was to obtain background information, as well as illicit their initial thoughts around poverty, defining a good quality of life and the pathway needed to achieve a better quality of life. The process used in semi-structured qualitative interviews allowed me to interact and exchange information thus providing an ideal platform for the girls to get to know me and for me to establish a connection with each of them. I focused on establishing a conversation with the girls. Even though the Head Teacher acted as my translator, I maintained constant eye contact with the girl that sat in front of me. This was particularly important since we did not share a common language so I wanted to ensure the girls knew that I was present and attentive to their ideas and thoughts. The girls responded to my attentiveness. They demonstrated their trust for me in the notes they wrote, the personal details of their lives they shared with me and the affection they demonstrated.

All interviews were audio-taped with the girls' consent. The interviews were translated and transcribed within three days of the session. In order to ensure that the girls remembered what they had said, all transcribed notes were reviewed with the girls in the following session to ensure accuracy of transcribed data. During the qualitative interviews, all the girls raised similar issues. I categorized them into three categories: lack of male relationships in the form of a father, uncle or grandfather in their lives; enormous amount of time the girls spent completing their chores and their daily limited nutritional intake.

With the qualitative interviews completed, I reviewed the girls' drawings and realized that the girls while seated together appeared to have copied each other's thoughts since almost all the drawings were identical. Or maybe all the girls shared a common perception as illustrated. It would be important to

investigate this further during the next session. I also made a note to have the girls seated separately in order to bring forth their own unique ideas.

At the fourth session, I had a research assistant, Sarah. Sarah, a university student was home for the holidays. She spoke fluently in Portuguese and English. Within the first half hour, she had developed great rapport with the girls. There was a marked difference between the rapport the girls had with Sarah and with the Head Teacher. The girls were much more open with Sarah. Even their body language appeared to be more relaxed. Questions I had raised in prior sessions were being responded to in much greater depth and with passion that I had not seen earlier. Clearly, the relationship between Sarah and the girls was essential in enabling me to gather rich and varied data. I encouraged Sarah to provide me with her reflections and ideas at the end of each session.

I wondered why there was such a difference in the type of data gathered when the Head Teacher posed the question and when Sarah posed the same question. Power and perception are omnipresent and probably even more pronounced when adults work with children. James (1995) underscores that the way we see children will be indicative of the methods we select when working with children. She describes four models: the developing child, the tribal child, the adult child and the social child (James, 1995). According to James, the developing child is lacking in status and not fully competent (James, 1995). Whereas, the adult child is seen as being socially competent in ways comparable to an adult (James, 1995). From my observation, it would appear that the Head Teacher and Sarah both *saw* the girls from different standpoints which clearly translated into the type of interaction they pursued with the girls. In addition, the power imbalance may have been even more pronounced given that the Head Teacher represented formal authority for the girls within their school environment. Also, how children are perceived and the power they hold in front of an adult which is reinforced by culture may have been another challenge with respect to the more formal, but limited rapport the girls had with the Head Teacher (Alderson, 1995). The girls may have delivered responses that they

assumed would be expected by the Head Teacher, whereas with Sarah, the conversation (and not question/answer) was more free-flowing and natural.

The fifth session began with a walkabout where the participants viewed the images drawn by their peers defining abject poverty. After the walkabout we had our first focus group discussion. Although focus groups typically center on questions raised by the researcher (Morgan, 1996), I approached it slightly differently. The focus groups did have a research focus, however if the conversations took an unexpected turn, I did not change the course of the conversation, but allowed it to flow freely. Data that emerged from these unexpected turns was always insightful, adding another layer of understanding to girls experiences with poverty. Although I was not able to use all the data, as some of it was outside of the scope of this research, it did provide me with deeper insight into the lives of these girls living with poverty.

In contrast to the qualitative interviews in which I was able to gain insight into one girl's perspective at a time, a focus group format provided a platform for the girls to dialogue and debate. It also allowed for issues that were common, as well as unique to group members to surface (Callaghan, 2005; Morgan & Krueger, 1993). Most importantly, focus groups 'gave voice' to marginalized groups like girls living with poverty (Morgan, 1996).

The aim of the first focus group was to better understand the girls' definition of poverty and her perception of a better quality of life. I noted that the girls were still cautiously sharing their perspectives, as if they were still unsure of the value of their ideas or were not ready to share them with the larger group. I made a note of whose voice remained silent within the group. Four of the ten girls had either barely spoken or remained silent. In order to hear their voices, I considered the importance of reflection pieces for all successive sessions.

Reflection is a key step in participatory research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). With the girls' role as co-researchers, it would be important for them to develop critical reflection skills, a necessary step for empowerment (Kemmis et al, 2000). I also realized that if I wished to hear the voices of girls who had been silenced for generations, a variety of data collection methods would be required to

ensure that each girl found comfort and ease with at least one data collection method.

The images the girls had drawn with respect to poverty focused on physical poverty that is the house and the contents of the house. A common image which the girls referred to as a poor person's house emerged. According to them, a poor person's house is a *broken down, two room house with a toilet outside*. The house as a symbol of poverty reminded me of the critical role of architecture. "Architecture is the only art that is a direct reflector of poverty ... in it there is an inherent and unavoidable demonstration of the quality of life or its absence" (Aga Khan in Jodidio, 2007).

Figure 2: 'A Poor Person's House'



*"I drew this house, because the house represents a poor person's house. A poor person's house only has 2 rooms – a kitchen and a bedroom with the toilet outside of the home. I think it's better to live in a house like this and not have to steal. If someone feels like they should help, they will. But, I will not steal things from the street".*¹⁷ Fatima © Sajan Virgi, 2010

When we asked the girls how the houses they drew represented abject poverty. They responded by saying "*the house is falling apart. It is broken.*" Rita felt that abject poverty had more to do with what a person had than the house they lived in. "*Poverty is when a person has nothing to eat or wear. If someone gives you something with love, it is more appreciated. Poverty does not mean*

¹⁷ The girls throughout the research spoke in Portuguese. The comments made by the girls that have been included in this article have been translated into English and verified by the participants.

stealing. The house symbolizes a house of a poor person with nothing in there. Live with what you have". Paula focused on the state of the house. "Someone who lives in that house has nothing to eat, rain comes gushing into the house. The person will have to sleep on the floor. I wish people would give stuff because they care". Fatima noted that "being poor means that I do not have a bed to sleep on. I sleep on the floor." The strong sense of ethic was consistently mentioned by all 10 girls. From each of the girls, it was clear that they had been offered food, clothing, school materials, but that it was done in a way that demeaned them. They wished to keep their dignity intact. Only three of the girls independently identified themselves as being 'poor'. One moment that stood out for me was when Fatima noted that a better quality of life would mean that she would have a bed. *"A bed would mean that I would be sleeping on something that would be dry and comfortable"*.

The girls were evidently enjoying the sessions since they requested to meet on Saturdays after they completed their chores in the morning.

Sessions 6 - 10: Introduction to Photo-Voice – 'Feeling Strong' and 'Feeling Not So Strong'

Session six began with an introduction to Michelle, my new research assistant, a Mozambican university student completing her last year of a Bachelor degree in Education. Sarah had returned to university. Michelle and the girls also formed a warm and trusting relationship. As with Sarah, I explained to Michelle the objectives of the research and also encouraged her to share her reflections after each session. I found Michelle's perspective to be important as she provided me with insight into the lives of privileged Mozambicans and what it meant to be a woman living in Mozambique, privileged or otherwise. At the end of the study, Michelle shared that she learned as much about girls living with abject poverty as I had despite living in Mozambique her entire life.

I was delighted to also introduce Claudia Mitchell and Naydene De Lange to the girls. Claudia and Naydene participated for two sessions and provided me with invaluable advice, practical guidance and essential support. Both Claudia and Naydene with their diverse research experiences played an active and

important role in introducing photovoice to the girls. The girls were given an overview of photovoice and introduced to the technicalities related to operating a digital camera. The excitement and energy emitting from the girls as they began to take photos using a digital camera and then immediately seeing the photos they took is indescribable. After practising with the camera, the girls were divided into three groups and asked to take photographs representing ‘feeling strong’ and ‘feeling not so strong’ (Mitchell et al, 2005). The girls took 30 pictures in total.

Figure 3: ‘Mastering The Camera’



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Figure 4: ‘Getting Up Close And Personal With The Photos’



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The following session, a sample of photos taken by the girls was displayed in the school courtyard. After the walkabout, we had to allow for an hour for the girls to view their photos and that of their peers. There were animated conversations across groups and within groups. Paula summarized the girls’

excitement and reactions to their photos: *“I could not believe that I was looking at the photos I had taken!”*

Figure 5: ‘Working With The Images’



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Figure 6: ‘Sharing Images’



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After the girls settled down, we had them seated alone to select photos and provide context to the photographs. The decision to have them sit alone during this activity was with the aim of having them discover their own inner voice instead of relying on the voice of others. The decision was a wise one as each girl provided her own unique perspective of ‘feeling strong’ and feeling not so strong’

(Mitchell et al, 2005) which allowed for a lively and engaging debate. Notably, all girls participated in the debate.

A second focus group was conducted around ‘feeling strong’ and ‘feeling not so strong’ (Mitchell et al, 2005). The simple prompt of ‘feeling strong’ and ‘feeling not so strong’ (Mitchell et al, 2005) resulted in immediate and almost visceral reactions as it is a common feeling experienced by all persons. The girls focused on diverse personal life experiences including unavailability of food and poor health as representative of ‘feeling not so strong’. The girls also used their life experiences to represent ‘feeling strong’ including having adequate food and being able to lean on others during hard times. The categories raised included the girls’ needs, aspirations, challenges and even diverse barriers they experienced which prevented them from attending school.

Sessions 6 – 16 were video-taped with consent provided by the girls. With increasing usage of videos in ethnographic research, Pink suggests that traditional hierarchies between text and visual data will begin to blur (Pink, 2001). I did not engage the girls in video-making (Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell, Walsh & Weber, 2007, Mitchell & Weber, 2007). Rather, I used it as a secondary tool to capture process data. The video-taped sessions enabled me to focus on “body language, such as gestures, facial expressions ... positioning ...” (Poland & Pedersen, 1998 p. 302). Video-taping the sessions provided me with a second opportunity to closely review data captured during focus groups and regular sessions. It also allowed me to be ‘present’ during the sessions as it minimized the need for constant note-taking. This provided me with important time to reflect and observe the absence or presence of voice during the sessions, as well as reflect on what was being discussed and notably what was not being discussed. The silence was particularly deafening during discussions related to HIV&AIDS.

Sessions 11 - 16: Community Interviews and Photo-Taking

These sessions focused on preparing and conducting qualitative community-based interviews, as well as taking photos within their community. Questions that the girls would be asking the senior female members of the family were developed. The interviews were organized around such questions as:

identifying female roles and responsibilities, discovering what older female relations would have changed in her life and why, as well as understanding from the female relative what could trigger the process of change in the quality of lives of the younger generation of women in her community. Given that the families lived with abject generational poverty, we were interested in seeing how the girls themselves would discover similarities or differences between the lives of their grandmothers, mothers and aunts and their own and what steps they would take, if any to address these issues.

Excerpts From A Transcribed Community Interview

The girls practised their interviewing and listening skills before conducting an interview with an older female relation. Below are excerpts from an interview conducted by Fatima with her mother.

Fatima: Tell me about grandmother, what did she do for a living, what were her dreams?

Fatima's mother (39 years of age): She was a peasant. She worked very hard. I never asked her about her dreams. I did not see her often as she was always looking for work or working. She died when I was very young.

Fatima: What are your dreams? If you could choose any job, what would you want to do?

Fatima's mother: I do not have time to dream. My focus is to take care of my family. I cannot afford to dream of different possibilities, this is our reality. I do not think it is possible for me to have a different life. Everyone in my family has the same life.

Fatima: If you could, what job would you want?

Fatima's mother: I would want to be a seamstress. The women who are seamstress make more money than I do. They had a chance to attend a training session, but I could not go as we did not have enough money for the course.

Fatima: What do you think needs to be done to change the lives of the younger girls?

Fatima's mother: *What would really help is if women would stop drinking and playing with men. This would avoid the majority of fights between them, and also prevent women from getting hurt. I wish that men would listen to us.*

The girls during Session 11 also learned the technicalities related to using a disposal camera. They preferred using a digital camera and expressed their disappointment towards using a disposal camera. Along with interviews, the girls each took the following photos within their community adding to the rich interview data they had already acquired.

- 2 portrait photos of the family member they were interviewing
- 2 photos that depicted a day in the life of the family member being interviewed. We asked the girls to record three different activities if possible.
- 4 photos that demonstrated a day in their own lives. We asked the girls to record four different activities if possible.
- 2 photos demonstrating the strengths found within their community
- 2 photos to record the challenges found within their community

Two additional focus groups were conducted. The first focused on strengths and challenges the girls had identified related to girls and women living with poverty. The second focus group focused on the girls' ideas for solutions with respect to the challenges they had identified. As with the other focus groups, the photos were used as an entry point for discussion and debate (Mitchell et al, 2005).

The girls commented on similarities and differences of their photographs. One category that seemed to cut across all categories was the role of food or lack of in their lives. The lack of food left the girls feeling lonely, isolated, helpless and even in tears. It also provoked feelings of anger among family members. Clearly in each family, it was women or girls who were responsible for acquiring food. Another category that surfaced strongly was gendered roles and responsibilities and the impact it had on the choices the girls had to make with respect to attending school, sleeping, completing their homework or even playing. An unexpected category that arose was the unavailability of designated safe and

clean playground space within the girls' communities. Without a designated playground space, the girls were left with limited options: playing on large garbage dump sites within their community or playing near pools of still rain water often mixed with sewage water. The girls also expressed many 'aha' moments related to becoming aware of intergenerational poverty, as well as in seeing themselves and each other for the first time as a result of ideas each had expressed during the sessions.

After the presentations, I sat alone and viewed all the photographs the girls had taken. The visual evidence before me was overwhelming. It reminded me of how photos "visually represent information, allowing the human to directly interact with it, to gain insight, to draw conclusions, and to ultimately make better decisions" (Keim, Mansmann, Schneidewind, & Ziegler, 2007 p.1). I imagined that the photographs the girls had presented would and should become strong visual evidence that decision makers would find difficult to put aside.

The final two sessions were conducted on a Saturday, leaving us with additional time to conduct the second unstructured qualitative interview. We posed the same questions we had asked during the first session. The responses were meaningfully richer in perspective. The analysis the girls had undertaken was thoughtful and considered a variety of elements including gendered roles, status of girls and women, power imbalance, voice, agency, vulnerability, physical violence, the absence of essential life giving necessities, barriers towards capacity building including time poverty, intergenerational poverty, absence of male relations and how they could or would transition from their current quality of life to a higher quality of life.

Previously when we had asked the question "how would you achieve this [change in quality of life]?" the response was consistently 'complete my education'. When the same question was asked at the second qualitative interview, the girls suggested that only education was not the answer. They wondered how they would be able to afford additional education. In reference to this they spoke about the limited income opportunities that are available for women, as well as how their roles and responsibilities interfered with their ability

to attend school. Status of girls and women was discussed at length and its role in preventing them from completing their education or accessing better jobs. Despite the challenges noted, the girls had clearly not given up on their dreams of a better future. The girls were actively considering different career options beyond nursing and teaching.

SECTION 4: WORKING WITH THE DATA

*What Counts As Data?*¹⁸

Data used in this research came from a variety of sources. The combination of visual and verbal data provided me with a much richer set of data. The rich and varied data I have acquired could not have been possible had I only used photographs or discussion (Young & Barrett, 2000). Principal sources of data included the following:

1. Drawings

Drawings provided an important ‘entry point’ to engaging girls in a participatory process, and in introducing the idea of interpretation. In all, the girls produced 30 drawings to represent their perceptions of poverty; their ideal life, as well as what would be required to achieve their ideal life.

2. Photographs, Written Captions and Explanations

Participants took 30 photographs to represent “feeling strong/not strong” in the photovoice workshops. An additional collection of 100 photographs were taken in the community. The participants took to represent their perceptions of strengths, challenges in their lives, as well as their ideas for solutions.

3. Transcribed Interviews Conducted By The girls

Each girl conducted an interview with one older female member of the family (grandmother, mother or aunt, or in one case a neighbour). The purpose of the interviews was to gain the perspective of women at least one generation apart from the girls regarding strengths and challenges of their lives, their community and their ideas for solutions that would lead to the alleviation of poverty. We worked with the girls to develop the interviews which were organized around

¹⁸ All written text, audio and video recorded conversations were in Portuguese. They were translated into English by the research assistants. The translation as transcribed was then re-confirmed for its accuracy with each participant at the next session.

such questions as: identifying the work undertaken by the female relative, discovering what she would have changed in her life and why, as well as understanding from the female relative what could trigger the process of change in the quality of lives of the younger generation of women in her community. Given that the families lived with abject generational poverty, we were interested in seeing how the girls themselves would discover similarities or differences between the lives of their grandmothers, mothers and aunts and their own and what steps if any they would take to address these issues.

4. Video

Each session was video recorded. The participants' photo presentations of their perceptions of strengths, challenges and ideas for solutions were also captured on video. All video data was reviewed and analysed to better understand girls' engagement in social issues and to record how their confidence grew with each successive session in articulating their unique ideas. I used the video as a secondary tool to capture data. In viewing the videos, I was interested in noting the facial expressions and body language of the girls. I also noted who remained quiet during the discussions. If a girl remained quiet, we would engage the girl in a private conversation about the topic discussed in order to provide her with time and space to contribute her thoughts if she so desired. We found that when certain topics were raised, lack of voice, bullying or HIV&AIDS, one girl in particular remained quiet. But, when we engaged her privately in a conversation, she had a lot to say about the topic, in particular about lack of voice and bullying.

5. Transcribed Qualitative Interviews and Focus Groups

I conducted two unstructured interviews with each of the girls. The first was during sessions 1 and 2. This interview focused on collecting background data, as well as asking girls' open-ended questions about their perception of poverty. The second unstructured qualitative interview was conducted during sessions 14 – 16. During this interview we asked the girls what they learned in the last 14-16 weeks; what they would like to have done differently; their ideas of strengths, challenges and solutions; what they learned through the interviews they conducted with their female relations. We then allowed time for the girls to share whatever

was on their mind. These interviews were audio-recorded only. Four focus group discussions were conducted. Each session was audio and video recorded. The focus groups lasted approximately two hours each. During the focus groups, the girls presented their drawings and/or photos with context. Discussion and debate followed each presentation.

6. Written Texts of Participants' Reflections

At the end of each session, participants wrote down their reflections, suggestions for topics to be discussed in future sessions, as well as note down questions they were too shy to pose during the session. In total, I had 145 pages.

7. Field Notes and Fieldwork Journals

Observations I made during the sessions, interviews, focus group discussion, as well as, discussion I had with the research assistants were recorded in my field notes. I also kept a journal in which I recorded what needed to be improved, why and how. Observations I made during informal conversations with participants and research assistants were also recorded in my field notes.

Chart 1 – Summary of Data Sources

Type Of Data	Number	Purpose
Drawings	30	Gain insight into the girls' perceptions of poverty and their ideal life, as well as the elements needed to bridge the gap.
Photographs / Written Captions and Text	130	Understand the girls' perception of feeling strong and feeling not so strong. Also, their understanding of the community's strengths, challenges and ideas for solutions.
Qualitative Interview Conducted By The Girls	10	Gain perspective of women at least one generation apart from the girls regarding strengths and challenges of their lives, their community and their ideas for solutions that would lead to the alleviation of poverty.
Unstructured Qualitative Interviews	20	Gain deeper insight into the girls' individual perceptions of community's strengths, challenges and their ideas for solutions. Provided time to further discuss issues girls had raised during focus group discussions.

Focus Groups	4	The girls presented their drawings and/or photos with context. Discussion and debate followed each presentation.
Participant Reflections	145 pages	Provide the girls with time and space to reflect on issues of concern to them. Also to raise any issues pertaining to focus group discussions.
Field Notes	63 pages	To record my observations during the sessions, interviews, focus group discussion, as well as, discussion I had with the research assistants were recorded in my field notes.
Video Recorded Sessions	11 sessions	Secondary source of data used to observe facial gestures, engagement, disengagement, positioning, as well as body language of the girls in relation to the topics being discussed and debated.

SECTION 5: ANALYSIS OF VISUAL AND VERBAL DATA

Qualitative data analysis is inductive rather than deductive. In inductive analysis, the researcher begins with the data and then categories emerge. Therefore, the researcher generates the hypotheses from the data (Fielding & Fielding, 1986). Given that qualitative research often employs several methods of collection, challenges arise when the field researcher begins to work with variety of data sources (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In order to analyze the data in a meaningful and relevant manner, I divided the data into visual and verbal data, although where possible, I analysed both types of data together. Keeping in mind that “data analysis is not off-the-shelf; rather, it is custom-built, revised, “choreographed” (Miles & Huberman, 1994 p. 142), I designed an approach that would be applicable and relevant for my study. I chose an iterative and holistic approach to data analysis. This approach enabled me to work across different data sets (photos, captions, interviews with girls, girls’ interviews with family member, focus groups). Berkowitz (1997) describes the iterative process involved in qualitative analysis.

Qualitative analysis is a loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data as additional questions emerge, new connections

are unearthed, and more complex formulations develop along with a deepening understanding of the material. Qualitative analysis is fundamentally an *iterative* set of processes (emphasis included) (Berkowitz, 1997).

The role of iteration is a reflexive process which is fundamental to sparking insight and developing meaning. Through reflexive iteration, data is revisited constantly and through this process insights emerge leading to refined focus and understandings (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009).

Working With Verbal Data

Iterative Analysis

In my iterative analysis, I was looking for key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data that become categories for focus (Glaser, 1978). These emerging categories as presented by the girls provided me with deeper insight into their experiences with poverty, the barriers that were present in their lives that prevented them from accessing capacity building opportunities like attending school. I also looked across various data sources for reoccurring themes.

There are several fluid steps used in iterative analysis including coding, constant comparison and categorizing data. “Coding is, of course, an attempt to fix meaning, constructing a particular vision of the world...”(Seale, 1999 p. 154). In this process, data are broken down into component parts and identified (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). Coding begins as soon as data are collected. Data are constantly coded and re-categorized. “Unlike quantitative research that requires data to fit into *preconceived* standardized codes, the researcher’s interpretations of data shape his or her emergent codes” (Charmaz, 2000 p. 515). Open coding is “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990 p. 61). For example, one code that emerged during open coding – nutrition, was identified during the first set of data collected. Nutrition later changed into becoming a category in relation to ‘lower status of girls’.

Another example of how codes evolved in terms of importance is found in the earlier reflection piece when Rosa noted that “*their mothers, grandmothers*

and aunties had warned them against playing with older men”. At the following session, we placed the following quote on the blackboard and asked the girls to respond to it “mother, grandmothers and aunties warn against playing with older men.” Even though only one girl had spoken about it in her reflection piece, it was clear that all the girls had received similar messages from their female relations. The conversation initially focused on pregnancy, but quickly moved into designated gendered roles. Various issues emerged including: vulnerability; stigma (girls who became pregnant were asked to join night school – the boys could however continue with their education at day school); their inability to complete their education; why boys had different opportunities than girls).

The main questions I asked as I interacted constantly with the data were as follows: What is happening? (Glaser, 1978); What does the data suggest? What is being highlighted? From whose point of view? (Charmaz, 2000). I also considered what was absent from the conversation? For example, the girls raised a variety of health concerns like malaria and cholera. However, HIV&AIDS was a topic I had to raise.

I enjoyed being surprised as I classified and re-classified categories and unexpected categories emerged. I conscientiously read all the data as it was being developed and continued to re-read all data produced at least once a week. I kept in mind Oakley’s thoughts regarding data analysis in which she says, “data analysis is not only a cerebral activity – it involves the whole person” (Oakley, 1994 p. 21). Oakley goes on to say that important insights and discoveries may be made when removed from the detailed work of coding and analysis (Oakley, 1994).

I worked closely with the girls to identify critical categories. For example, the girls identified various barriers they faced in trying to leave a life of poverty which was directly based on their pre-determined lower status as girls, lack of economic opportunity available for girls and women, the early hours their mothers had to leave for work, sometimes at 4 or 5am. Despite working hard, they often came home without having earned any money or very little money. The men in their community appeared to have money and did not have to work as hard as the

women. During the qualitative interviews, we probed further the type of employment options women and men had access to, as well as the decision making process that was being adopted within their homes based on gender. Upon reviewing the girls' reflection pieces, it became apparent that gendered roles and the lower status of girls was a category that emerged consistently with all the girls. We probed the topic further during the last focus group.

It was important that data continued to be collected to the point of saturation. Saturation occurred when new categories did not emerge or when older data did not move to a new category (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). Noted below are excerpts from qualitative interviews, focus group discussion and photovoice in which the concept of time emerged. The concept of time then became a major category: pre-determined roles and responsibilities for girls.

Paula (photovoice):

"Every morning, I wake up at 5am to fetch water. I carry at least 20 large containers of water as shown in the photo. When, I'm finished, I am very tired, very tired."

Rita (focus group discussion):

"I am responsible for collecting water every morning. Depending on how much water I have to collect, it can take me from 2 hours to 4 hours. It is very tiring."

Carla (photovoice):

"Only girls in my community are responsible for cleaning dishes, sweeping. Boys never help. They just laugh if you ask them to help you."

Rosa (qualitative interview):

"I am responsible for collecting water. I also have to wash all the dishes, clean the house and sweep every day. I also have to cook after I come home from school."

Yolanda (focus group discussion):

"I really like coming to school. I enjoy learning new things. I never get enough time to study or complete my homework. I have so many

responsibilities. But, if I don't help my mom, who will? My brother is not responsible for the house. My mother tells me it's my responsibility."

Anna (photovoice):

"I see how hard all the girls and women work. The men they have lots of time and money. I have to work hard at home to help my mother. I don't have time to rest or play. I wish I had time to do things that I like. But, this is my life. I am not complaining."

Fatima (reflection piece):

"Even though I have to do all the work in the home, I would never want to be a boy. Girls take care of their families. We work together. I only feel sad that often I can't come to school because I have finished my chores. My brother doesn't take school seriously. He doesn't realize how lucky he is to attend school every day."

From these excerpts the concept of time emerged clearly. The diverse responsibilities each girl had which impacted her ability to attend school regularly and/or complete her school work also became apparent. The data underscored that pre-assigned responsibilities which were labour and time intensive were assigned to the girls, based on her gender. In analyzing these excerpts and other comprehensive data, pre-determined roles and responsibilities emerged as a clear and distinct category. After six months of working with the girls, when no new information was collected and no new categories emerged, I was confident that I had collected all the necessary and pertinent data for my study.

Working with Visual Data

Selection of Photographs

Historically, photography has been an integral tool found in social research. Images recorded have been analyzed to better understand the social reality of population groups in distant lands as much as it has been used as evidence of how reality was constructed by photographers themselves (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). In today's world "images are 'everywhere'. They permeate our academic work, everyday lives, conversations and dreams" (Pink, 2001 p. 17). As a result images have become powerful tools as they

unconsciously or consciously shape our thoughts, beliefs and ideology.

Photographs have long been used to record visual evidence that is impossible to refute. Photography has also been used to support or refute stereotypes of peoples from a distant land, particularly commercial photography (Marien, 2002). Images therefore provide us with a reference point of our perspective of an event, culture or persons. However, what is equally as important is to acknowledge the role of the researcher in shaping the reader's perceptive by presenting some images and leaving out other images (Pink in Mullen, 2002).

As Gillian Rose (2001) and others highlight, there are several different ways of working with visual data such as photographs, based on such questions as 'who took the photograph?' and 'what does the photographer say about the image?' and even 'where is the photograph stored or displayed?' In other works, two additional questions have been posed 'how can photos be used within a participant-analysis approach?' (De Lange et al, 2006) and 'how do we work with a single photograph?' (Moletsane & Mitchell, 2007). My main approach was to rely on what the girls themselves chose to photograph (in terms of categories), and their own passion and enthusiasm when choosing from the images and photos they selected to focus on. They also provided the framework and context to the photos enabling the reader to understand the meaning they were making over their own lives (Freire, 1970). The photos permitted us to see the world through her eyes. Since photographs were used as an entry point for dialogue and debate, it was the follow-up discussions that provided even richer data with respect to the barriers they faced in trying to acquire a higher quality of life.

The principle objective of visual analysis is to deconstruct text in order to identify the elements that represent the entire text. The focus is to understand the textual strategies used to convey a specific meaning (Aiello, 2006). The deconstruction of visual text requires critical analysis (Iedema, 2001). Kress and van Leeuwen, (1996) emphasize that "an image is not the result of a singular, isolated, creative activity, but is itself a social process. As such, its meaning is a negotiation between the producer and the viewer, reflecting their individual

social/cultural/political beliefs, values, and attitudes” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 p. 54).

In analyzing the girls’ photos, I had two main signs: images and text. Harrison notes that “readers/users no longer rely solely on written text for comprehension: they absorb and process all that they see within a document to create meaning for themselves”. Horn defines multimodality as follows: “Tight coupling’ means that you cannot remove the words or the images or the shapes from a piece of visual language without destroying or radically diminishing the meaning a reader can obtain from it” (Horn, 1999 p. 27). I understood what he meant because without the girls’ text, the images alone could not have accurately conveyed the girls’ thoughts. An example of this can be seen in the image below (Fig 7).

Figure 7: ‘Feeling Not Strong’



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Putting it into context, the girls in this photograph were responding to images that represented “feeling not so strong”. Note that the representation of feeling not so strong is associated with sadness. The image takes on an entirely different understanding when the girls’ caption is added: *“This picture shows how I feel when I have not had enough food to eat. I feel sad and alone. Even with so many people around me, I feel alone. Sometimes I don’t go to school*

because I am so hungry it hurts". This attests to Horn's acknowledgement of the importance and value of 'tight coupling'. For the analysis of data as represented in Chapters 5 and 6, I worked closely with the photos that the girls chose to highlight.

Transparency, Trustworthiness and Dependability of Data

Qualitative and quantitative research generates different types of knowledge because of the philosophy each subscribes to and the methods it employs to acquire the knowledge (Ambert, Adler, Adler & Detzner, 1995). Qualitative research is regarded as being contextual and subjective versus quantitative research which is seen to be generalizable and objective. Quantitative research espouses positivist principles whereas qualitative research relies on interpretive inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research knowledge has been described as "being provisional, meaning that it might be true for now, for here, for a particular individual, however it can never be absolute, certain and once and forever truth" (Holloway & Freshwater, 2007 p. 50). This is because it is impossible to consider that a single account of social reality can exist for all (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Because of the tensions between qualitative and quantitative research, different terms have been developed that can attest to the validity and reliability of data as it relates to interpretive inquiry. In interpretive inquiry, conventional terms like 'transparency', 'reliability', 'validity' and 'generalization' are replaced with 'trustworthy', 'consistent' and 'dependable' research (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Merriam, 1998; Smith, 1997). "Validity or trustworthiness is concerned with the integration of the conclusions that are generated from a study." "Reliability or dependability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are consistent and repeatable" (Bryman, 2004 p. 13).

Transparency

As Butler-Kisber (2010), notes, making our work transparent, "show rather than just tell" (Butler-Kisber, 2010 p. 149) is critical. Indeed, in some ways it might be regarded as an umbrella in relation to such concepts as

trustworthiness, consistency and dependability. Throughout the study I have tried to make transparent my 'doing' and the decision making process. As Butler-Kisber observes, "...transparent accounts provide ways for other researchers to use and adapt the work, thus adding to the evolving nature of qualitative inquiry" (Butler-Kisber, 2010 p. 149). While it is easier to provide transparency in relation to the step-by-step aspects of the work, I have nonetheless tried to show how I arrived at the types of interpretations the girls have offered here.

But transparency also relates to the ways in which we work with participants in participatory research. Transparency is an internal exercise whereby participants understand how decisions are made and an external exercise whereby observers can audit the process (Blackstock, Kelly & Horsey, 2007). It has been claimed that participatory research rarely engages participants beyond the data generation stage resulting in minimal involvement if any in the analysis of data generated by the participants (Holland, Renold, Ross & Hillman, 2007). Data analysis can be both an informal and formal activity. For example, informally, data maybe be analyzed by seeking feedback, clarification and input from child participants (Thomas & O'Kane, 1998). It can also be a formal stage of research whereby children receive training in methods of analysis and are engaged in analysis as a defined research activity (Kellett, Forrest, Dent & Ward, 2004). In my study, the girls were consistently and constantly engaged through data they produced. I sought clarification, input and feedback. For example, I shared with the girls the categories which were emerging through the data they produced. I did not refer to them as categories, but stated that these were issues they had raised which were important to them. Using this process, I found that the girls used the categories as a natural entry for conversation and dialogue.

Even though I had engaged the girls in data collection and analysis, I wondered how power fit into their ability to engage with me. The girls did not live in an environment where they were encouraged to question and deliberate issues. They were also immersed in an environment in which they were not encouraged to question adults whom they perceived as being figures of authority, whether it was their caregivers or teachers. Even though they did challenge my

conclusions, I wondered if their conclusions would have been meaningfully different, if they had lived in an environment in which they were encouraged to critically think and analyze conclusions drawn by the adults in their lives including caregivers and teachers. I also questioned how different the conclusions would have been had I formally trained the girls in methods of analysis. My reasons for not pursuing this avenue was the time required for training and lack of funds.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of data in qualitative research focuses on the credibility of descriptions, explanation and interpretations (Maxwell, 1996). Internal validity is critical in qualitative research since it indicates the extent to which the researcher 're-presents' the participant's social reality and the meaning they gave to their life experiences (Holloway & Freshwater, 2007). I used member-check to affirm that the data collected and interpreted accurately represented the reality of these girls' experience with poverty. Lincoln and Guba describe member checks as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314) in a study. I did this by sharing conclusions drawn with the girls in order to ensure that they were accurate. For example, food consistently emerged as a topic of discussion in all of our meetings with the girls. I had therefore placed it as a higher priority above water for building appropriate capacity for girls living with poverty. However, when I shared with the girls the list of priorities, they disagreed. The girls unanimously indicated that access to water would have a higher impact on their quality of life than food. Carla summarized the girls' thoughts.

If we had water inside our communities, we would be able to sleep longer. We would not be tired before going to school. We would be able to attend school regularly. We would have time to play and rest. Food is important, but having water inside our community is more important.

Trustworthiness also depends directly on prolonged engagement in the field until data saturation is reached. I began the study with the intent that I would remain in the field until I reached data saturation which occurred at six

months. The use of multiple methods of collection of data also allowed for increased credibility through triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Flick, 2002). In this study, I had ten types of data to draw from for the purposes of triangulation, as well as to develop rich and in-depth descriptions, explanations and interpretations. For example, for emerging categories related to gender inequality, I used data collected from semi-structured qualitative interviews that I had conducted and compared it with data collected from focus groups, as well as interviews conducted by the girls with their female relations. This allowed me to draw conclusions with confidence and also provided space to reflect on questions that remained unanswered. For example, it was beyond the scope of this study to answer a critical question related to how institutions continue to re-create male dominated power. Although the girls touched on it in-directly, there wasn't the depth of material needed to draw concrete theories and/or conclusions.

Dependability

Dependability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are “consistent and repeatable” (Bryman, 2004 p. 30). This term can be problematic if you consider that it is impossible to freeze the human condition within a given setting and at a particular time in order for another researcher to test for repeatability. The human experience continues to change constantly in response to its environment, the challenges and opportunities that are presented. However, dependability increases through multiple viewing of video-recorded data, multiple listening of audio-recorded data, as well as multiple transcriptions of audio-recorded materials. In this study, given that the girls spoke and wrote in Portuguese, my research assistants and I undertook multiple viewing and listening of all visual and verbal data (Ratcliffe, 1995) for accuracy with respect to translation, as well as to ensure that subtle visual cues (for example, a girl crying, gazing down or demonstrating their sense of confidence through their tone, and / or visual stature) were also being recorded. The research assistants then performed a member check of all materials translated and transcribed to ensure that we had captured the data in its essence and for accuracy.

The length of time spent in the field can also be attributed towards dependability. Time is critical as it is required to establish a trusting relationship with the participants. Data acquired without established trust would be meaningfully different. Adequate time is also required in order for the researcher to compare interview data with observational data. Time also provides the researcher with pluralist perspectives which allows for deeper insight. This can only occur once collaboration has been established in the gathering of new knowledge between the researcher and participant (Creswell & Miller, 2000). In this study, participatory methodologies allowed me to develop a close, trusting and working relationship with the girls. Without such a relationship, it would not have been possible to gather the rich data acquired over the six month period. At the end of the study, the girls' comments made me realize the impact of this study. Although this is a direct quote made by Fatima, each of the girls expressed similar sentiments. *"This study is very important to me. I have learned about myself. I have learned to listen to new ideas. Because of this study, I saw myself for the first time."*

SUMMARY

In this chapter I have reviewed the key literature on participatory visual methodologies and have then described the design of the study. Photovoice is an effective strategy to collect research data for qualitative inquiry. It is also a participatory tool to engage its participants and provide visual evidence which can be difficult to dispute. I also present a detailed 'doing fieldwork' process from finding and entering into my research site, addressing the issue of conducting research in a foreign language, recruiting participants and identifying my diverse sets of data collection methods. In terms of data analysis, I explain the analytical methods that I have used and how I have worked with the visual and verbal data I gathered. In chapters 5 and 6 the girls' voices will be heard directly through the data collected.

CHAPTER 5 - ANALYSIS 1

CAPACITY BUILDING BARRIERS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GIRLS LIVING WITH POVERTY

*“Children, particularly girls, continue to inherit family poverty.
This cycle must be broken.” UNESCO, 2003 p. 5*

INTRODUCTION

Consider the following four facts. The development sector has focused predominately on education as the leading tool required to develop capacity for girls living with poverty in order to enable them to access a higher quality of life. The very early years of adolescence are essential precursors to health, education, vitality and longevity. Given that poverty overwhelmingly has a female face, girls living in poverty are more likely to be permanently excluded from school (Tilak, 2005). Reflecting on these four facts noted above, this study focused on identifying unique barriers girls face while living with abject poverty and the type of capacity that would enable them to exit from a life of poverty. This chapter is the first of two chapters that offers an analysis of work undertaken in partnership with the girls. In chapters 5 and 6, I will draw on stories and comments made by Anna, Beatrice, Carla, Fatima, Joana, Patricia, Paula, Rosa, Rita and Yolanda. I will be presenting data and where relevant, reading it against the literature on girls’ in development context in both chapters.

In Chapter 5, I will share discussions related to research question 1 and 2.
Question 1: What barriers do girls face in their attempt to exit a life of poverty?
Question 2: According to the girls, what specific capacity building opportunities will result in a meaningful and sustainable increase in their quality of life?

The second chapter of analysis (Chapter 6) will highlight the role of the girls’ participation through participatory visual methodologies in creating increased awareness, developing critical thinking skills and finally, policy making and social action at the grassroots level.

As noted in the previous chapter, the data sets described here and in the next chapter draws from the 130 or so photographs taken by the girls (photos on ‘feeling strong/feeling not so strong’, and photos on a typical day in the life of girls and women in their community). It also draws from photos selected by the girls along with their captions, discussions during focus groups, data which emerged during one on one interview that I conducted with them plus the interviews that the girls themselves conducted. In these two chapters, I work primarily with images that the girls selected.

SECTION 1: PUTTING CAPACITY BUILDING INTO MOZAMBICAN CONTEXT

Political Will

Even though political will and policies are beyond the scope of this research, it became crystal clear through the research process, the essential role of politics in developing relevant capacity building policies for girls living with poverty. The girls in the discussions touched on the role of Government in relation to improving their quality of lives. The data collected is not sufficient given that it was not a focus of the study. It is however, worthwhile to include the issues they have raised given the critical importance it has in improving their quality of life. Without governmental support, the girls lives will remain embedded in poverty. The Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls’ Education and Gender Equality made on May 20, 2010 reemphasizes this point by highlighting that “poverty is both structural and multidimensional and has differential impacts on girls and women, interventions for girls’ education must cover multiple sectors. Education policies, strategies, plans and budgets must all be gender-responsive” (UNGEI, 2010a p. 7). The Declaration underscores the vital role of the Government in alleviating poverty, something the girls also emphasized in their comments noted below.

Without political will, appropriate support (financial, human resources, technical) and authentic engagement of girls living with poverty in capacity building discussions and decisions, it will be challenging, if not impossible to develop meaningful and relevant capacity building strategies. This will result in

girls continuing to live a substandard quality of life. In one of their collective reflection pieces written after girls had presented their drawings depicting poverty and their ideas for a better quality of life, the girls highlighted the necessity of Government support in their lives. They note: *“without Government support, it will not be possible to change our lives, because we do not have money and need money from the Government.”* During the first focus group session, the discussion turned to policies. I wanted to gain insight into the girls’ understanding of the role of Government and policies. The girls were asked to consider “what type of policies would you develop for women in your family and community? Fatima’s proposed policy addressed the long hours of work undertaken by their mothers and grandmothers for little pay:

“I would ask the Government to pass a policy which ensured that our mothers did not begin work until 8:00am. Our mothers leave for work very early in the morning, sometimes before we even rise. They come home very late at night. They are too tired and often just go to sleep. We need our mothers at home with us. We miss them very much. We wish our mothers had different work opportunities like that of men in our community. The men work shorter hours and always seem to have money, unlike our mothers and grandmothers”.

Beatrice asked the question:

“Isn’t the Government supposed to take care of poor people? Shouldn’t everyone have something to eat every day? My grandmother does her very best to take care of us, but, the only thing she can do is either work as a housemaid or work in the shamba (field). She is too old to do either. So often, we do not have any food to eat.”

Fatima’s comments stress the need to provide women living with poverty with alternative skills and training which can result in shorter working hours and better income. Beatrice’s thoughts on the other hand highlight the need to have alternative employment opportunities or social services for the elderly. The

challenge in effectively addressing Fatima's and Beatrice's comments is the reality that current capacity building strategies and policies have been predominately designed by decision makers, mostly male within government, among donors, international community with some input from NGOs and civil society but, are void of grassroots stakeholder's voice. As noted earlier with respect to decision making, "women have been marginalized because men monopolize the decision making structures and are in the majority. One underlying problem for women has been the difficulty in dealing with the inherent patriarchal structures that pervade the lives of people, the processes of state and the party" (Nzomo, 1997 p. 250). Grassroots stakeholders that would be directly impacted by capacity building policies, namely girls and women living with poverty have not been consulted in developing capacity building strategies and / or have had token participation. As such, the probability of capacity building policies being relevant and meaningful would be significantly lower.

Girls Perception Of Leadership – Who Can Be A Leader?

In Focus Group 3 & 4, the discussion focused on gender roles, responsibilities, capacity building and the girls' ideas for solutions. We asked the girls for their ideas for solutions with respect to water. The girls discussed and debated various solutions as one larger group. They jointly presented the following practical solution with respect to water that would result in increased time to attend school and complete their homework. Their solution clearly highlights the essential role of the Government:

"We would ask all the girls and their families to attend a meeting. We would then approach the community leader. He would then have a meeting with the Director of Agua de Mozambique (Water Ministry). The Director would need to approve the building of the well within our community. We would identify which homes have water within our community. We would trace the water source so that we would know where to dig. We would ask all the community members to assist us in digging the well. The Government would need to help us with the money needed for building the well. Each

family would have the responsibility of maintaining the well each week. If families do not meet their responsibilities, they would not be allowed to access water from the well. The increased time available to us would be valuable to us with respect to attending school and completing our homework. We would also not be tired when we attend school’’¹⁹.

According to the girls, the Government holds an important financial role, without which the project cannot commence. Given the absence of water-wells within the communities, it is likely that decision makers may not have considered the significant impact water-wells would have in relation to an increase in the quality of life for girls who would not have to rise at 4:00am to collect water. The girls have highlighted the following benefits to having a water-well within their community: 1) increased and regular attendance at school; 2) time available to complete homework and prepare for tests; 3) increased attentiveness in school due to less time allotted to labour and time intensive tasks. It is also important to note the exclusive male reference used by girls when referring to decision makers within the community and Government.

The exclusive use of male in reference to leadership is surprising given that Mozambique has the ninth highest number of women in the lower house of parliament in the world (Norris & Inglehart, 2000; Tripp & Kang, 2008; Peronius, 2005). Despite the high female representation in parliament, it has not translated into increased voice and agency to affect meaningful change in policy and agenda setting related to the role of women (UN-OHRLLS, 2005) given that basic issues like collection of water, a predominately female activity has not been addressed as noted by the girls. More importantly, it has not changed girls’ perception of having females in leadership positions. Sónia Maria Mboa, 33, is a municipal assembly member for RENAMO in Maputo city. She notes that self-censorship; low self-esteem and low self-confidence deter women from competing for top

¹⁹ The girls’ presentation is evidence of their increased critical thinking skills. They developed the solution in less than half an hour. Their ideas were much more thoughtful and thought-out than the first day I had met them.

positions. "Women still have the idea that politics is for men," she told IPS (IPS, 2008).

The girls endorsed the idea that males are considered to be leaders through their perceptions of leadership and the language they used in reference to leadership. For example, the girls in their discussions regarding potential solutions to challenges they had identified often spoke about the need to gain the support of the Government. In their discussions, the girls only referred to 'he' in reference to decision makers. Community leaders were male, decision makers within the Government were referred to in the male context. And even within their family units, the girls referred to their brothers, uncles and fathers as decision makers. When we asked whether they could be regarded as leaders or could it be possible for them or other women becoming President of Mozambique, the initial reaction was giggles. When we encouraged them to respond as President of Mozambique, it took them awhile to even be comfortable with the idea – even though the girls were just pretending. Their reaction while speaking as the President of Mozambique was evident of how uncomfortable they were with the idea of women holding the highest position within the country. From all the girls, Patricia seemed to be the most uncomfortable with the idea of pretending to be the President of Mozambique: *"ummm, (giggle), well...if I ummm were ummm the President of Mozambique, (giggle followed by silence for about a minute)...I would (giggling while staring down at her feet) I would..."* Anna who generally voiced her opinions was only slightly more comfortable: *"mmmmmm (giggle), if I were the President of Mozambique (silence, leans over and whispers something to Paula..I would ..."* We asked Anna to share with us what she told Paula. She just smiled, but did not respond. Anna then shared, *"Paula said that it would never happen so why pretend?"* The lack of active citizenship among girls living with poverty results in apathy which is clearly noted in the girls comments above.

Disengagement Of Girls From The Decision Making Process Despite Their Practical Ideas For Solutions

“The right to be heard is about the right to be an active participant in political processes; it is about being able to speak up and be listened to by those in power” (Rowlands, 2009 p. 1). However the right to be heard is not accessible to girls living with poverty who generally do not even have voice and agency within their family and community, much less a political voice (Jones et al, 2010). Disengagement from the decision making process leaves citizens, particularly the most vulnerable like girls living with poverty without a voice and also without the power to inform and influence the decisions that affect their quality of lives (Rowlands, 2009). With poverty having a female face, then resolving the complex issues of poverty which appear to have the most devastating and long term impact on girls and women cannot be achieved unless girls contribute towards identifying the challenges and potential solutions towards the reality they live with everyday. Decision makers cannot develop effective policies in relation to poverty and girls without access to a complete set of gender and age disaggregated data. And since “there is no single voice of childhood [girlhood]” (Roche, 1996 p. 3), there also cannot be a single voice for poverty.

An example the girls raised that would speak to the impact of having a lack of sex-disaggregated data necessary to implement significant change in the quality of lives of girls is related to sanitation. In Focus Group 3 & 4, the girls spoke at length about sanitation in relation to dignity, health, safety and possible solutions.

Anna spoke about the current quality of toilets found within their community:

“We have washrooms in our yards, but they are not very well built. The washrooms are made of corrugated zinc sheets or reeds. They don’t have electricity. Some washrooms have a door, some don’t and most have a capolana (sheet) instead of a door. When the wind blows the capolana, everyone can see me inside. I feel so embarrassed. None of the washroom doors have a lock. Some

washrooms have a washbasin, most do not. Only a few washrooms have a designated space for a shower. Without electricity inside the washroom, some of us have often fallen into the washbasins and gotten hurt. We feel scared going to the washroom at night and will always try to take someone with us”.

Paula added her thoughts with respect to sanitation and health:

“When it rains, the water causes a lot of problems. It attracts flies that can cause cholera. The smells are unbearable. The washrooms become muddy and dirty with the water leaking both inside and outside the washroom. As a result, the waste and dirty water leak out into the yard. Children often play close to the washrooms because of limited place for play. They also play with mud building different things. As a result they get sick from the contaminated water mixed into the mud”.

The girls collectively presented their ideas for a perfect toilet during Focus Group 4:

“It would have electricity, windows, a proper door with a lock, washbasin, designated shower space and running water. The whole structure would be made of cement. Cement is important because no one can see you when you are inside. You can feel safe. Cement also absorbs the smells better than other materials”.

The girls in their comments above raise a number of issues that highlight the vulnerability they experience as girls using inadequate toilet facilities. They also raise health-related issues due to leaking toilets and space available for playing. For the girls, a dignified toilet facility represented privacy and in turn self-respect and self-worth. Additional research which is disaggregated by gender and age is required which outlines the number of health related issues that arise due to poor sanitation available for boys and girls. Gender and age disaggregated data also needs to be collected that identifies the number of days girls remain absent from school with respect to toilet-related issues, be it safety, access or availability in relation to boys.

Evidently, increased female representation in the Government alone is not an answer in of itself to develop effective capacity building policies and strategies for girls living with poverty during their very early years of adolescence. The political will of the Government of Mozambique is also an important component in advocating for increased research related to girls and capacity development with the caveat that data be collected which is age and gender disaggregated. This type of data could then provide additional insight as to why the barriers highlighted by the girls remain.

Mozambique Government's Underdeveloped Capacity

Substantial aid is provided to Mozambique by donors who consistently state that capacity building is one of the four *barriers to progress* (Batley, Bjornestad & Cumbi, 2006). Even then, the capacity building budget for technical and political capacity time and again decreases in 'real dollars' for all sectors including government, NGO and civil society²⁰. The result is weakened capacity among Mozambique's senior leadership charged with responsibility of advocating for appropriate capacity building for the most vulnerable in society - girls living with poverty. For example, in 2004, only 8% of the Ministry of Planning and Finance staff had degrees. The National Directorate of Planning and Budget had the highest percentage of university graduates among the ministries with only 35% of their staff having a degree (Hodges & Tibana, 2004).

Additionally, "none of the parties has more than a token capacity for policy development, particularly in technical areas such as public finance" (Hodges et al, 2004 p. 11). Among civil society organizations, only a few "have the technical capacity to analyze budget issues" (Hodges et al, 2004 p. 11). In the education sector, highly regarded as being pivotal in the eradication of poverty particularly for girls (Kelly, 2009, WHO, 2008, UNESCO, 2007), even today

²⁰ Partnership General Budget Support (PGBS) for Mozambique increased from USD 30m in 2000 to USD 239m in 2004. In addition, the international donor countries increased from 5 to 17 (Batley, Bjornestad & Cumbi, 2006). In July 2008, with 19 international donor countries, Mr. Henrique Banze, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mozambique reiterated the conclusions drawn by the PGBS review including the need for substantial increase in capacity building (Banze, 2008).

41% of primary education teachers in Mozambique are untrained (GMR, 2010 in UNESCO, 2011).

Retention in school is also a significant issue that remains as a major challenge. Today, retention levels at school are dismal. For example, of the 100 students who enter grade 1, only 37 will continue past grade 5. By grade 7, only 15 will remain. In grade 12, only 1 will have completed secondary education (World Bank, 2005). Given the continuing barriers that remain within the government with respect to gender mainstreaming, budgets, resources and expertise combined with the substandard education offered to girls living with poverty because of untrained teachers, this leaves little opportunity for these girls to develop their capacity in a meaningful and high impact manner. In order for gender equality to be addressed in a substantial manner that translates into a higher quality of life for girls the following will be required: girls to be engaged in decision-making process; increased female representation; increased decision-making powers for women in leadership; appropriate resources; and political will.

Summarizing the Issues Raised By Girls

Chart 2 entitled ‘Who Is Making Decisions For Girls Living With Poverty?’ summarizes the imposition of male figures of authority on girls at home, in society and in politics. With males consistently making decisions and with girls unable to access decision-making spaces in all aspects of their life, they will remain without voice, agency, authentic empowerment and citizenship. Furthermore, if girls continue to be denied access to all decision-making platforms, they will continue to be silenced; their capacity under-developed and their quality of life will remain sub-standard.

Chart 2 - Who Is Making The Decisions For Girls Living With Poverty?



SECTION 2: GENDER INEQUALITY

The term gender inequality can be problematic as it gives the impression that inequality experienced by girls and women will be the same. This is not the case. The inequality experienced by girls during their formative years which is a unique period dedicated to intellectual and physical growth is a pivotal factor resulting in the under-development or limited development of girls' physical and intellectual capacity. If girls do not achieve intellectual and physical growth during this critical period, the impact is permanent and difficult to alter at a later stage in life. This is because at the age of 10, a girl's capacity for basic learning has been determined (Temin et al, 2009). By the time she is 15, her body size, "reproductive potential and general health have been profoundly influenced by what has happened in their lives until then" (UNDP, 2004 p. 3).

The girls in the study identified gender inequality as a major barrier towards maximum capacity development. For the girls, gender inequality appeared in many forms including lack of voice, agency, pre-determined roles and responsibilities, disengagement from decision-making, power imbalance, vulnerability and inadequate quality of health as noted by their examples below.

Role of Culture – No One Takes Us Seriously

UNESCO during the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, Bonn, Germany organized a special side event entitled "The forgotten priority: Promoting gender equality in education for sustainable development" on April 2, 2009. The girls at this special side event spoke at length about the role of culture or social values as a tool to legitimize gender discrimination. In working with and learning from girls engaged in this study, culture also emerged as a reason for the girls' lower status and the limited opportunities and choices available to them to exit from a life of poverty. Patricia often commented, "*no one takes us seriously when we talk about becoming a teacher, nurse, journalist or doctor.*" At the same time, Fatima elaborated:

"So many of my friends' mothers are sick. We have all experienced death. There is always someone who is sad. I want to become a doctor so that I can take care of them. But no one

expects me to do this. They only expect me to get married and have children. When I talk about becoming a doctor, they do not encourage me. I know my mom wishes I could be a doctor, but she cannot give me any money to help me. So she just remains quiet. My dad, I think he thinks I am just being a child. But he doesn't treat my brother like that. He encourages and expects my brother to make money. I want more, but I do not think I will have what I dream of".

A family is normally a reflection of society's norms and values. The girls in their examples highlight their lack of voice and visibility within the family unit along with lack of expectation for girls' aspirations. As noted in Chapter 2, a strongly patriarchal society like that found in Mozambique elevates the status of a son and places the daughter, far behind the man with respect to status and roles.

Pre-Determined Lower Status of Girls and Women

"The low status of girls and women [that] is a formidable obstacle to poverty reduction [will remain]" (UNICEF, 2001 p. 21). This powerful statement succinctly underscores the impact of the lower status of girls and her inability to independently exit a life of abject poverty. Patricia during Focus Group 3 shares her inability to challenge her brother:

"I cannot challenge what my brother says. My mother will not challenge what my brother says. I am not allowed to make any decisions. I wanted to go to another school, but my brother decided this school was better for me. He did not even visit the school. He didn't even have to give a reason for his decision. It was like he said it, so it had to be correct. My mom accepted his decision. I had to follow it".

Beatrice in her reflection piece following Focus Group 4 writes:

"My sister did not want to marry this man. He was much older. No one listened to her. She cried for days. She even stopped eating food. But, no one listened to her. She has been married for two

years. She looks so thin and unhappy. She does not attend school. I cannot see her. I am not allowed. Her husband does not want me to see her. She is scared to disobey him. Last year, I saw her by chance. We exchanged looks, but could not speak to each other. He was with her. I am afraid that I will have to marry soon too”

Yolanda shares her inability and that of her mother to engage in decision-making in her home:

“Even though my brother is younger than me, he is able to make decisions for me. My uncles who live far away from me make decisions for me. My mother who works hard to take care of us, she cannot make any decisions for me or my brothers”.

Lack of voice and agency is amplified in child marriages. Notably predominately, it is young girls who get married to much older men, rarely the reverse. Rosa had been married for 1 year. She did not share her marriage status even with her closest friends for 11 months:

“I am so embarrassed. He is an older man. I wish my life was free like my friends. By marrying him, I am helping my family, so it’s okay, but I still feel sad, very sad and alone. My life will be forever different from my friends. I did not have a choice. I just had to accept it”.

This young teenage wife was also unaware – completely unaware of HIV&AIDS. Often she would miss our Saturday sessions if her mother-in-law expected her to be at home completing chores. Consistent in all of the comments shared by the girls is the male person that is in the position of authority and the female person is subservient.

Since the lower status of girls has been acknowledged as a critical barrier that must be addressed in order to meaningfully reduce poverty, then why has there been limited progress? Part of the reason may lie in conceding that tension remains between two key discourses related to poverty. The more dominant discourse, rich in resources focuses on economic factors and is endorsed by the

World Bank, several research bodies and large sections of civil society. The less dominant discourse focuses on rights-based research (Kabeer, 2003).

“Poverty strategies often disregard the fact that women as a group face non-economic barriers in terms of social constructs (laws, norms, attitudes) which limit their access to land, inheritance, education, employment, mobility and personal freedom” (de Vylder, 2004 p. 42). For example, development experts have indicated that schools would result in increased empowerment for women. However, if discrimination denies girls access to schools based on tradition and culture, then the availability of a school building does not guarantee that girls will be able to enter the school building or that they will be able to pursue their education beyond grade 4 or 6 (Drechsler & Jutting, 2010).

Patricia during Focus Group 4 shares why she was unable to attend school at a younger age. The male figure of authority does not need to provide a reason in relation to why their daughters cannot attend school as can be seen in Paula’s comments:

“My father did not allow me to attend school. But, my grandmother insisted that my sister and I attend school. He disagreed. He never sent us to school. Many of our friends, girls do not attend school. Then things got bad at home. My father lost his job. So he sent me to live with my grandmother. The only reason I am at school is because of my grandmother. She is a teacher”.

The other girls also spoke about the availability of schools in their provinces, but their friends are still unable to attend school. During a presentation made by Yolanda in Focus Group 3, she summarizes the girls’ thoughts:

“Schools are not necessary for girls – this is what we are being told. After coming to school, we all believe that schools are very important for girls. If we do not know anything, then how will we become better people? For example, I have learned how to do math and help my mother at the market. My mother cannot speak Portuguese. I am learning Portuguese so that I can translate for my mother at the market. Her business has improved a little”.

Pre-Determined Roles And Responsibilities - Preventing Girls From Regular Attendance At School

The Chronic Poverty Research Center (2005) has confirmed that poor families are heavily dependent on the labour of girls in particular. The cost of this increasing dependence is that school is seen as a less likely option (CPRC, 2005). Pre-determined roles and responsibilities assigned to girls leaves them tied to their homes and fields. The gender division of roles typically attributes collection of water, obtaining food and wood, as well as caring for the sick and elderly to girls and women.

Joana writes in her reflection piece after Focus Group 3 referring to the discussions related to designated roles and responsibilities for girls and how it restricts her ability to develop her capacity:

“When I am late coming to class, my teacher does not believe me that I am late because I had to complete my chores. I had to make several trips to fetch water, wash the dishes and clean the house before coming to school. I feel sad that she does not trust me. It is not easy being a girl. I have to help my mother. If I do not help her, who will? My brother will not help her.”

Paula in her reflection piece following Focus Group 3, highlights her love for learning, but she also underscores how her chores interfere with her learning:

“I enjoy coming to school. I like learning. But, often I cannot come to school. Sometimes it is because I am so hungry I just do not have the energy to walk to school. I try to sleep so that the time will pass by quickly. Other times, I am busy with my chores. When I miss a lot of school, I get left behind. It is difficult for me to understand what is going on in class. I cannot stay behind to ask my teacher to help me because she will ask me for money. I also need to go home and complete my chores, so I cannot stay behind”.

Fatima shares her thoughts regarding the difference of opportunity between her brother's ability to attend school and her lack of opportunity to attend school in her reflection piece following Focus Group 3:

"My family makes sure that my brother is able to attend school. But for me, they feel it's okay if I do not go to school. They feel it's much more important for me to learn how to keep the house clean, cook and take care of younger siblings as this will be my responsibility when I grow up. When I say that I like going to school, I like to learn, they tell me that is my brother's job not mine"

The amount of time and energy expended by these girls' daily chores including fetching water hampers their ability to attend school regularly. As Paula shared during Focus Group 4:

"We need water every day. If I wake up late and start collecting water later, then I have to miss school. Often, when I am sitting inside the classroom, I find it hard to concentrate. I have a headache. I am tired from collecting water. I just want to sleep."

If girls are unable to give their complete attention inside the classroom, then their true capacity will remain hidden due to obstacles they face like collection of water. The boys on the other hand are encouraged to work only outside of their home. Their work is both valued and measured by the income it generates. The girls in the study commented on the different status of their brother, male cousins and just boys in general in relation to theirs. Carla highlights how boys are treated better than girls:

"Boys are treated differently than girls. At home, I am expected to do all the chores which takes my time away from homework. Boys can walk down the street confidently, while we walk cautiously and in groups. I wouldn't want to be a boy, because boys steal and don't look after their families. I prefer to take care of my family. But, I still wish I had the freedom and choices that boys have which are not available to me. Why do girls have such difficult

lives in comparison to boys? No one even asked me what I wanted to do with my life.”

The main reason identified in the literature for this imbalance between sons and daughters is the ‘mother substitute’ role that girls often play. Due to the unequal gendered distribution of labour within the household, when women take on paid employment outside the home, in the absence of alternative affordable child care options or in times of illness of a family member, daughters are often expected to shoulder additional traditional gender responsibilities, usually at the expense of their education (Jones et al, 2010). Pre-determined roles and responsibilities are an outcome of the girls’ lower status. Girls experience time poverty as a result of her labour intensive and time consuming roles and responsibilities which directly impacts her ability to attend school (Sen, 2010; Bessell, 2010).

Girls Are Not Expected To Be Smart, Just Subservient

Tradition and culture continue to be strong influences particularly on the lives of girls living with poverty. For example, traditional gender roles and power relations disadvantage girls throughout their lives severely restricting their capacity to exit from a life of poverty (Plan, 2007). The girls in their discussions highlight their expected role within their family. Despite their frustrations, they felt powerless to change their roles and status within their family.

The girls from the first day I met them, often spoke about “*the importance of working hard*” and about “*ethics and values*” in their reflection pieces and focus groups. Notably, the language they used in reference to ethics, values, working hard was consistently female. They would compare their lives and that of their male counterparts within their family and community, wishing their lives were easier like that of the boys. But, in their reflection pieces eight of the ten girls said that they would want to be girls and not boys, “*because girls look after their families*”. The other two girls did not make any comments in reference to this.

Many times the girls would share their frustration and wonder why no one believed they could do what boys did. They believed they were as strong as boys.

In one of her reflection pieces, Joana summarizes, *“it is our mothers that will carry the sick to the hospital”*. They believed they were just as smart as their brothers. Yolanda during Focus Group 3 noted, *“when I can figure out something before my brother can, he gets mad. I don’t say anything. I just remain quiet”*. During the same Focus Group session, we asked the girls why they didn’t challenge their brothers or male relations. Paula responded in a manner that consistently emerged in all of the girls reflection pieces, focus groups and semi-structured qualitative interviews – the girls avoided confrontation and ultimately chose to conform rather than challenge as can be seen in Paula’s comments: *“We just don’t do that; there would be a lot of yelling. We get scared when there is a lot of yelling. Someone could get hurt. So we just stay quiet.”* When we asked who would get hurt? Paula, Carla, Anna and Rosa responded, *“we would or our mothers or grand-mothers would”*. The language they used with respect to violence was always in reference to the female person that was being abused. They also consistently did not challenge the male person as can be seen in their response, even if they believed themselves to be correct in their position.

Lack of Critical Thinking Skills

Another significant challenge that is pervasive throughout the educational system is the under-development or non-development of critical thinking skills which is essential for sustainable development (Bengtsson, 2010). If girls are unable to think critically about their life, gender inequality, power, agency, voice, the role and influence of culture, assess the difference between justice and injustice, identify how to transition their lives to a higher quality of life, they will be unable to move beyond their present status quo. Girls equipped with critical thinking skills will have tools to think holistically, critically assess knowledge, norms and values and effectively participate in decision making (Bengtsson, 2010).

During the first few sessions when we asked girls a question that would require them to critically analyze their circumstance; they were unable to undertake such an assessment. One example that demonstrates this relates to a picture we showed the girls from their curriculum. In the picture, a woman who

was tasked with the responsibility of retrieving elements from beneath the ground had a metal collar around her neck. She would place the elements she collected in a sack, attach it to the collar around her neck and pull the objects and herself to the surface. Men were not engaged in the task of retrieving the elements from beneath the surface, however, once the elements were collected, the women handed them over to the men. The men were responsible for selling the products. It was obvious given the rudimentary method used for retrieving objects from beneath the ground that this was something that occurred many generations ago.

In many other pictures of females, they were consistently subservient to men and/or appeared to only use simple tools to carry out their work, while men used sophisticated tools to carry out other work. We asked the girls what they saw in the picture. The girls only described what they saw using similar descriptions as shared by Beatrice: *“The woman is bringing something from under the ground. The men are waiting for her and will help to bring her up to the surface”*. We asked them to describe images of boys and girls that they had seen in their curriculum and to consider the message the image was conveying. They were unable to respond. It wasn’t something that they had considered before. When we presented another image, this time a man who appeared to be rushing to work and the woman was left behind with children at home, the girls were only able to literally describe the image. They all provided a basic description as stated by Rosa: *“The man is working and the woman is at home with the children”*. Without critical thinking skills, girls will be unable to challenge the male person, understand their current lower status and/or advocate for their beliefs.

The Automatic Privileges That Come With Being a Boy- Including Regular Attendance At School

“From the very start of life in many contexts, power, male privilege and perceptions of gender-specific entitlements result in girls and boys being assigned different sets of rights and privileges. Gender relations assign authority, agency and decision-making power” (Kabeer, 2003 p. 193). The difficulty for girls is in confronting cultural perceptions of masculine and feminine identities in the

absence of power, thereby making change in their quality of life particularly challenging (Unterhalter, 2010). Rita during Focus Group 4 shares what she has observed during dinner time in her home: *"My mother always eats last. I know she is hungry, but she will eat last. When she distributes food, she gives food to my brothers and then me and my sisters. And then she takes food for herself"*. Males are also given the 'right' to play and have fun, whereas the female child is burdened with household and family farm chores and responsibilities. Beatrice was resolute as she shared, *"we rarely get to play. We are always busy with our chores. Our brothers they are always playing. We wish they would help us with our chores. When we ask why they do not help us. We are told this is our responsibility."* Hence, as the boy observes his life and compares it with this sister, he develops greater self-confidence and the perception that he has a right to privileges over and above his sister and this results in a feeling of being superior to his sister and other females (Johnsson-Latham, 2010). It cannot be possible therefore to develop effective policies related to poverty, capacity building and girls, without addressing traditions and social norms (Drechsler & Jutting, 2010).

The girls during Focus Group 2 spoke at length about the different privileges afforded to boys. They spoke about the burden they and their female relations shouldered. In the follow-up joint reflection piece during Focus Group 2, they stated:

"Often, when we wake up in the middle of the night, we see our mothers worried about what they will feed us the next day. Even though our mothers and grandmothers work every day, they often come home with very little money. It makes us sad to see the difficult life our mothers and grandmothers lead. The men and boys in our community seem to have money but they do not use it to take care of us. If we don't have food at home, it is our grandmothers and mothers that will go out and find food".

The girls' critical thinking skills were being developed through their engagement with the study. They were beginning to recognize the

differences in opportunities and privileges bestowed upon them and comparing it to their brothers as can be seen through the above examples.

Inadequate Quality Of Health²¹

As Wagstaff (2002) and others note, poverty and poor-health are intertwined, Wachs (2000) also acknowledges that the critical development years of girls are directly shaped by psychosocial, environmental and biological factors and by genetic inheritance (Grantham-McGregor et al 2007). Poverty and its ensuing issues pose severe risks towards girls' growth and development (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Bradley & Conwyn, 2000). From the conversations the girls had with us detailing what they ate and how often they ate, it is likely that they all experienced poor quality health and malnutrition. As you will read in their words, their capacities to learn, concentrate attentively in class and attend school regularly were being impacted as a direct result of poor health and malnutrition.

Poor Nutrition

Adequate and appropriate nutrition is a key determinant for high quality health. It is also a fundamental requirement for development. Important to note is that "the quality of care and feeding offered to children ... is critically dependent on women's education, social status, and workload" (UN Sub-Committee on Nutrition, 1997). Appropriate nutrition is mandatory for a strong and healthy immune system leading to a significant decrease in illness and overall poor health. Children who are healthy are able to focus on their education and learn better than those that are hungry (WHO, 2010). "Better nutrition is a prime

²¹ Although the physiological impact of health is beyond the scope of this study, it is important to have a cursory understanding as it directly influences the girls' capacity to maximize their potential during their formative years. With education being a recognized key trigger required to exit from a life of poverty, the critical importance of quality health during the first few years of life up to adolescence cannot be over-emphasized. Decisive development occurs during the first few years of life that affect the functioning of all organs (Grantham-McGregor, Cheung, Cueto, Glewwe, Richter & Strupp, 2007). For example, "the brain develops rapidly through neurogenesis, axonal and dendritic growth, synaptogenesis, cell death, synaptic pruning, myelination, and gliogenesis" (Grantham-McGregor et al, 2007 p. 61). Each event builds on the preceding, deficit in one can have "have long-term effects on the brain's structural and functional capacity" (Grantham-McGregor et al, 2007 p. 61).

entry point to ending poverty and a milestone to achieving better quality of life” (WHO, 2011b).

Food always played a role in each of our conversations with the girls. Even if the topic being discussed was unrelated to food, somehow food always became an integral part of the conversation. Notably more than 60% of chronically hungry people in the world are women (FAO, 2006). This statistic should be highlighted in relation to eradication of poverty and girls, as it remains one of their greatest obstacles towards effective capacity development. The girls during their reflection pieces, semi-structured interview 1 and 2, as well as in Focus Groups, particularly 1 and 2 and 3 shared the scarcity of food in their homes. Their comments were similar to Patricia: *“Food is not always available. We often have black tea and bread for breakfast. Our next meal is usually at night.”* The girls’ lives are physically demanding which includes walking for long hours under the hot sun in search of water and firewood. With poor nutritional intake, it further taxes their already weakened bodies. The girls’ bodies are still growing and therefore adequate nutrition plays a fundamental role for current and future health, as well as capacity to learn and retain new knowledge.

Malnutrition also removes power from girls by increasing their probability in attaining or aggravating illness. The girls had all been absent from school for extended periods of time due to malnutrition and inability to obtain medical attention due to cost. Malnutrition leads to sickness and poor health that contributes to girls’ inability to complete even primary education because of absenteeism. A long period of absenteeism from school leads to a poor educational foundation and lessens her ability to complete her education resulting in diminished employment opportunities in the future (World Bank, Zambia, 2005). Joana shares her concerns regarding absenteeism and an upcoming exam:

“I am worried about the national Grade 6 exam. This year, I have not been able to attend school regularly. I have been sick a lot. It has been a hard year at home. We have not had enough food. My mother lost her job. The people she was working with, they moved away. So

we did not have a lot of money. We sometimes did not eat for a full day or two. Last year, I was away from school for 5 weeks in total. Each time it was because I was sick or had not finished my chores. Sometimes the medicine makes me sick too. When I returned to school, I found mathematics to be difficult. My friends would try to teach me, but I found it hard because I had missed so much school. I cannot take extra classes, they cost too much money.”

World Bank (2005) and others have proven that “malnutrition affects access to school, capacity to learn, physical development and energy to work” (World Bank, 2005 p. x). In our meetings with the girls, they would often start to cry from hunger and thirst. They would leave the room abruptly. The first time this happened, I did not know why Paula had left the room. However, the other girls knew immediately. *“She is hungry”* they said. *“She just wants to be alone for awhile. She will come back”*. As the girls came to know my research assistant and myself, they would remain in the room and simply cry softly. The girl next to her would comfort her quietly. What was striking for me was the reality that none of the girls had enough to eat, and yet, hunger appeared to be a relative concept. Each of the girls knew what it was like to be hungry and intimately understood what it felt like to experience extreme hunger.

Hunger and malnutrition are the worst outcomes of abject poverty (ECOSOC, 1999). The girls demonstrated the impact of hunger clearly in the following statements they prepared together during Focus Group 2:

“It is hard to concentrate at school when we are hungry. Sometimes we just stay home if we haven’t had enough to eat. We try to sleep so that the time passes by faster and hope that our mothers and grandmothers will find food so that the pain in our stomachs would disappear.”

Given that the girls’ diet is high in sugar and starch, low in protein, their hunger pangs and low energy creeps back into their existence much faster given the limited energy sugars and starches provide.

The types of food the girls had access to are limited in variety and nutritional value. The girls are consuming calories far below what is required for a child between the ages of 10-14 years of age. Also, the food they consume is void of proper nutrition and does not comprise a balanced meal. Anna shares what her family eats on a daily basis and what they hope to have during special occasions like Christmas:

“Eating meat, eggs and fruit is a treat which happens very rarely. Usually we eat bread, maize, rice, potatoes, fish and the cheaper vegetables. If we had fish, then one fish would need to feed at least four to six people. The fish isn’t very big. We have noticed how little our mothers and grandmothers eat. They always say that they are not hungry, but that can’t be possible. We know they go to bed hungry. Sometimes we say that we are not hungry, that we have eaten at school just so that they will eat. On special occasions like Christmas, we will have cakes, biscuits, chicken and soft drinks.”

From this description, their diet appears to be rich in starches with limited protein intake. Foods from the four food groups essential for growing bodies are evidently not a part of the girls’ daily intake.

Figure 8 ‘Feeling Strong’



“I like this picture very much. I remember clearly that in this picture I had eaten food that day”. “We are strong because we are happy and we are happy because we have eaten.” Photo Credit: Rita © Sajan Virgi, 2010

The words spoken by these girls speak volumes and underscore the importance of food in the lives of girls living with abject hardship. It also points to the distinctly different realities between a researcher and a participant with respect to nutrition. The realities I imagine may even be more pronounced between girls and decision makers and/or donors. It also highlights the importance and value of *engaging participants* if we wish to gain deeper and a more holistic understanding of the challenges first and then develop relevant and dependable policies and strategies. Critical information like the role of food which is vital in participating and/or completing any activity, be it education, household chores, health can be missed without direct engagement of girls.

Dependence on Caregivers

The girls also emphasized their dependency on caregivers for food. They spoke at length the burden that fell on women in their family with respect to food and nutrition. This is something that weighed heavily on their minds. Patricia quietly shares her thoughts during Focus Group 3:

“Whether or not we have a second meal is dependent upon the adults in our lives. Some of our mothers and grandmothers depend on making money every day from the sale of used clothing or small items at a candy/food stall. Others work as housemaids and/or on the land and are paid monthly. Therefore, if our mothers and grandmothers have made money that day or have left over money from their monthly salary, then we eat. If it is towards the end of the month, we have probably run out of money and food so we go to bed hungry. Often, we haven’t eaten for one or sometimes even two days. We often cry not just because we are hungry, but because we feel all alone when we don’t have food to eat. It’s like no one cares about us. We remember the days that we have eaten. When we grow up, we will work hard to take care of our mothers and grandmothers”.

Decreasing Nutritional Intake, Increasing Anger

Lack of food also makes it easier to become angry at one another, as the girls interact with one another on empty stomachs and limited water intake. Family tension is also more volatile as each member of the family is deprived of their daily nutritional intake, while being overly tired due to physical exhaustion. The girls often spoke about the arguments that would take place in their homes because of lack or no food available. Fatima summed up the situation, *“I wish we had enough food for everyone. At least the fighting would stop. I get scared when I see everyone fighting. I don’t like to fight.”*

Exploring Preventable Death

Mozambican children, like other children in developing countries face death from preventable causes including diarrhoea, pneumonia, measles, malaria, HIV&AIDS and malnutrition (Fotso, Ezech, Madise & Ciera, 2007). The health reasons girls in the study provided for missing school included diarrhoea, malaria and hunger – malnutrition. The girls would describe a parent and/or a family member physical condition the last few months of their lives, which appeared to be like HIV&AIDS. However, given the stigma attached to HIV&AIDS, no one could confirm the reason for their death.

At various points most of the girls sobbed when they described the death of a family member or described the current poor health of their mother. The remaining two did their best to hold back the tears. These two girls we had observed had taken on the role of protector of the other eight girls. One of the girls who took on the role of a protector is a young teenage wife. One of the younger girls, Paula shared:

“I am so worried. My mother has been sick for so long. I don’t know what is wrong with her. I love her so much. At night, I often fall asleep crying because I am afraid that she isn’t getting better”.

Carla shared her thoughts about her mother who lived in another province:

“My mother is in Xai Xai (another province). She is sick and I want to go home to be with her. But, she wants me to stay and finish my school. When I am at school, I can only think about her.

When I am at home, I can only think about her. I am so worried. I don't want to be here, I want to be with my mother. She sounds so different on the phone. Her voice is softer, like she has no strength".

Even though they are children, they are clearly dealing with adult problems and extreme stress on a daily basis. How can it be possible for them to focus on their education if their family members' health is not improving? Notably, the solutions required to address preventable causes of death are available and inexpensive, yet remain beyond the reach of these girls. These include immunization, safe water and sanitation, micronutrient supplementation, nutrition counselling, and in malaria-prone areas, insecticide-treated bed nets (Mohan, 2005). Two critical factors raised by the girls that directly affected their ability to attend school regularly are: 1) their own poor health. 2) weakening health of their mothers, which placed enormous stress in their lives and prevented them from being attentive at school.

When we asked girls for their ideas of solution with respect to food, they developed a joint response during Focus Group 4 and presented the following:

"We would ask decision makers to have a special place where poor people shop for food. Food would be cheaper. Only those people who have registered would be able to shop at this store. We would also make sure that all children are given a small meal at school. It would be easier to focus on the lesson being taught by the teacher, if we didn't have headaches, weren't tired or hungry".

The girls have essentially described a food bank that is found in many cities and towns in the West. They have also effectively linked poor nutritional intake with negative impact it has had on their ability to remain attentive inside the classroom. The desire to learn is evident. What is missing is adequate food intake.

Environmental Health Impact

Another major issue that impacts girls' health is the nature of their environment. For example, the photo taken below by Rosa vividly shows the reality of a dirty *water collection source*. It is apparent that girls collecting water

from this area will be unable to procure clean drinking water and not surprisingly, diseases and health concerns will be particularly high in these communities.

Figure 9: ‘Dirty Water’



"This picture shows where we fetch water. It is full of garbage, mud and dirty water. This is not good, because we may end up getting cholera and other diseases. Kids end up playing in this water, because we do not have playgrounds and parks. The children get sick."

Photo Credit Rosa – Age 14 © Sajan Virgi, 2010

From Rosa's comments, it is clear that children are aware of issues related to dirty water. However, no other options are available for her and her community. Another health-related issue that consistently surfaced among all the girls was the unavailability of a designated playground space. The photo below vividly shows poor quality of playground space available for children living in communities facing abject poverty.

Figure 10: ‘Our Playground Space’



"This garbage shouldn't be here. People end up putting the garbage here and not in its proper place. Children also play in this area. There isn't any proper play area for children in my community. Children should not play here because it is not good for their health. "

Photo Credit: Paula © Sajan Virgi, 2010

Paula describes in her reflection piece what visitors would see inside her community:

"When you enter our community, you will notice that there is very little open space for playing. Any common space usually has mounds and mounds of garbage which takes a very long time to be removed. So in the meantime, we play on heaps of garbage, because we don't have any other play space. Some of us end up getting very sick. But, we still return to the garbage heaps to play with our friends because we have no other space to play."

"The second thing you will notice is there are many pools of water scattered throughout the community. The accumulated water is from the rains, as well as from washrooms that leak – most of our washrooms inside our community leak especially after it has rained. As a result, the water smells very bad. There are lots of mosquitoes and flies near the water. Young children play

there and use mud to build things, but they get sick since the water is not clean and neither is the mud which often seeps out from the washrooms”.

The girls also noted that through proper education, community members would keep their communities clean. Joana shares her thoughts:

“Our communities would be clean and tidy if there were garbage cans inside our community and if people were taught the importance of only throwing garbage inside the garbage can. Most importantly, if garbage was being regularly picked up, we would have clean space to play and children wouldn’t get sick so often.”

When we asked the girls what would make the greatest difference to the overall quality and well-being of their community, they unanimously responded “garbage collection!” Yolanda elaborated: *“our communities like other communities should have regular garbage collection, so that the community would look nice and we would all have a nice place to play.”*

Access and Cost

The girls summed up their challenges regarding the health care system in two powerful words: accessibility and money. Anna highlights the challenges related to unavailable health care:

“The majority of us do not have a hospital inside our community. The closest ones are approximately 3.5 – 5 km from our home. A few lucky people know someone that has a car, so they are driven to the hospital. Most of us have to walk to the hospital. Walking when you are sick is very tiring. Our mothers often carry people who are too sick to walk. Sometimes we can afford to go to the hospital, other times, we cannot afford the fees. A lot of us have marks on our arms. We don’t know why we have them. But, we can’t afford to go to the doctor. Sometimes you feel that if you have money, only then you will be treated with respect and taken care of properly. At the hospital, they want money for every small

thing. How much can we afford? And when we are sick and they are asking for money, we feel sad and upset”.

Rita elaborates on the costs associated with health care:

“When I get sick, only if there is extra money available do I go to the doctor. But, when my brother is sick, somehow, someone always seems to find the money for him. I love my brother very much, but ... (she started to cry)”.

Fatima’s thoughts highlight how she tries to avoid getting sick because she recognizes that her mother needs her assistance:

“I try not to get sick, because I know my mother needs my help. So many times I have collected water when I wasn’t feeling well. But, if I didn’t collect it, then who would? I have missed school many times because after I finish my chores and when I am not feeling well, I would be too tired to go to school. I would miss my friends. When I am at school, I feel very happy. I don’t have to think about difficult things. I miss learning too.”

The hidden fees that remain within even a sub-standard functioning health care system is a major deterrent particularly for women living in abject poverty whose main source of income is through the informal market sector. The informal markets are particularly vulnerable to market whims. Women working within the informal market sector are particularly vulnerable since they do not have legal recourse against long hours, lower pay or even unpaid salaries. The woman’s salary is needed by her children, possibly her mother and any other family dependants. Hence the loss or absence of the woman’s salary significantly impacts her family. In addition, these women who are responsible for caring for their sick family members are unable to take time off without loss of pay.

Availability of pharmaceutical medicines is another problem that the girls spoke about at length. Carla shares her experience with a doctor and a curandeiro (traditional healer):

“Sometimes we can find the medicines at the hospital, other times we have to go to the pharmacy. The knowledge and skills of the

doctor is another problem. Many of us know of cases where someone in our family had been misdiagnosed or the surgery had gone very bad resulting in complications and permanent health problems. Our grandmothers and mothers take us to the hospital first, if we are not cured, then they turn to curandeiro. Neither the medical doctor nor the curandeiro is perfect. When we grow up and if we become doctors, we will always take care of poor people first because we know how it feels when someone doesn't take care of you just because you don't have money".

HIV&AIDS

HIV&AIDS is central to any discussions related to Mozambican girls and health²². The girls would speak in whispered tones when the subject of HIV&AIDS was being discussed. *"I don't know what HIV/AIDS is"* says Rosa who has been married for a year. *"I think it's a disease you get when you 'play' with men"* says Anna. The girls giggle. *"What do you mean by play with men?"* asks Paula *"I don't know, but it is something my mom and auntie always warn me about when I go and play with my friends"* responds Beatrice. *"I was told that HIV/AIDS is a disease you get when you have bad blood"* says Fatima. I asked: *"How can HIV&AIDS be prevented?"* Complete silence. Not one of the girls could answer this question. They all looked at the floor, quietly shaking their heads (Sajan Virgi cited in UNICEF, 2011).

Another important issue that emerged was who informed the girls about HIV&AIDS²³. Fatima shared: *"We learn about HIV/AIDS from our teachers.*

²² HIV&AIDS first appeared in Mozambique in 1986, 24 years ago. By 2005, there was an estimated 16.2% of the population between 15 – 49 years infected with HIV or AIDS. In July 2004, the Government declared HIV&AIDS a national emergency. Twenty-four years later, Mozambique still has 90 new infections *everyday among children*. Today, more than 90,000 of children under 15 years of age live with HIV&AIDS in Mozambique (UNICEF website). Despite the high prevalence of HIV&AIDS in Mozambique along with the acknowledgment of feminization of HIV&AIDS, knowledge related to prevention of HIV&AIDS is notably absent. As a result, girls are not equipped with critical knowledge required to protect themselves from AIDS and premature death.

²³ In my conversations with women and girls who lived in Maputo city, as well as in Gaza Province which has the highest rate of HIV&AIDS in Mozambique, it became evident that there is limited if any information available regarding HIV prevention. The girls and women all said that they do not demand that condoms be used even if they suspect that their partner is unfaithful.

They talk to us about it privately. It is something that is not being discussed at my school.” Where did your teacher learn about HIV&AIDS? Anna responded: “We don’t know, maybe from her auntie or neighbour.” My auntie talks to me about HIV/AIDS says Beatrice. My auntie learned about HIV/AIDS from a curandeiro (traditional healer). My friend at school was the first person who told me about HIV/AIDS says Carla. She learned about HIV/AIDS from her neighbour” (Sajan Virgi cited in, UNICEF, 2011).

Procurement of Food

When I asked the girls where they procured their food, I learned that none of the girls’ families grew their own food. As Beatrice declared: *“my grandmother buys food at the market or if she does not have any money, then she will ask friends and neighbours if they can share their food”*. All the food was purchased from the local market. The value and importance of having a community garden that can provide a variety of nutritional content through fruits and vegetables has not been introduced to these peri-urban communities. I believe this to be a significant oversight given that nutrition has been such a critical issue particularly for girls and women living with abject poverty.

Girls’ Ideas for Solutions Related To Health

When we asked the girls what solutions they would propose to decision makers in relation to health, they presented the following during Focus Group 4:

“We would ask for a small health center to be built in every community. We would ask that the doctors and nurses be paid well so that they do not ask sick people for money. Health is important because when we are sick, we cannot do things that are important like chores, attending school and playing. If our health is good, then we can grow up to be strong”

They feel powerless to deny sex for fear of being left alone. They are taught to look the other way if they hear about their partner’s infidelities. And they are taught to ensure that he returns home every night to a home cooked meal and attention. Girls who had received university education and had secure jobs within the formal sector surprisingly also felt the same way as did girls and women who had no education and worked within the informal economies. Increased education did not increase their confidence or decision-making ability with respect to safe sex.

Hearing What Poverty Means For Girls

Poverty does not appear in a homogenous state. It is a different experience according to sex, age groups, geographical regions, as well as in relation to urban, peri-urban and rural communities. It would be of value therefore to have several definitions that address the unique experiences of poverty. In order to understand why poverty has a female face, it is important to hear directly from girls living intimately with poverty. Putting poverty into context as experienced by the girls in the study provides insight into the barriers they raised in relation to capacity building. The girls' definition of poverty became a series of statements. I have recorded them here as they shared them with us during a presentation they made in Focus Group 4. I had asked them the previous week to consider jointly poverty from a girl's perspective.

“As a girl, I have different roles and responsibilities which take up a lot of my time. Often I have to miss school. As a girl, I am expected to obey what is told to me by my caregivers. I have to marry a man much older than myself. I have to stop going to school. The women in my community only have a say in decisions if they are making money outside of their home. Otherwise, the man decides how the money will be spent. Even then I prefer to be a girl instead of a boy because girls always take care of their families. Being poor means that I don't have enough to eat, I have to walk long distances to fetch water and the fact that we don't always have enough water to bathe. Sometimes we smell bad, but that's because we don't have enough water. Our home looks like everyone else's home. It is a poor person's home. We each have two rooms and a small space for cooking. Our toilets are far away. They smell. In our community, no one comes to remove the garbage. We have no space to play. We have to play on the garbage. We get sick because of the garbage, dirty water that stays in our communities and because there isn't a separate space for animals and people. We sleep on the floor and often go to bed

hungry. We feel so alone and wonder why no one is thinking about us. We are always worried. We worry about our moms who are sick. We worry about our grandmothers who are sick. We can't always go to the hospital because it's expensive. Everyone asks for money even when they know we don't have any. We worry because someone in the house has lost their job. We worry what will happen to us? Besides worrying, being poor means that we are always tired. Tired from fetching the water, tired from fetching the wood, tired from the little food we eat. But, in our communities we don't complain. We always try to be happy. We sing, we dance. When we grow-up we will take care of our grandmothers and mothers. It is important to work and go to school."

The girls have raised issues related to time poverty, lower status of girls and women, poor quality of health, lack of voice, gender based pre-determined roles and responsibilities, loneliness, lack of play space and inaccessibility to basic necessities. We also see their resilience, capacity to love and be engaged within the community. The girls in other conversations talked about how poverty "deprives individuals of their dignity, and denies them the opportunity to be participating citizens, with a sense of self-respect and a feeling of well-being" (UNESCO, 2003 p. 5). Beatrice too shared how poverty deprived her of self-respect, self-worth and dignity.

"We have all been hurt when strangers make comments about how we smell. We don't like to smell bad, but we don't always have soap and water. If we had soap and water, we would always smell nice. I wish people would not be so mean. They really hurt our feelings without understanding us."

The girls all indicated that they felt disregarded, judged and invisible because of strangers reaction to them. Anna summarized the girls' thoughts.

"Even in my home or in my community, I am not heard. I speak, but often no one responds to me. I feel alone. When I am with my

friends (girls), I feel happy. I feel like myself. We laugh, we cry and we even get mad at each other. But we always listen”.

Beatrice speaks about her day at the new school. The school day is for six hours instead of three hours. Since the school day is longer, the girls are allowed to bring food for recess. She notes:

“I feel so alone. Everyone has food. I don’t have food. No one shares with me. Even though we are all poor, they do not want to share with me. They treat me differently. In front of them, I feel invisible. Even my friends from the other school, they don’t treat me the same at this school.”

Beatrice also elaborates on her experience attending Church. She explains:

“I really like going to Church, but I wish I had something nice to wear so that I could fit in with the other girls. Everyone gives me that look, like I am the poor girl. I wish I had nice shoes and a dress for Church. I am left out because I am poorer than the other girls. They can be so mean to me. Often after I come home from Church, I cry for hours and my grandmother tries to make me feel better”.

On the other hand, Joana shares how violence follows girls at the hands of men:

“I remember one day, my friend’s uncle (mom’s brother) had beat up my friend just because he heard that she was with a boy. He just took my friend inside the house, closed the door and hit her. When her mom came home and found out what happened, she could not say or do anything. She could not even ask her brother why he hit my friend. My friend had packed her clothes and was ready to leave. Boys are not treated like this, only girls”.

Gender inequality is felt throughout the life of girls even as they transition into womanhood and something that is passed on from mother to daughter. In my informal conversations with the girls’ female relations, all working within the informal sector, the female caregivers shared with me their experiences of life as a poor Mozambican woman.

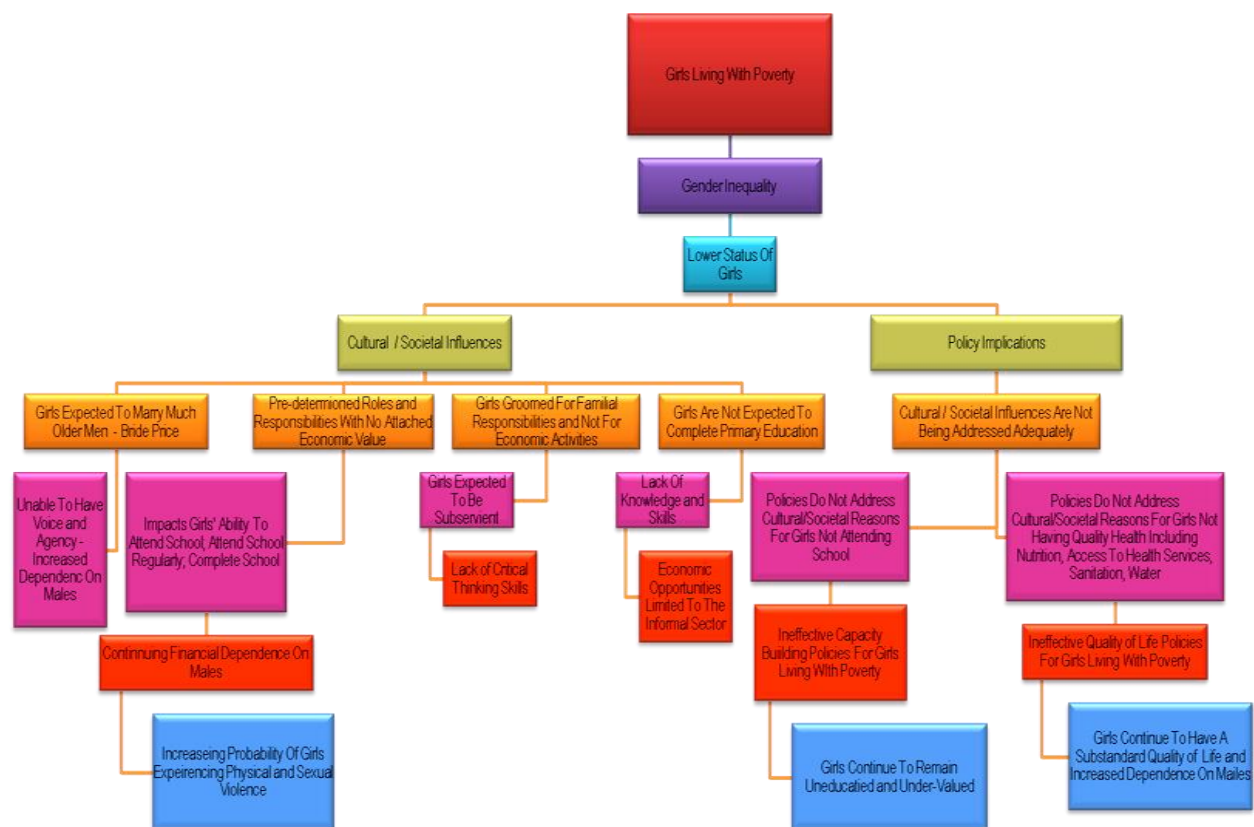
We never carry any extra money. Whatever little we have has been stolen by boys and men (family and strangers). When our employers give us food, clothes or toys for the children, we try to disguise our parcels when we board the chapas (public transport) to prevent theft by men and boys.

It became evident during our conversation, that the sense of fear and powerlessness followed the women into their communities, leaving her in an almost perpetual state of anxiety. When I asked the women what they could do to change their state of fear, they were unable to find an answer. It was as if they had accepted their situation and could not imagine an alternative existence.

Summarizing the Issues Raised By Girls

Chart 3 entitled ‘Gender Inequality – A Root Cause For Girlhood Poverty’ outlines the multiple barriers that girls face due to unequal status. This lower status is bestowed upon them at birth. As a result of this lower status, the girls face multiple barriers that prevent them from leaving a life of poverty. Given the diverse impact resulting from gender inequality, it can be presumed to be a root cause of poverty for girls.

Chart 3 –Gender Inequality – A Root Cause For Girlhood Poverty



SECTION 3: INACCESSIBILITY TO BASIC LIFE NECESSITIES

“Clean water is essential for human health and survival; indeed, the combination of safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygienic practices like hand washing is recognized as a precondition for human health and for overall reductions in morbidity and mortality rates, especially among children” (UNDP, 2004 p. 2 *emphasis mine*). Lack of adequate sanitation services and water for drinking, cooking and bathing results in poor health and hinders gender equality and poor economic development (UNDP, 2004). In this section, the absence of water and sanitation will be discussed from the perspective of their role in preventing girls from accessing, remaining and completing their education.

Water

Lack of access to clean water and basic sanitation is a silent crisis affecting more than 33 percent of the global population (Bartram, Lewis, Lenton, & Wright, 2005). Approximately 443 million school days are lost each year due to water-related illness (Barry & Hughes, 2008). Despite research endorsing “150 years of acceptance of the healthful effects of clean water, an estimated 1.1 billion people still lack access to it, and 2.6 billion people lack access to adequate sanitation” (Barry et al, 2008 p. 785).

Water – A Pre-Determined Responsibility for Girls

In sub-Saharan Africa, girls and women walk to a water source in the early hours of the day. In Mozambique, most women, particularly in rural areas spend on average 15-17 hours per week collecting water. Using 15 – 17 hours of water collection per week as a yardstick, this translates into ~40 billion hours a year – a staggering number equivalent to France’s entire working force (UNDP, 2006). The time used to collect water takes away from completing homework, even attending school for girls, alternate training opportunities for girls and young women, as well as time to secure upward mobility employment for women²⁴.

²⁴ In a conversation with the Canadian High Commissioner in Mozambique, he indicated that in their recent analysis, they had come across women in northern Mozambique, in Cabo Delgado where women would walk for 12 hours to the water source, spend a night near the water source, and begin the 12 hour walk back home the next morning. This would mean that mothers would have to arrange for accommodation and all costs associated with it. Also, while the mothers were

The girls during Focus Group 3 spoke at length about time in relation to collection of water. In their collective reflection piece, they stated:

“We start collecting water between 4am and 5am every day, including weekends. It is difficult carrying water while dodging cars and trucks as we try to cross busy streets. The truck/car drivers don’t stop; they keep driving fast and make us run across the road with our water. We wonder why they don’t slow down and consider how difficult our job is carrying water under the hot sun. When we come back from collecting water, we are always very tired.”

From this brief reflection, the girls have raised issues related to gender, power, status and pre-determined expected roles and responsibilities.

The girls all agreed that the collection of water was mainly the responsibility of children, predominately girls. Rita shares how tired she becomes after collecting water:

“Some of us have to make 20 trips to the well, others have to make 10. The water sources can be far away, some as far as 60 minutes. It is very tiring. The water feels very heavy on our heads and our arms hurt from holding 20 litres of water. Some of us weigh 25kg others weigh 35kg. Carrying 20 litres of water, several times a day is very hard – particularly when we haven’t eaten anything from the night before”.

In the analysis of the data, we learn that collecting water consumes ~30% of the girl’s day light hours in the winter, and ~25% of their day light hours in the summer. The majority of girls living in economic challenging circumstances do not have access to electricity; hence day light hours are critical for studying. In addition, given the amount of energy required to collect 20 litres of water several times in a day while walking under the hot sun and only being rewarded with a cup of black tea is certainly taxing on the girls’ overall health. Their noticeable

away collecting water, the children were left on their own, unattended for approximately 36 – 48 hours.

low levels of energy and their inability to concentrate on new materials being taught at school can be attributed to several factors, including physical stress on their body from collecting water compounded by limited nutritional and water intake.

The photograph below captures Paula's expression effectively as it communicates the burden she bears having to carry water every day.

Figure 11: 'Collecting Water'



"Every morning, I wake up at 5am to fetch water. I carry at least 20 large containers of water as shown in the photo. When, I'm finished, I am very tired, very tired."

Photo Credit: Paula © Sajan Virgi, 2010

Given how physically taxing water collection is and the reality that the girls undertake this activity 365 days of the year, no holidays, no time off, how can we then expect the same girls to have sufficient energy to concentrate on their education after undertaking labour and time intensive tasks along with minimal if any nutrition? The availability of water sources that minimize the amount of time required by children for water collection is a necessary first step towards capacity development for girls. The proximity of water sources is essential in order to increase regularity in attendance and completion of education beyond primary school for girls.

Gender discrimination is a heavy cloak that follows girls from birth to death. Due to the time required to complete their household chores, in particular fetching wood and water, girls are often absent from school even during the primary years which is regarded as mandatory schooling (UNICEF, 2001). Girls in Sub-Saharan Africa, spend on average four times as much time on productive tasks than boys (UNFPA, 2004). It is not surprising then that girls have a poor educational foundation. Carla shares during Focus Group 4:

“I asked my brother to help me with my chores. He just laughed at me and said how could he do girl’s work? I do not think it is fair that I have to work all the time and he has time to play. He never misses school. But if my work is not completed I cannot go to school”

Boys on the other hand are expected to attend school in order to acquire education that will enable them to participate in income generating activities. Girls work at home due to preparation for marriage – often early marriage. The roles and responsibilities she is given ensures that she will remain obedient, submissive and as a result will consider few opportunities outside of the home. The combination of this results in their inability to make decisions due to lack of confidence, advocate for things they would like including training opportunities. These expectations of prescribed roles and responsibilities result in her inability to negotiate any power for herself, thus leaving her completely vulnerable to exploitation (UNICEF, 2001). Rosa’s reflection piece written after our last Focus Group highlights her vulnerability, lack of voice and her prescribed roles and responsibilities:

“In my home as the daughter, I was expected to perform all the household chores including fetching water every day. My mother depended on me to finish this work. She worked outside of the home and would come home very tired. I love my mother. Now I am married. In my husband’s home, I am his youngest wife. I am responsible for collecting the wood and water. His mother also lives with us. I must obey everyone. They decide when I can go to

school and when I cannot attend school. When we started this project, I was very excited. I had never used a camera before. I really enjoyed everything I was learning. But, then my mother-in-law decided that I could no longer attend the Saturday sessions. I really wanted to be here on Saturdays. I cannot say anything. I just have to accept what everyone else decides for me. Where would I go?"

What remained striking in the conversations raised by girls regarding their assigned roles and responsibilities was the direct impact it had on their inability to attend and complete their education. Without a meaningful change in pre-determined roles and responsibilities, or without innovation which allows the girls to complete their tasks in a timely and less labour intensive manner, the girls will likely continue to remain absent from school in increasing numbers each year.

Violence and Vulnerability in Relation to Collecting Water

The distance the girls and women must cover in order to obtain water, sometimes even dirty water, puts them at increased risk of isolation resulting in increased chance of sexual and physical violence. The girls in the study spoke at length about the violence that had befallen upon their neighbours, family and friends. They recognized the dangers of collecting water. Carla shares how vulnerable she feels even on the streets in her community, *"I wish I could walk freely and confidently like a boy. I am always scared and find myself crossing the street when I see a boy."*

The girls spoke in soft but strong voices detailing the dangers related to collecting water. Yolanda shares her thoughts regarding possible violence that may be lurking near the water-well:

"We never go to fetch water alone. It is not safe for girls to go by themselves. Even when we are together, we have to be careful. A lady who went alone was killed last year when she went to fetch water at 3am. Men that were at the water well asked her why she was there so early in the morning. She had gone early because she

wanted to be sure she had water in her home. They killed her.

Another young girl fell into the water well and died instantly.”

The girls also spoke about how boys looked at them differently as they entered their teenage years. *“It makes us feel scared, that’s why it is important to go to the water well with a friend.”* The vulnerability girls feel is evident and yet they continue to complete the task of fetching water which is expected of them.

Water Has Been Proven To Be Essential, But Remains Out Of Reach For Girls Living With Poverty

Despite the central role of water in sustaining life, the human right to water has only been explicitly mentioned in two UN human rights treaties: the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1980); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and in one regional treaty: the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) (cited in World Water Council, 2010). Water has been entangled in politics with the result that in 2002 WHO estimated that 1.1 billion people, about 17% of the population did not have access to clean water despite water being recognized as being essential to life (World Water Council, 2006). Also, more than 125 million children under 5 do not have access to an improved source of drinking water, leaving them vulnerable to easily preventable life-threatening diseases (UNICEF, 2007). Since 2004, Mozambique has not demonstrated sufficient progress towards the provision of safe, clean drinking water for all its citizens. It is currently not on track to meet Millennium Development Goal #7 regarding improved water sources (UNICEF, 2007).

Girls’ Ideas for Solutions Related To Water

The girls during Focus Group 4 developed a joint solution regarding water. They presented it during Focus Group 4:

“A scheme should be established that will enable community members to become involved in building a water well. Community members would also be responsible for maintaining and cleaning the well. If the water well was not being maintained by the

community members, they would not have a second well built. Having a well inside our community would mean that we would have more time to rest, play, finish our school work and complete our household chores”.

Sanitation

Lack of sanitation, along with poor hygiene and unsafe drinking water contributes to the deaths of more than 1.5 million children *each year* from diarrhoeal diseases. In addition, hundreds of millions of children suffer reduced physical growth and impaired cognitive functions due to intestinal worms. In sub-Saharan Africa the number of people *without* access to sanitation has increased by more than 100 million since 1990. Mozambique has not made any progress towards the provision of improved sanitation for its citizens. In fact, it is currently not on track to meet Millennium Development Goal #7 regarding improved sanitation sources (UNICEF, 2007).

Impact on Girls’ Health

Poor sanitation is directly linked to diarrhea and malnutrition (UNICEF, 2010). The health impact is even greater on girls’ bodies that have already been weakened due to poor health and physically taxing responsibilities along with poor nutritional intake and unclean water. Rita during Focus Group 3 shares: *“In our neighbourhood, there is always someone that has diarrhoea every day. When I have diarrhoea I feel very weak and tired. I have to stay at home and close to the washroom”*. Anna adds her thoughts with respect to her younger cousins: *“When little Lina gets diarrhoea, I feel really sad. She is already thin. She cries throughout the night”*. Patricia whispers: *“I have missed a number of days at school because of diarrhoea. We all have.”* Throughout the world, girls and women shoulder a disproportionate burden regarding lack of access to improved sanitation (UNDP, 2006). Even today, 2.5 *billion* people are still *without* access to improved sanitation – including 1.2 billion children and adults who have *no* facilities at all and are forced to engage in the hazardous and demeaning practise of open defecation (UNICEF, 2010). Of the approximately 1.3 billion people who gained access to improved sanitation during the period 1990-2008, 64% live in

urban areas (WHO & UNICEF, 2010). Therefore, rural areas and peri-urban communities which have 70% of the population, the great majority living with abject hardship received less than 36% of improved sanitation.

Separate from water issues which as Creed (2009) argues, receives more attention and resources in a 'water and sanitation' framework than toilets. Toilets, as explored elsewhere (Mitchell & Umurungi, 2007; Mitchell, 2009; Umurungi, Mitchell, Gervais, Ubalijoro & Kabarenzi, 2008) remains a critical site for analysis when it comes to issues of addressing intergenerational hardship, safety and security. In one photovoice study, for example, with twelve and thirteen-year-old learners in a peri-urban school in Swaziland (Mitchell, Walsh and Moletsane, 2006; Mitchell, 2009), many of the girls took photos of toilets, pointing out the risks: toilets were dangerous because they were too far from the rest of the school and a girl could be raped there, or they were in such a bad state (doors broken) that you had no privacy and could be attacked. In another study with girls living on the street in Rwanda, the girls noted that the toilets at the nearby sports stadium are dangerous. They spoke about the fact that the toilets are at great distance and hence girls would be vulnerable (Sajan Virgi & Mitchell, in press).

Impact on Developing Capacity for Girls

Sanitation also plays a pivotal role in developing capacity for girls and women. How? Poor sanitation facilities severely disadvantage girls and women by increasing their probability of falling sick. Girls and women have the greatest physical contact with contaminated water and human waste. As a result, they are vulnerable to biological pathogens and chemical hazards. Furthermore, girls and women are also expected to dispose of the family's wastewater and feces. Due to unsecure and unavailable washroom facilities, girls and women often spend the entire day without relieving themselves. Trying to relieve oneself at night also poses increased safety risks given distance of the toilets from their home (UNDP, 2004). Girls also miss out on school once they begin menstruating due to unavailability of adequate washroom facilities at school (UNDP, 2004). Hence,

their ability to catch up on concepts that increase in complexity with each passing grade is difficult if not impossible.

The girls in this study talked about issues related to poor sanitation and the impact on their lives. Yolanda writes in her reflection piece the problems of rain mixing with sewage water:

“When it rains, the water causes a lot of problems. It attracts flies that can cause cholera. The smells are unbearable. The washrooms become muddy and dirty with the water leaking both inside and outside the washroom. As a result, the waste and dirty water leak out into the yard. Children often play close to the washrooms because of limited space for play. They also play with the contaminated mud building different things and soon after fall sick”.

In the picture below, Carla talks about issues related to poor sanitation, lack of playground space leading to children becoming sick.

Figure 12: ‘Contaminated Water’



"This picture shows the washroom. The water leaks from the washroom. As a result, the area is very smelly. Children play in this area as there no places for children to play. It is not healthy for the children to play in areas that are not clean."

Photo Credit: Carla © Sajan Virgi, 2010

Girls' Ideas For Solutions Related To Sanitation

The girls developed their ideas to address the challenges they raised in relation to sanitation together. The girls commented that if they had the chance to speak to decision makers, they would suggest *“that appropriate washrooms be built inside each community. Separate washrooms for men and women. Each family would be responsible for keeping the washrooms clean on a specific day. The building structure of the washrooms had to prevent flooding and leakage”*. The girls also indicated that proper and clean washrooms were essential for good health. They spoke at length regarding the impact of poor sanitation leading to increased frequency in children becoming sick, especially younger children. Joana summarized the girls' thoughts: *“The washrooms become dirty because of the rainwater that seeps inside the washroom causing flooding and leakage since we only have mud floors”*.

The girls then presented their ideas for an ideal washroom:

“We would have washrooms in our yards, but they are not very well built. The washrooms are made of corrugated zinc sheets or reeds. They don't have electricity. Some washrooms have a door, some don't and most have a capolana (sheet) instead of a door. When the wind blows the capolana, everyone can see me inside. I feel so embarrassed. None of the washroom doors have a lock. Some washrooms have a washbasin, most don't. Only a few washrooms have a designated space for a shower. Without electricity inside the washroom, some of us have often fallen into the washbasins and gotten hurt. We sometimes feel scared going to the washroom at night and will always try to take someone with us”.

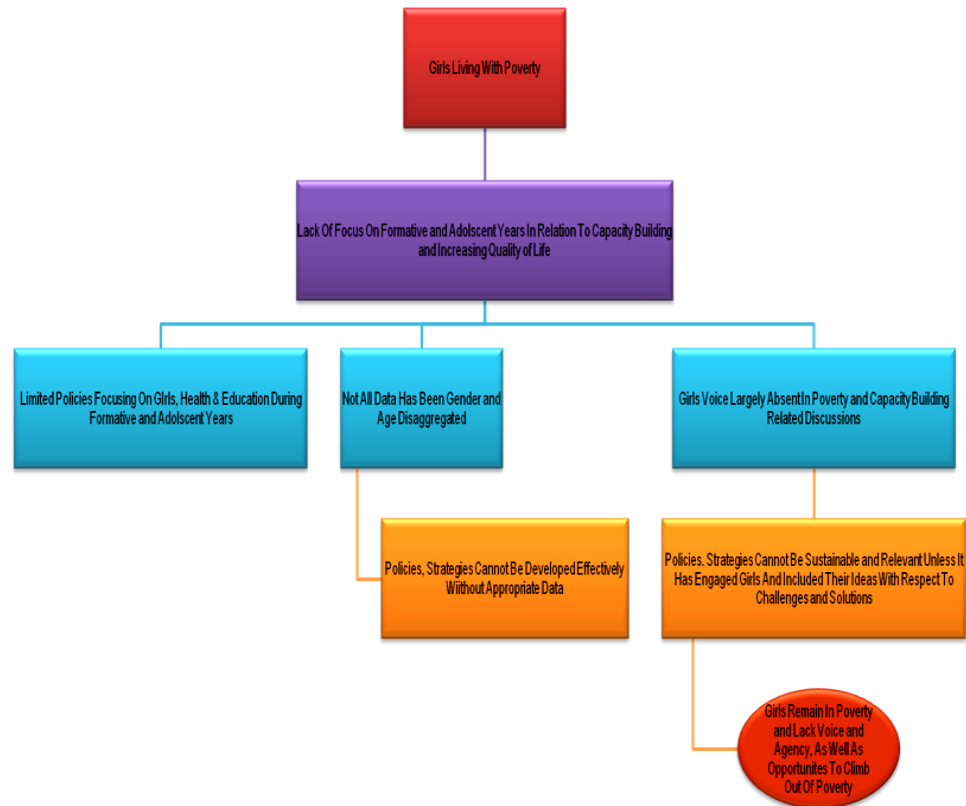
Sanitation is one of the building blocks towards attaining a higher quality of life. (See for example Greed, 2009). The World Toilet Organization notes that clean and safe toilets are also building blocks towards self-worth and self-respect. With the sanitation system that is accessed by girls living in constrained economic circumstances being of sub-standard quality, along with their poor nutritional

intake as well as, their inability to access high quality health care, the combination results in girls having an increased probability of failing health. The problem is cyclical in that these girls spend a substantial portion of their young lives having poor quality of health that often prevents them from completing school, developing appropriate skills and knowledge and thus falling prey to even greater depths of intergenerational hardship and a continuing lower status and increased dependency on their male counterparts.

Summarizing the Issues Raised By Girls

Chart 4 entitled ‘Lack of Focus on Girls during Adolescence’ highlights the barriers the girls face due to a lack of focus on adolescent years by decision makers at the local, national and international levels. This lack of focus continues to deny girls living with poverty with voice, agency and authentic empowerment which in turn prevents them from leaving a life of poverty. Decision makers on the other hand develop policies without having holistic data related to girls, poverty and capacity building which has not been age and gender disaggregated. This results in policies that are more general in nature, without a concentrated focus on very young adolescents which are critical years for intellectual, physical and emotional development.

Chart 4 - Lack Of Focus On Girls During Adolescence



CONCLUSION

The girls highlighted the critical role of gender inequity, which can be considered as the major obstacle towards accessing, remaining and completing their education. Given the importance of education in developing the capacity of girls living with poverty, inaccessibility to education due to their lower status needs to be considered as a priority barrier that impacts all other barriers the girls have identified. During the recent 2010 Dakar Conference, participating members who endorsed the Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls' Education and Gender Equality identified the need to develop a rights-based framework to address equity in education for girls. The Dakar Declaration also underscored that gender equity is a prerequisite for transformative and quality education (UNGEI, 2010a).

To achieve gender equity, the girls have identified barriers that exist prior to accessing grade 1, as well as those that remain throughout their primary education preventing them from completing their education. These barriers could be included in the right's based framework noted in the Dakar Declaration. Examples of barriers that exist prior to girls entering grade 1 include pre-determined roles and responsibilities. These roles and responsibilities have been identified by the girls as being major obstacles that are particularly taxing on their intellectual and physical development during their very early years of adolescence. These time and labour intensive roles and responsibilities assigned to girls based on their gender, severely impacted their quality of health, their ability to have enough rest which is critical during their period of growth and development, time needed to complete their homework and prepare for tests, along with their ability to regularly attend and complete their education.

Capacity development that is essential during these critical years is therefore being denied to these girls as a result of their gender based roles and responsibilities along with their lower status. In addition, inaccessibility to appropriate water and sanitation facilities in conjunction with poor nutritional intake further taxes their growing bodies during this critical period of growth and development; the combination of which exacerbates girls' health which results in

increased absence at school. This results in further weakening of their intellectual capacity development skills due to their inability to attend school regularly. Of importance is the 2010 Dakar Declaration that also confirms poverty as being both structural and multidimensional with diverse impacts on girls and women. The Declaration states that “interventions for girls’ education must cover multiple sectors. Education policies, strategies, plans and budgets must all be gender-responsive” (UNGEI, 2010a p. 7). However, without addressing gender inequity first, it will not be possible to achieve the objectives stated by the 2010 Dakar Declaration.

CHAPTER 6 - ANALYSIS 2

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION AND PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES

*“What would it really mean to study the world from the standpoint
of children (girls) both as knowers and actors?”
(Oakley, 1994, p. 25)*

INTRODUCTION

In general, children including girls living with poverty have been identified as a group for “whom having greater power and knowledge, and consequentially, a ‘voice’ is vitally important” (Clark, 2004 p. 3). Numerous changes have been attempted, including political changes in order to bring the girls’ voice to the center of discussion (Clark, 2004). United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that children are entitled to have their voice heard regarding situations and contexts that affect them. Yet, girls’ voices remain silent. Torri and Fine argue that active and consistent “participation lies at the core of democracy and justice” (Torri & Fine, 2006 p. 269). However, Brechin (1993) notes that, “research tends to be owned and controlled by researchers, or by those who, in turn, own and control the researchers” (Brechin, 1993 p. 73).

The central focus of this chapter is on findings related to participatory methodologies as a tool for hearing the voices and ideas of girls living with poverty. In this chapter I am particularly interested in the ways in which the process of doing photovoice contributes to making the issues visible, but also contributes to girls’ overall sense of empowerment. This chapter will address the final research question. Question 3: How can participatory and visual methodologies such as photovoice be useful tools to create increased awareness and develop critical thinking at the grassroots level? What role can visual methodologies have in the creation of relevant policies for girls living with poverty?

As noted in Chapter 5, I will draw on stories and comments made by Anna, Beatrice, Carla, Fatima, Joana, Patricia, Paula, Rosa, Rita and Yolanda. I will be presenting data and where relevant, reading it against the literature on girls in development context in both chapters.

SECTION 1: HIDDEN LIVES, UNHEARD VOICES

One of the main outcomes of research related to poverty, girls and capacity building is to gain new knowledge in order to develop relevant and meaningful policies which will enable girls living with poverty to access a higher quality of life as they deem appropriate. Based on what the girls had to say about the engagement, learning and knowledge making process and role of photovoice in achieving these outcomes, there are several key categories that will be discussed in this section: discovering myself; citizenship; locating power and developing critical thinking skills.

Discovering Ourselves

Since participatory methodologies create intellectual and physical safe spaces through consistent and constant interaction and dialogue (Stoudt, 2007), what emerged as a result of this process was the opportunity for the girls to discover an expanded sense of self. By using photovoice as an entry point, the girls throughout the study process commented on how much they learned about themselves and each other. An important comment made by Yolanda during Focus Group 4 and endorsed by the girls highlights the learning process girls experienced through the use of participatory methodologies:

“I learned as much about myself, each other, Sister Zainul and Sister Michelle through this process. It all started when Sister Zainul wanted to know my thoughts. Initially I was shy. But, then I found that Sister Zainul and Sister Michelle were really listening to what I had to say. My confidence grew. In working with you, I became more confident to voice my thoughts and ideas. I realized that I had good ideas. No one asked me before about my thoughts. I feel that I can now speak my mind in other occasions. Thank you

for this opportunity. I only wish that it had happened much earlier in my life”.

The girls through the use of participatory qualitative research began to develop a critical eye which leads to “the familiar becoming unfamiliar to them” (Stoudt, 2007 p. 286). It also facilitates voice which allows for traditional sources of power and knowledge to be questioned (Pattman, 2006). Fatima demonstrates her ability to critically analyze a situation that she appeared to now question. Fatima noted that prior to her engagement in the study, she had consistently received the same message – girls were not responsible for learning or thinking. Joana shared her thoughts during Focus Group 4:

“I have always been told that I do not have to think or learn. That is not my responsibility. That is the responsibility of my brother. My responsibility is to obey my future husband and to make him happy. If I become too smart, then no one will marry me. I know how unmarried girls are treated in my community. They are left out and are all alone. I want to get married. But, after participating in this study, I am surprised by how much I know. I am surprised by my good ideas and that of my friends. It is as if I am seeing myself for the first time. I wish we had met you earlier in our lives.”

Increased voice and agency leads to increased decision-making authority and decreased vulnerability. Increased voice and agency also results in visibility. It also encourages reflection and social transformation (Waite & Conn, 2011). The most powerful example that exemplifies voice and agency is when Fatima echoed similar sentiments of girls in the study when she said, *“this study is very important to me. I have learned about myself. I have learned to listen to new ideas. Because of this study, I saw myself for the first time!”* Joana elaborated, *“by listening to everyone’s ideas and in hearing my own ideas, I feel like I saw myself for the first time. I also saw everyone else for the first time. We all have really good ideas!”* What stands out in all of the girls’ statements is how they became visible to themselves and each other through their own ideas and in

hearing the ideas of other girls. It can be inferred that previously they remained invisible because they were not provided with the space to speak and listen to each other's ideas for solutions.

Locating Power

Participatory methodologies are about empowerment and establishing equity (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). The first step towards empowerment and equity for those, whose voices have remained unheard, like the girls in the study, is to understand power. Knowledge and power are two important components of research and policy making. They are intimately linked (Foucault, 1980). Culture also plays a strong role in shaping knowledge (de Cambra, Rambla, Besalú, Escobar, Marquès & Fernández, 2004). Power is the impetus for politics as is knowledge for research. Research is political since it is politics that sets and drives the topics to be investigated, the process of analysis to be undertaken, as well as what specific knowledges²⁵ will be available for public consumption and

²⁵ In my informal conversations with my research assistants Sarah and Michelle who were both completing their undergraduate degrees at their respective universities, I asked them to consider whose knowledge had developed their perception of girls living with poverty in Mozambique. Michelle focused on how her perception of girls living with poverty had been formed by external sources, many of whom had limited or no contact with the girls.

I had not thought about this before you asked me. But, now that I am carefully reflecting on whose ideas influenced my perception of girls living with poverty, it has predominately been decision makers, NGO reports, media, teachers, family and friends. And yet, as I am thinking out loud, none of these individuals have had direct long-term contact with the girls. From the reports and media, I learned that people living with poverty are lazy, not smart and not able to take care of themselves. But, in working with the girls, I realize these girls are not lazy. They physically work harder than I do, or my family and friends. They are smart. We have just never heard their ideas”.

Sarah shares how much her perception changed after working and spending time with the girls. The experience of working with the girls has inspired her to share with her colleagues the importance of searching for the truth.

“After meeting and working with the girls, I am determined to share the truth about them to all my family and friends. In my course work at university, we are expected to undertake research in an area related to socio-economics. I will focus on girls and poverty in Mozambique. I want my colleagues to have greater insight that is more truthful into the lives of these brilliant and loving girls”.

what will remain hidden from the public. Research produces knowledge which influences policies and in turn impacts the ability of those in power to withhold or share power (Buchanan-Smith, 2003).

Girls living with poverty face numerous forms of power which challenge their ability to contribute towards knowledge and meaning making. The following are excerpts from the girls' reflections pieces after Focus Groups 3 and 4. Beatrice highlights her invisibility in her reflection piece after Focus Group 3:

"In my class, I am the poorest girl. I know this because all the other girls can bring food to school, they have slippers that are not broken, and they have a school bag, notebooks, pens and pencils. I do not have these things. I usually wear the same clothes during my holidays. The girls at school all have different clothes to wear. I am often left out of the group. During recess, when everyone plays together, no one asks me to play with them. In class, the teacher pays more attention to girls that have a little bit of money. Often, my hand is raised because I know the answer, but the teacher rarely asks me to answer. Nine out of ten times, my answer would have been correct. But, no one will know that. No one will treat me differently".

Rita in her reflection piece after Focus Group 4 notes the challenges of remaining unheard:

"At home, I am the last person that is heard, if at all. No one asks me for my ideas, even if it is regarding my school. My brothers and uncles always speak on my behalf. My mother I know she wants to know what I think, but she never asks me. I think it is because she does not want to make my brothers and uncles unhappy because we are dependent on them for money. So many times I wish she would stand up for me and for herself. If we have less things or less food, that would be okay. But, to always be silent, that makes me unhappy".

Rosa equated the absence of power to the experience she had as a child bride. In her reflection piece after Focus Group 4 she explained:

“I remember the day my mother told me I was going to be married. I was so frightened. I did not want to leave my mother and siblings. I screamed no! I am too young. I do not want to get married. My aunties told me that I must get married. They told that I have begun my menstruation and am therefore a woman. A woman cannot remain in school. She must be married. I told them please do not get me married, I promise I will not play with men. I will be good. No one listened. The next day I was married to a man much older than me. I moved into his home with his other wives the same day. I had to listen to him and his wives. I was not allowed to have any relation with my family”.

After careful analysis of these excerpts, it becomes evident that power to engage, to participate in decision-making, to be heard as experienced by girls living with poverty can be held by many: other girls living in poverty, but slightly better off; teachers; uncles; brothers; older women; aunties and mothers. Power in these girls’ lives appeared in the form of tradition, knowledge, money, age and gender. Any one of these individuals beholds the purse strings of power and subsequently denies the girls with the opportunity to acquire power, become visible, have agency and be heard. Being cognizant of the little if any power that is held by girls living with poverty, it is essential that researchers use methodologies which are empowering, respectful and that do not further disempower girls living with poverty. Participatory methodologies have been successful in opening two way communications between participants and researcher (de Cambra et al, 2004) which is essential for dialogue, exchanging knowledge and most importantly empowerment of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Citizenship

Citizenship creates awareness of the wider society, outside of the familiar world that influences the girls’ life experiences. Citizenship also creates space

which enables the girls to understand how they fit into the greater society. It also identifies the strengths and challenges found in the greater society. Citizenship permits the formation of one's own identity (Sutton, Smith, Dearden & Middleton, 2007). With the formation of an identity, the capacity to recognize strengths and challenges, it can then lead to the girls' ability to negotiate change within the greater society. Participation is after all critical in demonstrating respect, rights and citizenship of girls living daily with poverty and in gaining insight into life experiences most likely different from our own (Bennet & Roberts, 2004).

Rosa's reflection piece following Focus Group 4 enables us to see how she is becoming an active citizen as a result of her participation in the study. She shares:

"In participating in this study, I have learned the importance of listening and speaking. So often in our communities, the men talk and we are expected to listen. And when women talk, no one listens. But, here we all speak and listen to each other's thoughts. We discuss new ideas. We learn that it is isn't about being right, it is about thinking of the problem, understanding the problem and then finding solutions together. I was most surprised when you asked us for our ideas. I was even more surprised when you listened. Here in Mozambique, adults do not listen to girls. And when someone has attended university, they do not listen to someone's ideas who have not attended university. But, for you, it did not matter. You were interested in our ideas. My confidence grew each time I attended a session. I am trying to speak up at home and in my community. It is hard, but I am trying. Many times I am still told to be quiet. But, I know if I don't try, no one will really know my thoughts. I look forward to our discussions and debates".

Carla shares her experience as one of the younger girls in the study during Focus Group 3:

“Usually when you are discussing important things, even if you are with other girls, if you are younger than them, then it is understood that you will only listen. It is like you are invisible, because you cannot speak and are not spoken to. But here, because we are treated the same, I had the courage to share my thoughts. Now we all talk and listen to one another here and when we are at school together”.

From Rosa’s reflection piece, it becomes evident that she is attempting to create change in her world. Carla’s comments raise the issue of power in the hands of those that are older, even older girls. She may or may not be successful, but the fact that she, like Carla has become aware, has gained confidence, may lead both of them on a new journey in which they can attempt to exert their ideas and thoughts amongst family, friends and community members.

Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Halpern defines critical thinking as “the use of cognitive skills or strategies that increases the probability of a desirable outcome” (Halpern, 1997 p. 15). Critical thinking is the foundation for informed and engaged citizens. Combined these are important perquisites for sustainable development (Ng, 2010). Participatory methodologies are important because they provides space for critical thinking resulting in the girls becoming active and engaged citizens (Casely-Hayford & Ghartey, 2007). Through participatory methodology, the girls analyzed, asked questions and became curious about their community. Through the process of photovoice, dialogue and debate, within a short span of time, the girls were eagerly sharing their unique ideas. The transformation for the girls seemed to occur the moment the photos were developed and placed in front of the girls. At this particular point, it appeared that the girls switched from being participants in their lives to being observers of their lives. The switch from participant to observer is key to enabling the girls to critically reflect and analyze their lives.

As a result of this transformation, they were debating with one another and confidently voicing their thoughts. This is in stark contrast to the first few times I

met with them where they would respond shyly using limited words. More often than not, they would just repeat each other's ideas, just slightly differently. By the end of the study, they had grown tremendously with respect to critical thinking skills and confidence. This can be seen through comments that each of the girls made at different junctures sharing similar sentiments to: *"I didn't realize that I had such good ideas."* Realizing that wisdom is within you is the first step towards developing critical thinking skills. Beatrice shared her thoughts after completing the community photo-taking and interviews: *"What I once thought was normal in my community is actually a challenge that needs to be addressed."* Beatrice's comments demonstrate an increased awareness of the community she has lived in for most of her life. It can be inferred that she is developing critical observation skills.

The girls demonstrated their capacity to critically analyze their lives when photos were placed before them in which all the girls had a photo of themselves carrying water. The girls identified the significant distance to water-wells along with the expense involved in procuring water as one of their major barriers. But, in identifying barriers, they began to reflect on the possibility of role change. Previously, they had just accepted them as the norm, but now they were critically considering what change would look like in their lives. Fatima during Focus Group 3 asked the group the following question: *"I wonder what would happen if boys had to collect water instead of girls. Would they do it? I don't think so. I wish we had water-wells in our communities."* Joana, Beatrice, Anna and Carla all agreed with Fatima. Joana added *"boys do not work hard. They do not care for their families. They would expect each person to fetch their own water"*.

Joana during Focus Group 4 raises the possibility of women having alternative employment opportunities. The girls were now beginning to question their surroundings which demonstrated their growth in thinking critically. Joana shares:

"Our mothers, grandmothers they work for long hours. They get up at 4am. They work for long hours working in the field or in someone's home as a housemaid. When they come home, it is very

late at night. We rarely see our mothers and grandmothers. We need them to be with us. We miss them. When they are at home, they are tired. And they are always worried. There never seems to be enough money for food. Often we wake up and see our mothers crying. We wish they could have other jobs, like the men in our community. Why do women only have such jobs? Why can't women have other jobs that will enable them to be at home with us? We need our mothers".

Paula during Focus Group 4 elaborated on the role of money in relation to the responsibilities women have towards families. She identified January as being a particularly difficult month. Paula explains:

"There are certain months which are harder than others. For example, January is a difficult month. School fees, uniforms, books – everything is due in January. December due to Christmas, our grandmothers and mothers do their best to have special food at home. But, then January becomes difficult. We have all learned to eat little. We do our best not to complain when we are hungry as it makes our mothers and grandmothers worry even more. Food is needed for life. Food is needed for peace within the home; otherwise, everyone starts to shout. Food is needed so that our mothers and grandmothers can sleep peacefully at night. Food is needed so that we can be strong and healthy. Food is needed so that we do not miss school because we are so hungry".

Rita during Focus Group 4 compares hospitals in her community versus the city. She also underscores the role of money and receiving quality health care. Rita shares her analysis:

"In the city, there are so many hospitals. When my neighbor was sick, her daughter worked at the hospital in the city. We went to see her. The hospital was big with lots of doctors and nurses. There was light and water available at the hospital. There was a big pharmacy inside the hospital. Our hospitals are different.

They are small, with one or two doctors responsible for so many patients. When you go to the hospital, you have to wait for hours and hours before someone sees you. Sometimes there isn't any light or water. The doctors and nurses, they are not too nice with us. If you have money, then suddenly they pay attention to you. I know how hard my mother works, so I try not to get sick."

Patricia during Focus Group 4 questions the difference in quality within her community and the city. She asks: *"since there are more people living in our communities and less people in the city, why don't we have better hospitals in our communities?"* Rosa questions why there are different playground spaces within the same space. She asks:

"The children on the other side our neighbourhood, they have a really nice playground space. But, we are not allowed to play there. They know we don't live there, so they don't let us play with them. In our communities, you have big piles of garbage. There isn't any other space. So we play and then we get sick. Where else can we play? Why are there different playground spaces for each community. Would it not be better to have one large playground space so that we could all play together?"

In each of the excerpts noted above, the girls are developing their observational and critical thinking skills. They appear to be much more aware of their surroundings, their roles and responsibilities. Instead of just accepting unavailable playground space, they are questioning why space is not available for them.

During the final focus group, I asked the girls to write about their experience working in the study. They wrote their response together in preparation for a community photo viewing session. For the community photo viewing session, I had requested time from the Head Teacher for three girls to deliver three minute presentations each. The girls undertook the selection process and identified three girls, Yolanda, Anna and Beatrice to present on their behalf. Three topics were selected. All the girls worked together to prepare each write-

up. Unfortunately, we had to cancel on the day of the presentation since the study's gatekeeper had provided us with incorrect information. With the cancellation of the presentation, it could be inferred that the girls were once again being ignored, devalued and their voices silenced, this time it was by an authority figure they trusted – the school Head Teacher. This is what Yolanda wrote and would have presented on behalf of the girls:

“Now I will briefly talk about the importance of the project in our lives. During the project we learned a lot of things that are useful in our lives. For example we learned to speak well and with confidence. We learned to take pictures and conduct interviews. We also learned that in life if we want something we must work hard for it. As an example, I learned that if I do the things I learned, someday I will be somebody, and people will admire me. They will say - look at that girl she did not know anything, now she knows a lot. When we want something we must work hard for it.

This project enabled us to see our community differently, by showing us what we considered to be normal or natural to us, was actually something that we needed to change. We started to see that we had a lot of problems that need to be resolved. We also saw that we can make a change in our community if we work hard for it. This was shown to us by the project. We are sharing this experience with all of you, because we would like to see our lives change, and yours to change as well. This project gave us opportunities to think ahead and see the world differently.

Fatima and Anna shared their written thoughts together on the final day of the study:

“This study is important for all of us. We have learned so much. We have developed interviewing, listening, presentation, writing skills. We have seen our community and ourselves for the first time. We have learned not to just see, but to look closely. By looking closely we have seen that what we once thought was okay,

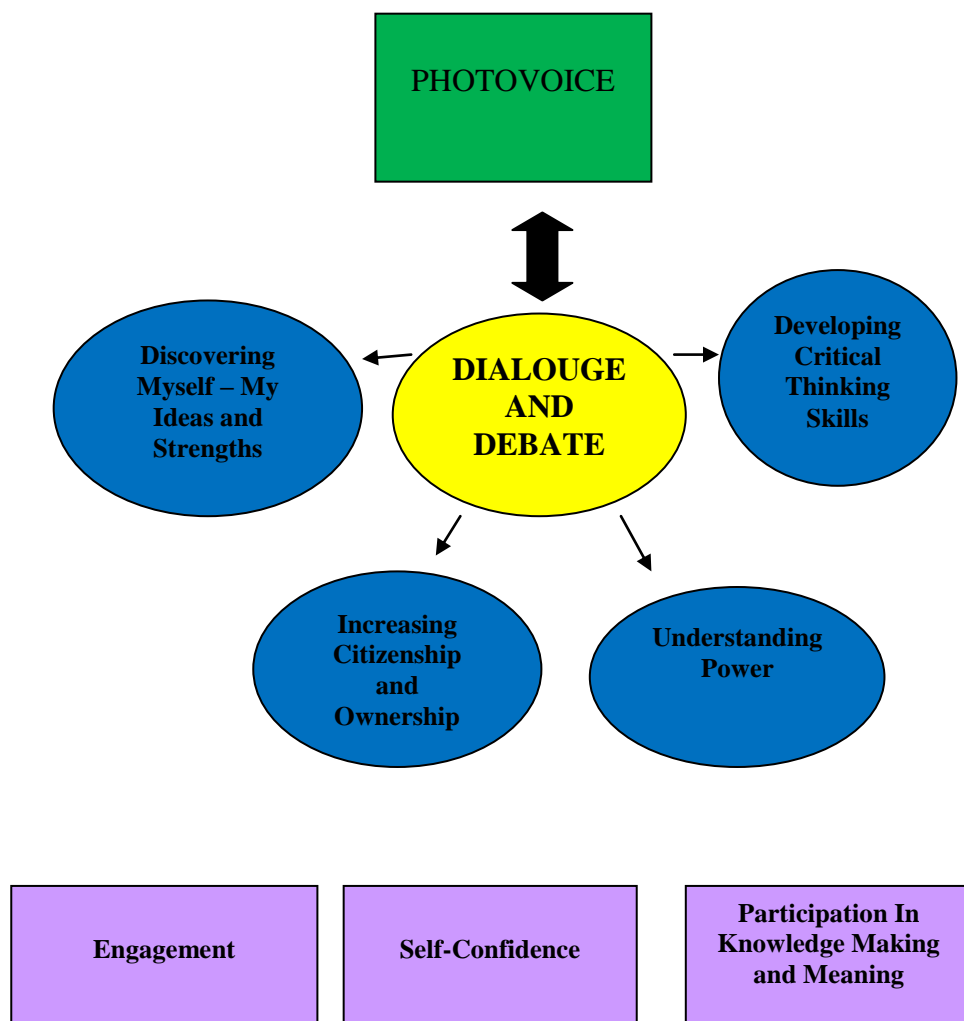
is in fact a problem that needs to be addressed. We wish our families had participated in a study like this. They would understand what we have learned.”

It is tempting to attribute the girls’ apparent transformation to participatory methodologies. While terms such as ‘active engagement’ and transformation are often highlighted in the literature on participatory research (Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart & Nkwanyana, 2006; Umurungi et al, 2008), perhaps the most important impact relates to the ways in which participatory methodologies allowed the girls to address the materiality of everyday life. Their photos related to nutrition, health, sanitation and girls carrying water serve as graphic and up-close reminders of the difficulties in their lives. The responses of the girls complement the work of Caroline Wang and her colleagues on the idea of grass-roots policy making and the significance of community members – in this case girls seeing that they can take steps to identify critical issues. From the fieldwork with the girls, there are a number of key issues, particularly in relation to nutrition, health, water and sanitation that could otherwise be missed without the incorporation of participatory methodologies.

Summary of the Impact of Participatory Visual Methodology

Chart 5 summarizes the diverse impact of visual participatory methodology on girls participating in the study. The meaningful increase in their self-confidence, recognition of their ideas and that of their peers, the capacity to critically analyze and develop thoughtful solutions progressed throughout their participation. A poignant moment in the study was when the girls saw themselves for the first time through their own ideas. Through dialogue and debate, the girls also became visible to each other. Whereas at the beginning of the study, the girls were quiet and shy to offer their ideas, by the end of the study, they were debating with one another and displayed new found confidence in their own ideas.

**Chart 5 – Impact of Visual Participatory Methodology
For Girls Participating In The Study**



Other Participatory Methodologies

The girls each conducted an interview with their mother or grandmother or auntie. Only in one case, one of the girls interviewed a female neighbor since her own mother and grandmother had passed away. The interviews were organized around such questions as: identifying female roles and responsibilities, discovering what older female relations would have changed in her life and why, as well as understanding from the female relative what could trigger the process of change in the quality of lives of the younger generation of women in her community. Given that the families lived with abject poverty, I was interested in seeing how the girls themselves would discover similarities or differences between the lives of their grandmothers, mothers and aunts and their own and what steps they would take, if any to address these issues.

The images produced by the girls offer an insider view of their lives and at the same time provide an entry point for them to offer practical solutions to the issues. At the same time it is also important to say something about their overall confidence and enthusiasm. The girls seemed to undergo a change through the process of taking the pictures, and engaging in dialogue and debate about what the images meant. Through the community interviews they conducted and the photos they took, they also began to connect with the lives of their grandmothers, mothers and aunties. As Beatrice shared: *“My great grandmother worked on the field. My grandmother works on the field. I do not know what my mother does since she lives in South Africa. My aunties have food stalls. Now that I see the lives of my family, I hope I will do something different.”* Joana shared: *“My grandmother works as a housemaid. My mother works as a housemaid. My sister works as a housemaid. Joana then took it upon herself to ask her neighbours about their employment. She shared during Focus Group 4:*

“Everyone in my family has only worked as housemaids. I spoke to 10 of my neighbours. Each of them also works as a housemaid. No one makes a lot of money. Everyone is always worried. I do not want to work as a housemaid. I must do something different”.

One interpretation of these comments ‘do something different’ may suggest that the girls were hoping to access different opportunities from their female relatives which would lead to a higher and easier quality of life.

The girls’ mothers, grandmothers, aunts and neighbour raised a number of issues similar to those raised by the girls including gender inequality, gendered roles and responsibilities, lack of agency and voice, as well as inability to exit a life of poverty. Below, I will share issues that were unique to those raised by the girls.

Gender Inequality

Beatrice’s grandmother in response to Beatrice’s question regarding what needs to change in order for girls her age to have a better quality of life indicated:

“It is important for girls to acquire land ownership. If you lose your employment, at least you will have a place to stay. The law is however not supportive of this. I do not know how you can challenge the law. Now that I see you attending school and learning new things, I wish I had gone to school too. When I was your age, girls did not go to school. If I had enough money, I would support you, but soon you will have to find a job if you wish to continue your education past grade 6”.

Anna’s mother focused on the importance of education. She shared:

“I was unable to go to school. My father did not want the girls to attend school. We were married when we were very young. Now that I am alone with only you and your brother and sister, I realize how important education is, especially for girls. I have learned so much from you, math, Portuguese. It has helped me with my business. I wish I had enough money for you to complete primary and secondary school. I would advise mothers not to get their girls married so young”.

Fatima’s mother in response to how she could have a better quality of life said:

“I do not know how you will have a better quality of life. We do not have enough money even to eat. I have many dreams for each of you, but I do not think that I will be able to provide them for you. As girls and women, this is our life. We cannot change it.”

In the girls’ interview, Fatima’s mother’s response was typical. The women had not considered prior to their daughters’ and grand-daughters’ question what they could do change their quality of lives. Or even if their lives could be changed. The lack of responses inferred that the older women had accepted their life as being unchangeable. Maybe it was due to their age or maybe it was due to the reality that women’s lives had remained status quo. What was also consistent was the recognition that the girls had evolved through their increased knowledge and skills gained at school. However, the challenge remained with the older generation of women, how would they be able to afford education past Grade 6 for their daughters and grand-daughters. This weighed heavily on their minds particularly when food remained a scarcity in their daily lives.

Photovoice Strengths

Two unique strengths that I attribute towards the use of photovoice in my research are embracing the wisdom of local knowledge and increasing collaboration and trust between the girls and me.

Local Knowledge

A critical objective for research is to gain insight and new knowledge of a community. What is important in collaborating with the girls is not what my perceptions of reality are with respect to their reality; it is not affirming my knowledge and experience; it is in fact discovering and understanding the world through their eyes. A second critical objective of research is identifying what specific changes they view as being essential in order to secure a higher quality of life as they deem appropriate. In order for this objective to be translated into action, it was vital to gain insight into their thoughts related to strengths and challenges of their community, as well as their ideas for solutions. Photovoice effectively achieved both these fundamental objectives of research. It provided the forum and the space for the girls to contemplate and critically reflect on their

ideas of community strengths and challenges. More importantly it uncovered for them the wisdom that already lay inside of them.

The barriers and definition they presented were significantly different from the ones I would have presumed based on my perception of reality. The solutions the girls developed were practical. One can clearly imagine how they would translate immediately into improving their quality of lives.

Individually and collectively, they produced new knowledge by utilizing critical reflection to change their ways of being which had been previously shaped externally by dominant discourse, organizational goals and power relations (McTaggart, 1992). Photovoice, dialogue and debate encouraged the girls to think outside of their realm, to reflect inwards and consider their strengths, challenges and not as defined by others. It also provided space for the girls to consider how they could change their community's challenges into strengths. The space created by participatory methodologies allowed them to consider which issues would have cross-cutting impact. They debated and developed a final list of nine priorities while highlighting why one specific priority was rated higher or lower over another priority. They deliberated over the course of a few sessions a definition for abject poverty. It was in the creation of their own knowledge that they gained confidence and voice with respect to their ideas.

In the process of creating new knowledge, the girls embraced the wisdom from their parents and grandparents, their culture and linked that with knowledge they gained from their environment, including school. Through the debates, a shift occurred; the girls began to take ownership of their own ideas and knowledge. They debated with one another and confidently shared their unique ideas. Ownership founded on shared values in turn gave rise to an increased opportunity for authentic empowerment for these girls (Tomlinson, 2002). Recognition and ownership of knowledge also resulted in sustained participation. This was particularly important when you consider that these girls had more pressing concerns to address like basic human survival instead of time spent attending our sessions. When we asked them why they attended the sessions regularly? They responded using similar sentiments as shared by Anna:

“We have learned about ourselves. We have learned from each other. Most of all, we have learned that our ideas are important. What we think is also as important. We didn’t see all the ideas that lay inside of us before. No one ever asked us. You ask us. And it forces us to think. We like that.”

In watching the girls engage and debate with one another, it demonstrated for me how photovoice certainly has the potential to give rise to authentic justice and democracy (Torre & Fine, 2006).

I also felt that through constant dialogue with the girls, it increased my accountability towards the girls as a researcher, as well as theirs towards their own lives (Tomlinson, 2002). I cannot think of a more important outcome than this as it ensured that the knowledge that the girls were creating and that I was recording was accurate, reflective and authentic. Without the use of participatory methodology it may have been easier to have decreased accountability towards affirming the authenticity of their voice. It would have definitely decreased the voice of the girls and the opportunity to gain local knowledge had I not used photovoice, dialogue and debate. If the goal is to gain insight into local knowledge and provide space for the participants to create new knowledge and gain voice, then photovoice is indeed an effective tool.

Increased Collaboration and Trust

A second important strength of photovoice is the ability to effectively enable the girls to become active participants involved in the learning and teaching of their own development (Mayoux & Chambers, 2005). If we compare photovoice with other participatory methodologies, photovoice offers many advantages. For one, photovoice is a low cost activity in comparison to other participatory methodologies like participatory video taking. Using a camera is also easier to master. For the girls, it was also easier for them to use a camera within their community as opposed to other participatory methodologies including video taking. Cameras are low key and images recorded are more natural in comparison to video-taking where community members would be much more conscious and aware of the recording being done by a video. The risk for the

girls' safety in using a disposable camera is also considerably lower than taking a video into their community.

Photovoice provided the space and opportunity to develop relationships between the girls and me. Over time I began to see how much our relationship had evolved. It gradually became a relationship based on trust and mutual respect. As a result, it also allowed the girls to recognize their own true potential (Lennie, 2005) as they confidently discovered new ideas. The girls actively analyzed and evaluated their ideas of solutions which would lead to increasing the community's capacity in accessing a higher quality of life. The girls developed solutions based on their resources, skills, capacities and needs (Lennie, 2005). Photovoice, dialogue and debate enabled the girls to intimately understand their life circumstance, make meaning from it and then consider which elements needed to be changed in order to access a higher quality of life as they deemed appropriate (Freire, 1970).

A comment that really struck me as being a turning point for some of the girls is when they said at various different points of the process, similar sentiments to *"I really see myself now."* The power of photovoice, follow-up dialogue and debate is that it made the girls visible (Sandercock, 1998) both within themselves and externally to each other. It effectively encouraged the girls to discover their individual voices which had been silenced by the dominant voice (Reason, 2004), be it male, culture or education. The girls' voices emerged in the development of ideas and in identifying key success indicators in relation to quality of life.

In the words of Soumana Sako, the Executive Director of the African Capacity Building Foundation, "if there is no local ownership, it has been shown that development projects won't succeed. People have to feel that it is their program, designed with their priorities in mind and based on their own leadership" (Development Gateway, 2005 p. 10). If we accept that local ownership and knowledge, as well as the active engagement of participants are fundamental aspects needed to achieve relevant social change, then photovoice can be seen as an effective tool that enabled the girls to step back from their lives

and observe it critically through the photographs they had taken. Furthermore, photovoice provides visual evidence of the strengths and challenges found inside the girls' neighbourhoods. This evidence is important since these neighbourhoods are not always visited by donors and decision makers. This visual evidence provides the girls with a tool depicting their reality which cannot be denied. The evidence can then be used to advocate for change.

Without the girls engagement, without understanding the relevance and importance of local knowledge it would be difficult to develop relevant and sustainable policies and strategies that can affect their quality of life as they deem appropriate. And if we do not meet this critical objective which creates change that enables individuals to realize their potential and gain a life of quality and independence, what then is the point of research?

Photovoice Challenges

Two unique challenges that I attribute towards the use of photovoice in my research are changing the power landscape and concerns related to empowerment as it pertains to the girls.

Changing the Power Landscape

There are usually three main power brokers in the developing world: donors, national government and NGOs – each competing to stake their importance and place in the development process (Tomlinson, 2002). The girls identified the following internal stakeholders which I felt were critical to sustaining change within the family unit and community. They are Church leaders; community leaders and male family members namely brothers, uncles, fathers and grandfathers. One of the greatest challenges for participatory related research is producing authentic power for community members to independently alter their community's quality of life, therefore it is important that these internal gatekeepers support the girls' desire for a higher quality of life through increased capacity building.

The girls although not directly naming it culture, identified the fall-out as a result of culture namely the lower status of girls; pre-determined roles and responsibilities as being critical barriers towards developing their capacity. They

also spoke in great detail about their inability to be heard or even seen within their families. How would it be possible for the girls to achieve a shift in power; that is to realize authentic power and position within their respective communities and families, if they are deemed invaluable as individuals not worthy of even primary education? How would the girls shift power and challenge tradition that has existed for over 400 years that has placed the girls second to boys? A shift in power resulting in gender equality would need to achieve two important goals: discussions and strategies regarding how to increase a girl's social capital, as well as how to increase her status and opportunity including changing her pre-determined roles and responsibilities (Lilja & Dixon, 2008).

Without the initial support from internal gatekeepers, it will not be possible for change to occur. The challenge for me with respect to the girls was in increasing their awareness of their community's current situation, encouraging them to seek change as they deem appropriate without encouraging current power brokers to share power with traditionally marginalized groups like girls living with poverty. Gillian Attwood summarizes the challenge by indicating that "factors such as poverty, social mobility and disruption, gender inequality and economic underdevelopment shape not only the context in which individuals make decisions, but also the range of possible decisions available to individuals. Whether or not to change one's sexual practices, go for testing or seek treatment, are not purely private decisions, they have political implications" (Attwood, 2004, p. 2).

Mayoux and Chambers concur with Attwood's concerns by indicating that the success of outcomes as a result of participatory research depends on the political will to hear, listen and act on the voices of community members often from marginalized segments of society (Mayoux and Chambers, 2005). I would highlight that the will of the male family members and male community leaders to initially support the shift in thinking and considering daughters in relation to sons is a prerequisite and necessary for change to occur and be lasting.

Can We See Empowerment?

One of the challenges in a study of this length is to try to identify the ways in which the methods contribute to the overall sense of the girls' sense of having some sort of voice. Pithouse and Mitchell (2007) in their work on 'looking at looking' focus on process photos of participants engaged in looking at/ working with their own photos as examples of engagement. They argue that such photos form a critical part of the visual data, and as evidence, offer close readings of several photos of looking at looking. In working with the girls, I attempted to document all aspects of the process, from playing with the cameras, through to their viewing a mini exhibition on a clothesline arranged on the school fence (See Figure 5).

Empowerment with respect to the girls discovering their wisdom, developing citizenship, identifying power and developing critical thinking skills were evident among all the girls. But, what about empowerment with respect to real life issues girls face including lack of food, poor sanitation, water resources that are far away, or the girls' inability to attend school regularly? Even though the girls provide visual evidence, these critical and real life issues remain a part of the girls' lives. The question that remains unanswered for me is what should empowerment look like when engaging marginalized population groups like girls living with poverty with participatory methodologies? Should the girls have any expectation when sharing intimate parts of their lives generously with a researcher? Should researchers be responsible for enabling the girls to achieve authentic empowerment such that they are able to independently advocate for themselves and / or negotiate a meaningful change in their quality of life? How would PhD candidates be able to achieve this given time and costs associated in enabling meaningful social change not to mention support from decision makers in the Government, among donors and NGOs? These issues need to be addressed particularly when Mitchell et al emphasizes "hearing the voices of children – should not be separated from taking action. At the same time, we must also adhere to a code of conduct where we don't simply hear the voices of children for the

purposes of our own research without ensuring that we take appropriate steps with policy makers” (Mitchell et al, 2006 p. 277).

SECTION 2: COMMUNICATING HER IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND SOLUTIONS TO KEY GATEKEEPERS

A key question of course is one of reception: “Are policy makers listening (or seeing)?” How can their voices and their images be linked with local policy makers who have the power to translate the priorities raised by the girls into action? How can research become action? I considered both internal and external gatekeepers. I asked the girls who they considered to be their gatekeepers with respect to the diverse barriers they had identified throughout the study. They wrote their response together following Focus Group 3 and presented it during Focus Group 4. Their presentation responded to the following question: who are the important people that need to hear what you have shared with us in relation to strengths, challenges and potential ideas for solutions? Anna presented on behalf of the group:

“If changes are to happen in our lives, then it will be important for community leaders to understand our needs and ideas. It would be important for the men in our community and families to also make changes with us. Our fathers, uncles, brothers, cousins they would need to support us in our education. If we have to perform all the household and farming chores, we cannot attend school. We will have no time for homework. Our fathers, uncles and brothers must learn to listen to us. If they do not listen to us then how can we work together to change. We want to have a better life, easier life than our mothers and grandmothers. They work too hard. The Church leaders are very important. Everyone goes to Church and nobody questions the priest. So the priest is an important person that must understand and support us. Government is also important. The Government can provide opportunities for our mothers and grandmothers to have different jobs. The Government can build wells and proper toilets. We will help in building them,

but we will need help paying for it. After that we will be responsible for it. Our mothers need to be heard. Our grandmothers need to be heard. They must be helped with all the work they do. The men in our community must help. They must share the responsibilities. They cannot earn money and then not help out at home. That isn't nice. Together we can change."

From the girls' write-up, the community leaders and Church leaders are an important first step in translating the research into action, particularly in relation to sharing the girls' aspirations, priorities and their capacity to contribute towards the growth and development of the family and community. The second step appears to be in bringing together the community, including male members to either undergo a similar process with a slightly different focus. In order for the change to be sustainable, the ideas for change must emerge from within the community, from both male and female members. The focus could be on the potential of men and women working together to transition out of poverty collectively. How would the roles and responsibilities change in order to meet this objective?

The girls have also identified the support required from the Government. It would be important for the Education and Health sector, along with the Women and Youth Ministry to also be engaged in developing concrete policies and strategies to address gender inequality and the absence of basic needs for all its citizens. Consultations would have to be undertaken with all stakeholders including grassroots stakeholders.

SUMMARY

In this chapter I have focused on the ways in which participatory methodologies were pivotal in enabling the girls to discover themselves, increase their sense of citizenship, understand power and develop critical thinking skills. I also identified the strengths and challenges related to photovoice. Two strengths that I attributed towards the use of photovoice in my research are embracing the wisdom of local knowledge and increasing collaboration and trust between the girls and me. The main challenge related to photovoice is in being able to

negotiate the three main power brokers in the developing world: donors, national government and NGOs change the power. The girls also identified the main internal gatekeepers who needed to be involved in the process of change for the girls' quality of life.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATION FOR NEW RESEARCH

SUMMARY

In this final chapter I reflect on previous chapters to summarize my analysis and learnings, and return to my three research questions. Question 1: What barriers do girls face in their attempt to exit a life of poverty? Question 2: According to the girls, what specific capacity building opportunities will result in a meaningful and sustainable increase in their quality of life? Question 3: How can participatory and visual methodologies such as photovoice be useful tools to create increased awareness and develop critical thinking at the grassroots level? What role can visual methodologies have in the creation of relevant policies for girls living with poverty? Each chapter builds on the preceding one to provide increased insight into barriers that remain even today for Mozambican girls living with structural and political complexities related to poverty.

As noted in Chapter 1, globally feminization of poverty stands at approximately 70% (UN WOMEN). Given this statistic, it can be safe to presume that girls must be facing unique barriers that prevent them from exiting a life of poverty over and above their male counterparts. However, even with the acknowledgement of feminization of poverty, Governments and international agencies for the most part focus on girls under the age of 5. A second focus on gender appears, but that is when she is 15 years of age (Temin & Levine, 2009).

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge a report released in February 2011 by UNICEF entitled *State of the World's Children 2011: Adolescence An Age Of Opportunity*. Given that the report has recently been released, development and implementation of policies geared towards adolescence at the country level is pending. The report makes the critical distinction of identifying two areas of adolescence – early adolescence and late adolescence. The report also notes that “internationally recognized indicators disaggregated by sex, age,

disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity, caste and religion are *urgently required* to drive and monitor progress towards development goals. Identifying the most marginalized and vulnerable adolescents is essential to ensuring that advances are equitable” (UNICEF, 2011 p.11 emphasis mine). However, of importance to note is the Report does not focus on the critical role of culture in relation to inequality experienced by girls.

Currently, there is an absence of data related to early years. This data is required to develop effective policies, strategies and programs in order to develop capacity of girls during this critical and unique period in development. Without the availability of holistic age and gender disaggregated data along with a lack of focus on girls between the ages of 6 – 14, girls during their early and adolescent years, a critical period with respect to securing the tools necessary to alleviate poverty will continue to remain invisible (Temin et al, 2009).

Chapter 2 provided additional insight into the reasons why Mozambican girls specifically are unable to exit from a life of poverty. This chapter provided a historical review 400 years prior to Mozambique gaining ‘independence’ to its current state of being submerged in neo-liberal policies in order to understand the critical influence of culture and ideology on the status of girls. The chapter also focused on the journey health and education policies for girls have taken from the time Mozambique was occupied and then colonized by the Portuguese, through the 25 years of war it experienced and culminating with the neo-liberal policies and intellectual colonization of G19, United States and United Nations. The lower status of girls remains an issue. Education then and now has not been and continues not to be a priority available for girls, particularly girls living with poverty. Girls are assigned with pre-determined roles and responsibilities without any attached economic value. They remain tied to the home and the small farm. Their intellectual capacity building remains underdeveloped. As a result, the girls are unable to exit from a life of poverty.

Chapter 3 brought to the forefront the importance of the very early years of adolescence with respect to intellectual and health development. The first eight years are critical in relation to complete and healthy cognitive, emotional and

physical growth in children (Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Bradley, 1994; UNICEF b). By the time girls are 15, their body size, “reproductive potential and general health have been profoundly influenced by what has happened in their lives until then” (UNDP, 2004 p. 3). Early stress can also impact memory and learning adversely and/or permanently (Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Brown & Pollitt, 1996; Kramer 1987; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; UNICEF b). And poverty is indeed a dominant stressor in these girls’ lives during their unique development years.

Through the literature review undertaken in Chapter 4, it became clear how the methodology employed could either bring to light or keep hidden the strengths of even the most vulnerable population groups. It can also make clear whose knowledge is being included and whose is excluded. Who generally affirms knowledge as being ‘the truth’? Do all forms of knowledge from the North and the South have equal voice and acceptance? Generally in poverty related discussions, knowledge from the North predominates and influences knowledges and ways of being in the North and South. Knowledge from the South takes a back seat to knowledge emanating from the North. Western knowledge, Western paradigms predominates research and research methodologies globally (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999) and in turn knowledge production, policy-making processes and outcomes. It is because knowledge from the South, and in particular girls living with poverty whose voices remain unheard, that participatory methodologies be employed to ensure that these girls become visible and are heard.

Chapters 5 and 6 focused on the voices, ideas and thoughts of 10 girls between the ages of 10 – 14. The girls indicated that barriers they faced were strongly influenced by culture and shaped by policies. The barriers the girls highlighted included: their lower status; lack of voice; agency; pre-determined roles and responsibilities; disengagement from decision-making; power imbalance; vulnerability; inadequate quality health; inaccessibility to necessities of life including adequate nutrition, appropriate sanitation and access to water sources. These barriers combined paralyzed their ability to access or complete their education. The girls demonstrated how their lower status led to a lack of

agency and voice at home, in the community and at school. The barriers identified by the girls were particularly detrimental for school age girls since it resulted in their poor attendance at school which translated into poor academic results and non-mastery of evolving concepts, particularly in math, language and science. It also resulted in a weakened body that is more likely to be susceptible to poorer quality of health and preventable diseases like diarrhoea, malaria and hunger – malnutrition. There is an exponentially greater impact of poorer quality health and lack of intellectual stimulation that is present during the girls' early and adolescent years.

In my engagement with the girls through the use of photovoice what became apparent is the absence in capacity building and gender related literature which highlights how pre-determined roles and responsibilities have an impact on girls living with poverty. Also, the substantial role of cultural and societal norms which places girls second to boys is often not discussed in depth as a barrier to exiting from a life of poverty, but one that became self-evident in the conversations that ensued particularly after the girls' community-based interviews. Data is often absent which identifies specific barriers present in the girls lives as they attempt to attend school, achieve better healthcare, access diverse economic opportunities, and achieve independence and empowerment. All these objectives are compromised as a result of the enormous time required for household related responsibilities which have been pre-determined based on their lower status. The importance and necessity of engaging girls living with poverty to identify barriers cannot be overstated. The barriers the girls identify may not be readily visible to researchers and decision-makers who have not intimately experienced a life of poverty. Without engaging girls, decision makers will be unable to develop capacity building policies that will be relevant, meaningful and high-impact leading the girls to a higher quality of life – a clear objective for research and policies related to girls, capacity building and poverty alleviation.

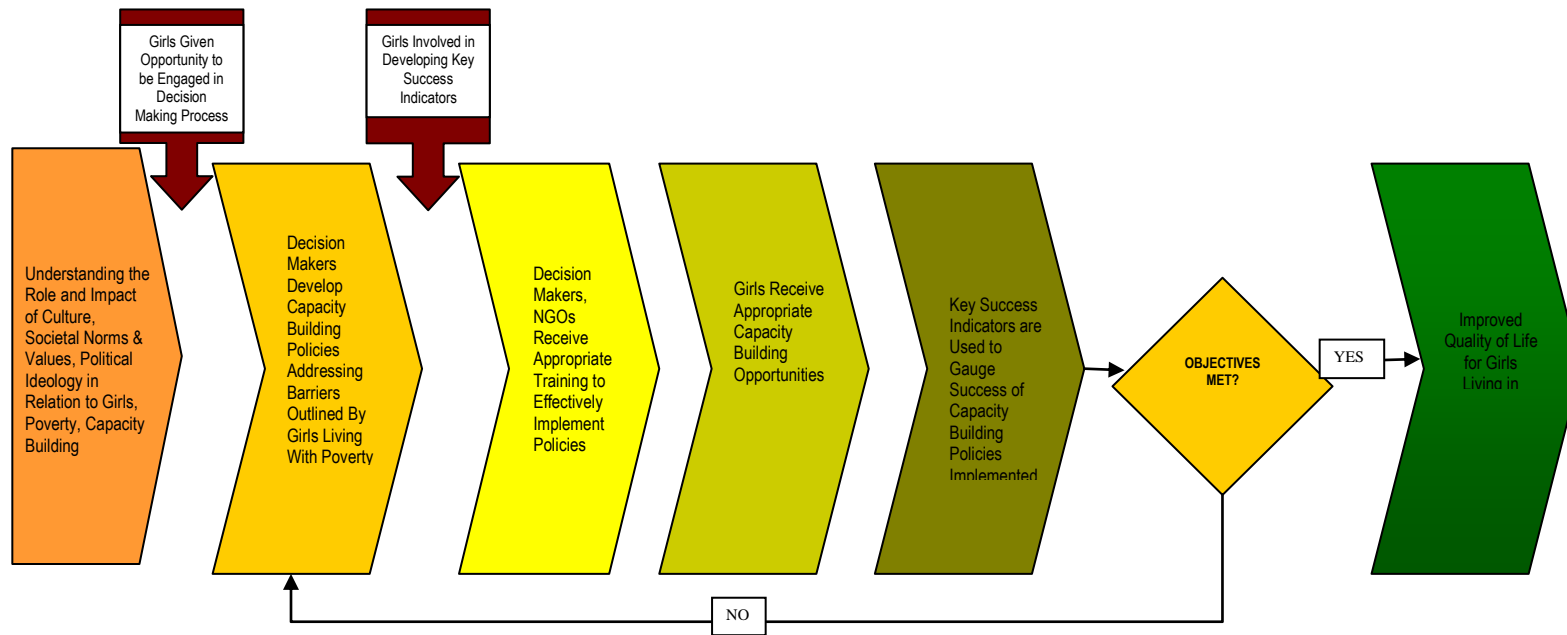
TOWARDS A CAPACITY BUILDING MODEL

From the very start of this study I have been interested in capacity building. I considered the following four facts as I began to deliberate on ideas for a new approach towards capacity building. 1) 70% of individuals living with poverty are girls and women (UN WOMEN). 2) At the EFA, education was acknowledged as being the “single most important critical element in combating poverty, empowering the poor, enhancing economic growth, controlling population growth, protecting the environment and promoting human rights and democracy” (Tilak, 2003, p. 2). 3) In the Dakar Declaration on Accelerating Girls’ Education and Gender Equality made on May 20, 2010, participants proclaimed extreme poverty, structural inequality, poor quality education and violence against girls as critical gaps which remain as barriers for girls attempting to access and complete their education. 4) The first eight years are critical in relation to complete and healthy cognitive, emotional and physical growth in children (Hawley & Gunner, 2000; Bradley, 1994; UNICEF b). In addition to these four important facts, I reflected on the barriers raised by Anna, Beatrice, Carla, Fatima, Joana, Patricia, Paula, Rosa, Rita and Yolanda, girls who have been living intimately with poverty their entire lives. These girls highlighted barriers which included their lower status, lack of voice, agency, pre-determined roles and responsibilities; disengagement from decision-making; power imbalance; vulnerability, inadequate quality health along with inaccessibility to necessities of life including adequate nutrition, appropriate sanitation and access to water sources as being paralyzing barriers preventing them from accessing or completing their education.

In considering the above, a new approach to capacity building would need to focus on the following four critical elements. 1) In order to effectively address the feminization of poverty, it would be important to develop a preventative approach that focuses on girls particularly during their early years of adolescence. 2) Education is a critical tool in enabling girls to exit a life of poverty. An effective capacity building model would need to consider what barriers exist prior to girls entering grade 1, preventing girls from regularly attending school, as well

as, completing at minimum secondary school education. 3) If the goal of capacity building for girls living in poverty is exiting from a life of poverty, then key success factors would need to be developed that would directly correlate with quality of life indicators. 4) Girls authentic participation in identifying barriers and developing key success indicators would be essential in developing high-impact and relevant capacity building strategies. While it is beyond the scope of this study to develop and test out a new model for capacity building, I highlight here a tentative set of ‘ingredients’ for a capacity building model focused on girls. It ensures that their participation is authentic and necessary. The model also consider the critical role of culture, societal norms and values along with political ideology on the predominant capacity building barrier for girls living with poverty – their lower status. And finally, it builds in a component of accountability by ensuring that decision makers and NGOs implement the training they receive in relation to girls, poverty, capacity building and quality of life key success factors.

Chart 6: Ingredients For A Capacity Building Model Focused On Girls



CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

As noted above, my study does contribute to key areas around capacity building and girls living with poverty, and the idea of empowerment itself. There are several other specific knowledge areas that the study also informs.

One area relates to the ways in which poverty has an impact on girls. There is limited research which analyzes the relationship between childhood poverty and girls (Delamonica et al, 2006). According to the CPRC, the knowledge base is thin regarding specific research on girls' and adolescents' experiences with poverty (Jones et al, 2010). My study informs the study of poverty, girls and capacity building conversations by working with girls between the ages of 10 – 14 using participatory methodology. Through the use of participatory methodology, the girls identified specific barriers they experienced towards developing their capacity. In particular, the study notes that barriers prior to girls entering grade 1 need to be considered in relation to accessing, regularly attending and completing their education. The study identified the following root causes related to poverty, girls and capacity building:

- a) Culture and political ideology are key reasons for the lower status of girls. The girls' lower status was a primary reason for their labour and time intensive roles and responsibilities which prevented them from accessing, attending or completing their education. Girls marrying men much older while children themselves was another indicator for the girls' lower status. These young brides were also prevented from accessing, attending or completing their education. Culture and political ideology were key factors in maintaining the lower status of girls.
- b) Very early years of adolescence are unique years for intellectual and physical development. Girls living with poverty do not have access to basic necessities including adequate nutrition, accessibility to water and appropriate sanitation, which severely restricts their intellectual and physical development. These girls cannot alter the impact of a lack of physical and intellectual development at a later stage in life,

thus the underdevelopment of their physical and intellectual capacity will remain with them throughout their lives.

Poverty alleviation remains a critical issue on the global stage and particularly within the agendas of G8 and G20 countries. Gender and poverty has become a key issue as we see in recent publications such as the *International Handbook on Gender and Poverty* (Chant, 2010). In this Handbook, intersecting issues including human rights, local to global economic transformations, family, race, sexuality, assets, paid and unpaid work, health, conflict and violence are addressed. Surprisingly, girlhood and poverty, while an obvious area of study, is not taken up directly in the Handbook. My study suggests that this is an oversight because given that poverty has a female face, it is important to uncover the barriers that must exist for girls during their very early years of adolescence which prevent them from leaving a life of poverty over and above their male counterparts. My study highlights that a root cause approach to studying gender and poverty which would involve understanding the barriers girls living with poverty face with respect to developing their capacity is necessary to alleviating poverty. Studying the barriers that exist for women without first considering the barriers that exist for girls will not result in a meaningful reduction of poverty for women. The study also emphasizes the need to secure complete and holistic data related to poverty and capacity building that is age and gender disaggregated.

A second area relates to girls and leadership in the context of patriarchal culture. Much is made of girls' leadership or the need for girls to have a voice in development literature (see for example Roby et al, 2009; Jones et al, 2010; Bird, 2007; OESU, 2001; UNGEI, 2010b) without addressing the role of a patriarchal culture. My study raised the critical role of a patriarchal culture which has dominated Mozambique's ideologies, values and norms for over 400 years. It demonstrated the role of a patriarchal culture in relation to the lower status of girls living with poverty and in turn their inability to leaving a life of poverty. The study also underscored the reality that a predominately male leadership would likely endorse norms and values exemplified by a patriarchal society. Therefore,

the likelihood of developing policies that will result in a shift of power favouring girls is less likely given their endorsement of a patriarchal society.

As a third area, my study acknowledges that the poverty experienced by girls is structural, political, cultural and social in nature impacting multiple sectors simultaneously. Even though education is a critical impetus required to reduce childhood poverty and inequality (May, 1998; Jung & Thorbecke, 2003; UNICEF, Mozambique, 2006), girls face numerous social and cultural barriers towards accessing and completing their primary education (Green, 2008; Justiniano et al, 2005). Hence solutions required to address these complex issues will also need to be holistic, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral in its approach.

The study also contributes to the growing body of literature on participatory visual methodologies generally and in particular to deepening an understanding of photovoice in engaging vulnerable population such as girls living with poverty. One of the most powerful outcomes of photovoice is the space it provides participants to create new knowledge and draw meaning from it (Friere, 1970). Within this space, the girls come to realize that they are the “experts in their own lives” (Wang et al., 2004, p. 911) and that they have “a complex stock of knowledge” (Flick, 2002, p. 80) about themselves and their world. In my study, the impact of photovoice in enabling the girls to become visible to themselves and each other was evident. Thus, while many researchers working in the area speak about issues of empowerment, this notion of visibility is a critical one. The girls at various points of the study shared sentiments similar to “I saw myself for the first time” or “I did not realize that I had such good ideas.” The girls’ critical thinking skills also dramatically improved as evidenced from the girls’ initial to later conversations. Critical thinking is the first step towards empowerment.

At the same time, my study suggests that there is more to be said about empowerment in relation to participatory methodologies. When I started the study I, like many who embark upon this work for the first time had a view that such methods could automatically lead to empowerment. By using participatory methodologies with girls living with poverty, it became evident that participatory

methodology is an effective tool to gain insight into community and life experiences. However, what also became clear was the essential role of empowerment for girls living with poverty in order to realize authentic change in their quality of lives. The girls would need to access what I describe as ‘authentic power’ in order to create a shift in the current structures of power at the community, national and possibly international level in order for the change to be relevant and sustainable.

I see authentic power as power the girls have acquired which remains with them and cannot be taken away by others. For example, when the girls develop critical thinking and analytical skills, increase their self-confidence and belief in themselves, are able to organize themselves as a group and articulate and advocate for change in their lives with decision makers – then they have achieved authentic power.

However, the girls I worked with would need to establish control over tools needed to increase their quality of life, as well as have access to decision makers and the capacity to influence policies directly impacting their lives. Without substantial change in these two fundamental arenas, I cannot envisage that these girls’ lives will independently improve in a sustainable or relevant manner for generations to come. How they can achieve this independently is difficult for me to envision. Even though literature on participatory visual methodologies such as photovoice often highlights the idea of empowerment for participants, I can see limitations to this, something that may speak to the relatively short time for the fieldwork (6 months), but also speaks to the magnitude of the problems and issues.

As part of a related issue, I constantly struggled with the possible negative impact I presumed I might be having on the girls by increasing their awareness of their circumstance without enabling them to either independently or jointly transition into a better quality of life. I wondered what value there was in enabling them to think critically and engage them in possible solutions to the challenges they had raised, if true ‘authentic power’ could not be realized in their lives. This question remains unanswered for me although I temper it with the idea

that perhaps independent researchers such as myself should have realistic goals on what is doable in a fieldwork setting. More than anything though this also speaks to the need for follow-up and longitudinal studies organized around the question ‘what difference does this make?’”

LIMITATIONS

There are two main limitations to this study. The first is in relation to language, and the second relates to selection of participants. Even though the research uncovered the voices and ideas of girls living with abject poverty in a powerful, relevant and effective manner, I believe the knowledge may have been even richer had the study been conducted in the girl’s primary first language – Chagani. The girls in the study had been exposed to the Portuguese language for a very short period prior to the commencement of the study. Even though their ability to express themselves was evidently done in a confident and thorough manner in the Portuguese language, the research is limited in that we cannot say with confidence if any new knowledge would have been uncovered had the research been conducted in their primary language – Chagani.

A second limitation of the study relates to the selection of participants. Ten girls were selected from Year 2 and Year 3 because of their mastery of the Portuguese language. Girls in Year 1 were not considered since they had not mastered Portuguese. As time passes, so do events in our memories transform and change in terms of importance. It would have been important for the study to engage Year 1 girls since they were commencing school for the first time in their lives. Some as young as six and others as old as in their 20s. These girls could have raised barriers not discussed by Year 2 and Year 3 students. These girls would also be able to provide valuable information related to the transition in their lives from the provinces to the city, how their lives had changed particularly since many had left behind their family members in the provinces, as well as the type of barriers they faced in the provinces and the ones they faced in their new peri-urban communities. Their recollection of these events despite being common with Year 2 and Year 3 girls may be different given that it was a recent event.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A study like this which directly engages and hears from girls living with poverty is likely to raise more questions than answers. As I was conducting the study and analyzing the data, I saw the possibility for a number of further studies.

One key area relates to increasing our understanding of barriers that are present for girls living with poverty during their unique development years. In order to develop high-impact solutions related to girls, poverty and capacity building, the greatest impact will be felt during girls' very early years of adolescence. This particular period is currently a gap in research (Jones et al, 2010; Population Council, 2009). We need to deepen our understanding of barriers that exist for girls during this critical period of growth and development towards accessing relevant capacity building opportunities leading to a higher quality of life. To continue hearing the voices of girls, empowering the girls through active participation at the decision making level, it will be important to develop a critical mass of leadership of girls through the use of participatory methodologies. A comparative analysis using participatory methodologies to understand the impact of poverty and capacity building on girls living in urban, peri-urban and rural areas would provide decision-makers at the international and national level with concrete evidence whether or not specific strategies are needed for girls from urban, peri-urban or rural areas, or if a singular strategy is sufficient to address their collective barriers.

A second area for further research relates to culture research that deepens our understanding of the role of culture, possibly a comparative analysis between a matrilineal culture and a patriarchal culture and impact of each in maximizing the capacity development of girls living with poverty. What type of political will and resources is attached to each ideology and how does that influence the capacity development of girls living with poverty.

A third area relates to key success factors which for girls living with poverty would be an increase in their quality of life. Current poverty, girls and capacity building related research does not generally include key success factors related to quality of life. Research that develops key success indicators with girls

living with poverty related to improving their quality of life may result in focused efforts that does not only consider an increase in the number of girls for example attending grade 1, but related it to an improvement (if any) in their quality of life. The Head Teacher in this study noted that even though the girls completed secondary education, this did *not* enable the girls to exit from a life of poverty. This was in fact her greatest frustration.

A fourth area would be in relation to intergenerational female poverty. Along with the acknowledgement that the impact of poverty is as a result of structural, political, cultural and social elements, participatory research that would deepen our understanding of the combined increasing impact of each element throughout the life cycle of females from the time they are born, through their early and late adolescent years, into adulthood and senior citizens would be important in enabling us to ‘see’ and ‘hear’ the impact of each directly from females at different stages of their lives. This type of visual evidence would be compelling for decision makers to see the impact of structural, cultural, political and social impact of poverty that results in the feminization of poverty. Such studies would also be important in enabling the participants to see and understand intergenerational poverty, particularly if studies are undertaken with representation from each critical period in the female life cycle.

And finally a fifth area would be in deepening our understanding of the impact of post-conflict situations on the lives of girls living with poverty. For example, it would be of great value if comparative studies could be conducted in other post-conflict settings at different stages of reconstruction (e.g. like Sierra Leone) which could deepen our understanding of the unique and complex experiences faced by girls living in post-conflict situations and the role of participatory methodologies in engaging these girls in developing holistic, relevant and sustainable solutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although not all studies necessarily have to end up with a series of recommendations, I feel it would be remiss of me to not consider the ways in which key stake holders have different responsibilities and interests and the

unique possibilities that they have to contribute towards social change. The following are recommendations following discussions with girls living with poverty in relation to girls, poverty and capacity building:

UNICEF, UNGEI

Sex and Age Disaggregated Data

Given the absence of a complete set of age and gender disaggregated data for girls which provides holistic data that has been gathered using participatory methodologies in relation to girls, capacity building and poverty. The sex and age disaggregated data gathered would identify barriers girls experience in relation to a multi-sector perspective including education (quality education; access to education; regular attendance; completion of primary and secondary education), health (nutrition, access to quality health care), legal (policies reflective of barriers noted as a result of sex and age disaggregated data collected), political (participating in decision-making within the home, community and society), cultural (lower status, voice, agency, pre-determined roles and responsibilities, child marriage) and employment (developing social capital). In the absence of a holistic set of data UNICEF, and UNGEI could take the lead in supporting research that collects age and gender disaggregated data using participatory methodologies which would ensure that diverse girls' voices continue to be added to poverty, gender and capacity building discussions. With very early years of adolescence being critical years for development, it would be highly recommended that data be collected during this period as widely as possible

UNICEF and UNGEI

Quality of Life Indicators

In order to move away from a quantitative focus related to girls, poverty and capacity building and move towards measuring an improvement in their quality of life, UNICEF and UNGEI could take the lead in developing quality of life indicators as key success factors for policies, research, projects and other types of intervention addressing girls, poverty and capacity building. Quality of life indicators should be drafted in conjunction with girls living with abject

poverty. These girls would provide critical real-life insight towards solutions that would have the highest impact on their quality of lives.

UNGEI and UNICEF – Girl Development Rank

Without addressing traditions, social norms and legal reforms; gender and multi-dimensional measures including Human Development Index (HDI), Gender-Related Development Index (GDI), Human Poverty Index (HPI) and Capability Poverty Measurement (CPM) reinforce inequality by excluding for example time poverty, labour inputs, gender-based violence. Notably, only GDI from these four main indicators related to poverty includes sex-aggregated data. Poverty experienced by girls and women cannot be a homogenous experience. Therefore, it would be recommended that UNGEI and UNICEF develop a separate rank for girls with a special focus on critical formative and adolescent years.

In this separate rank for girls, the age categories would be as follows: 0 - 2; 3 - 6; 7 - 10 and 11 - 15. The rank would be designed to measure quality of life that would incorporate the 5 freedoms outlined by Sen (2000). It would incorporate access to necessities including sanitation, water, nutrition, health. With respect to education, it would seek to capture access, retention and completion. In addition, literacy would be included both in the primary and secondary language used for education and business. Time in relation to responsibilities in the home and field would be measured. Also since status and participation in the decision making process are essential for voice, agency and access to resources, it would be important to include key indicators that could measure these essential components.

Measuring a change in cultural, societal norms and traditions may be challenging. However, indicators outlining how political and legal reforms are responding to issues related to identity cards, inheritance, violence and child marriages could be used as key success indicators. An educational curriculum that demonstrates gender equality would also be an important indicator for a change in societal and cultural norms. Laws that are enforced which prohibit child marriages and violence perpetuated against girls will be strong indicators to

demonstrate a change in cultural and societal values. Finally, the employment opportunities afforded to young women would be a strong indicator of gender equality. To better understand how pervasive the problem is from an age perspective, it would be important to include age-disaggregated data for all relevant indicators.

Donors & National Government Leaders - Millennium Development Goals

With 2015 being the target date for the MDGs, in relation to gender equity and female empowerment, I would recommend that decision makers at the national and international levels strongly consider the role of culture in relation to achieving gender equity and empowerment for females. Without incorporating culture as a distinct and critical category in relation to addressing the gender inequity and disempowerment that currently exists and has existed for females for centuries, it will be challenging if not impossible for countries to achieve the goal of gender equality and empowerment. At the local level, keeping in mind the internal gatekeepers the girls highlighted, it will be important for decision makers at the local and national level to include civil society and community leaders when designing strategies and policies to address gender inequality and disempowerment with culture as a central focus.

Government of Mozambique – Developing Multi-Sector Policies

Given the multiple complexities related to living with poverty, UNICEF and UNGEI together with the Government of Mozambique and G-19 would need to use a holistic approach when developing policies and strategies related to girls, poverty and capacity building. Such policies and strategies would need to secure insight from diverse sectors as to the specific barriers that exist for girls from a legal, political, social, cultural, economic, human rights, education and health perspective. This combined perspective would then enable decision makers, international community and NGOs to develop high-impact and relevant capacity building strategies and policies that would respond to the barriers identified by girls living with poverty.

Ministry of Education and Civil Society – Social Capital

Coming back to the important point raised by the Head Teacher in the study in which she notes that despite girls living with poverty completing primary and secondary education, their quality of life does not change. They remain in poverty. In light of this, I would recommend the Ministry of Education and civil society, particularly schools, to develop policies and strategies that would meaningfully increase the social capital for girls living with poverty. In order for these girls to expand their network of opportunity, that is enter into sectors other than the informal sector for employment, they would need to increase their social capital. In the West, youth are provided with opportunities to participate in internships within various sectors that expose them to different career options and also increases their potential employment networks. If schools were charged with the responsibility and supported by the Ministry of Education to provide a bridge for girls to increase their social capital through internships within diverse sectors; these girls would have an increased probability of exiting from a life of poverty.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Where To From Here?

Although as noted above, I came to appreciate the limited possibilities for the girls themselves to be empowered in the absence of access to ‘power channels’ this does not mean that I as a researcher could have no access to such power channels. Thus, it was important for me to take the girls’ voices beyond the research and into the realm of decision makers where a change in their quality of life could be realized. I considered the influence of the G-19 and UN organizations on the Government of Mozambique. One influential Mozambican individual who wishes to remain anonymous shared the point that if I desired change among Government leaders, then I needed to have the support of leading members of G-19 or UN organizations. I presented my research and its findings to UNICEF, Mozambique. Hearing the voices of the girls through photovoice, they invited me to contribute towards UNICEF, Mozambique’s 2011 *Child Poverty And Disparities In Mozambique* report (UNICEF, Mozambique 2011). This is an important report that is written every four years. It is shared widely in

Mozambique. Every sector within the Government, all donors, embassies, NGOs and other key stakeholders receive this report. The report is also shared among all UNICEF organizations globally. Gaps identified by UNICEF in the report can then be translated into programs/projects by appropriate stakeholders. UNICEF, Mozambique has included six stories from the girls perspectives related to nutrition, water, sanitation, health, HIV&AIDS and hope for the future. The girls' photographs depicting the same have also been included in the report. With the level of attention provided to the girls' ideas and thoughts, I hope that UNICEF and/or stakeholders reading the report can influence policies that would respond to the issues raised by the girls through the stories and photographs.

My next step was to present the girls' ideas related to the strengths, challenges and solutions leading to sustainable development at conferences hosted by the UN organizations. In January 2011, I was invited by the Government of Egypt and UNICEF, Egypt to present my research findings at the "Child Participation Together We Decide" Conference²⁶ (UNICEF, Egypt).

Locally, I produced and shared a short nine minute video 'Girls Living With Abject Generational Poverty Speak Out: A Case Of Looking At Capacity Building Using Participatory Methodologies' with over 100 grassroots NGOs working in Mozambique at a few local events.²⁷ From the responses received by the grassroots NGOs, NGOs are currently not widely using participatory methodologies in Mozambique. The presentations garnered a lot of interest, particularly from the smaller grassroots NGOs. The challenge they faced was in securing the support of donors to provide funding for research that is participatory

²⁶ I hoped to convey the barriers experienced by the girls living in Mozambique and enable the decision makers to connect the priorities raised by the girls and compare those to girls living with poverty in Egypt. The issues around the globe are similar, but differences arise with respect to gravity of the barrier from one country to the next. It was my hope that if decision makers saw the similarities in the plight of girls living with poverty, that more could be done in local, national and international partnerships to address the multiple barriers experienced by girls living with poverty and the clear disadvantage it has in enabling them to access a higher quality of life. From this perspective alone, the presentation and follow-up dialogue and question/answer session, the message had been effectively conveyed.

²⁷ I am also currently working on a 30 minute documentary I hope will be ready by early next year. I hope to use this documentary as another tool to engage multi-stakeholders here in Mozambique and globally. The documentary would convey to power brokers, images developed by the girls, along with their top priorities and ideas for solutions.

in nature. One particular NGO that I met with a few times was keen in working with children in her neighbourhood (one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Maputo), using participatory methodologies. She tried for three months to secure funding but was unable to find support, even though she regularly received funding for other projects from a number of donors.

Finally, I would like to say something more about grassroots policy making. When I first started to plan out this study, I had a vision of two grand photo exhibitions - one at the school, and another in Maputo city. The photos would be mounted and appropriately exhibited and the girls who had participated in the study would be the 'leading lights' in a public forum with church leaders, community and school leaders, teacher, parents and family members. The second photo-exhibition would focus on local and national decision makers (government, donors, civil society). The objective of the photo-exhibitions was for internal and external decision-makers to see and hear directly from the girls their experiences with poverty, their perception of the community's strengths and challenges along with their ideas for solutions. The photo-exhibitions would elevate the conversations I had the privilege of participating in with the girls to decision-makers who could address the concerns of the girls. Since girls living with poverty are largely without voice and agency and often hidden, the photo-exhibitions would be successful in enabling the girls to be seen and heard.

In the end, such a vision went beyond the possibilities for what could be accomplished as part of a doctoral study. However, the responsibility of ensuring the girls voices and ideas are heard remains. As I reflect on my journey and consider the journey made by the girls, I think it is important for universities and government institutions to develop formal linkages which allows for dialogue between graduate students and decision makers. It is critical that the findings that emerge in our work with groups that continue to be marginalized be shared with multi-stakeholders in order for their quality of lives to improve. Somewhere in the Ethics and Review Board, in addition to do no harm to the participants during the research process, there should also be a clause in which it states do no harm to the participants even *after* the research process. Otherwise, it leaves you

wondering what was the point of the research, in particular when the objective was to understand the barriers to poverty, if nothing changes in the quality of lives of girls who have made visible the barriers that were once hidden, at least from my view.

The Opportunity to Work With the Girls

From a personal perspective, I feel that I have grown tremendously as a result of my journey with Anna, Beatrice, Carla, Fatima, Joana, Patricia, Paula, Rosa, Rita and Yolanda along with my two invaluable research assistants – Sarah and Michelle in deepening my understanding of the complex realities girls face daily in trying to negotiate power in order to begin the process of climbing out of abject poverty. They each shared themselves and their lives with tremendous grace, honesty and insight which allowed me the privilege of understanding their lives with greater intimacy.

In listening to each of them, I was left feeling incredibly humbled as I considered the quality of their lives and mine. I could not overlook how they expected nothing from me except my attention, care and time. They showered me with love and hugs. They accepted my embrace when they began to tell me a particularly difficult story, like when their mothers were sick and had been sick for a long time or the reality that their caregiver had lost their employment and they weren't sure what would happen to them. Their tears and sobs revealed the depth of their suffering, but their voice revealed their strength and tenacity. Their ideas of solutions were practical. In considering their ideas, I could see how quickly their solutions would lead to a meaningful change in the quality of their lives.

There are many moments that stand out for me in my engagement with these ten amazing young girls, but one that is particularly poignant is when each of the girls became aware of the wisdom that lay inside of them particularly when they conveyed similar sentiments to "I now see myself". Or when they looked visibly surprised by the ideas they shared in our discussions. Or when their capacity to critically analyze and contribute to conversations became more thoughtful as the study progressed.

I am incredibly grateful to the girls in allowing me to better understand their lives. I hope that over the next few years, I can work with them to address the priorities they have raised. If that becomes a reality, then the study would have been truly worthwhile for both the girls and me.

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Appendix A: Certificate Of Ethical Acceptability Of Research



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ETHICS REVIEW RENEWAL REQUEST/FINAL REPORT

Continuing review of human subject research requires, at a minimum, the submission of an annual status report to the REB. This form must be completed to request renewal of ethics approval. If a renewal is not received before the expiry date, the project is considered no longer approved and no further research activity may be conducted. When a project has been completed, this form can also be used as a Final Report, which is required to properly close a file. To avoid expired approvals and, in the case of funded projects, the freezing of funds, this form should be returned 2-3 weeks before the current approval expires.

REB File 276-0309

Project Title: Girls and girl orphans in Maputo, Mozambique speak out: A case for exploring capacity building through participatory methodologies

Principal Investigator: Zainul Sajan Virgi

Department/Phone/Email: Education – DISE zainul.sajanvirgi@mail.mcgill.ca

Faculty Supervisor (for student PI): Dr. Claudia Mitchell

1. Were there any significant changes made to this research project that have any ethical implications? No
If yes, describe these changes and append any relevant documents that have been revised.
2. Are there any ethical concerns that arose during the course of this research? No. If yes, please describe.
3. Have any subjects experienced any adverse events in connection with this research project? No
If yes, please describe.
4. **Yes** - This is a request for renewal of ethics approval.
5. ____ This project is no longer active and ethics approval is no longer required.
6. List all current funding sources for this project and the corresponding project titles **if not exactly the same** as the project title above. Indicate the Principal Investigator of the award if not yourself.

Jackie Kirk Fellowship

Principal Investigator Signature: Zainul Sajan Virgi Date: March 16th, 2010
(currently in Maputo, Mozambique)

Faculty Supervisor Signature:
(for student PI)

Date: March 25th, 2010

****NOTE NEW MAILING ADDRESS****

Submit to Lynda McNeil, Research Ethics Officer, 1555 Peel Street, 11th floor, fax: 398-4644 tel:398-6831

(version 12/07)

Administrative Use

McGill

REB: ☐ REB-I ☐ REB-II ☒ REB-III

☐ The closing report of this terminated project has been reviewed and accepted

☐ The continuing review for this project has been reviewed and approved

☒ Expedited Review ☐ Full Review

Signature of REB Chair or designate: J McNeil Date: April, 2010

Approval Period: April, 2010 to March 31, 2011

****NOTE NEW MAILING ADDRESS****

Submit to Lynda McNeil, Research Ethics Officer, 1555 Peel Street, 11th floor, fax: 398-4644 tel:398-6831

(version 12/07)

Appendix B: Facts About The Study

Speaking Out Facts about the Study²⁸

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Before you sign your consent forms, please read this fact sheet and talk it over with a school staff member. We must be sure that you understand this fact sheet before you can join the study.

What is the point of being in this study?

If you join this study, you will get a chance to:

- Work on photography. The photography will be about identifying challenges, strengths and ideas of solutions related to developing your capacity. It will also be about understanding what it means to be a girl and understanding the unique challenges that you have in your life in comparison to boys, particularly as it relates to building capacity that will enable you to access a better quality of life. The photography will also be other community issues you feel are important.
- Think of new ways for girls to get involved in developing knowledge and skills needed to begin the process of having a better quality of life. It will be about having a safe space to talk about issues that are important to you and to consider the ways together that these issues that you have raised can be addressed.
- Present your ideas as part of the group to members of the school, community, church, as well as, other decision makers like not for profit organizations, government and donors.
- Take action on issues that you and the group believe are important.

What will happen in the study?

First, you will be in a workshop. Here is what you will do in the workshop:

- Learn how to use a camera and take photos.
- Learn about capacity building. Develop a definition of capacity building that meets your needs specifically.
- Talk about the challenges you face as a girl in developing your capacity.

²⁸ The ideas for this form were taken from Claudia's Mitchell et al research entitled "Taking Action: Using Arts-Based Approaches To Develop Aboriginal Youth Leadership In HIV Prevention."

- Talk about the ideas you have for solving the challenges you have identified.
- Work in small groups to translate your ideas into photography.
- Meet in small groups to talk about your work with the other people in the study.
- If you want to, you can write about your work and say what it means to you.
- If you want, you can also write about your experience in participating in the workshops.

On the last day of the workshop, you will present your work to the other people in the study. You will also present your work at 2 photo exhibitions to be held within the community and in Maputo city. The photo exhibition in Maputo city may be attended by decision makers in not for profit organizations, government and donors.

Could anything bad happen from being in the study?

I hope not, but there are a few risks. I am taking all the steps I can to keep these risks down:

- There is a risk that you may get upset or confused by something that comes up in the group discussions. You may find it hard to talk about issues like HIV, issues related to poverty, challenges you may be facing in your life.
- People might get angry with you if you take their picture without getting permission.
- Even though we will all promise to respect each other's privacy, there is a chance someone could break their promise and talk about you outside the group.

What are the good things that could come out of it for me?

- You will get training on how to use a camera. You will learn about how photos can be used to create social change.
- You will learn a lot about capacity building and how you can make yourself more aware and stronger.
- You will get a chance to talk about issues that concern you.
- You will get a chance to talk about the ideas you have that may solve the challenges you face.

- At the end of the study, you may feel like you have grown a lot. For instance, you may feel that:
 - you can have more direction and control in your life
 - you are a better leader
 - you can think through issues better.

How will you protect my privacy?

- Each person who joins the study will promise not to discuss the things said in the workshop outside the group. You do not have to say anything in the group that you don't want to, for any reason.
- The photos that you take for the study will belong to you. I may ask you to let me publish your photos to show the results of the study. I will only use your photos with your written permission. I will talk with you about which photos I can use. You can decide if you want your name on your photos or not. You will sign a form telling me which photos I can use.
- If you do not want your name used in the study, I will change your name on our records so that you cannot be identified. I will store the study records safely at my home, in a place that only I and / or my assistant(s) will have access to. We will not share any of your personal information without your permission.

Will the sessions be audio-taped?

- In order for me to understand and record your ideas accurately, all sessions will be audio and video-taped.
- If you do not wish the session to be audio-taped and/or video-taped, notes will be taken.

Your rights as a study member

Everything you do in the study is voluntary. You do not have to take part in activities you don't want to. You can leave the study at any time you want. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. Your decision to leave the study will not affect your relationship with me. All data and materials collected in relation to you will be destroyed immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a study participant, you can always contact my supervisor, Claudia Mitchell at anytime. She will be happy to hear from you. She can be reached at claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca

This research has been reviewed and approved by McGill University's Ethics Review Board for compliance with Senate Research Ethics policy.

Appendix C: Consent Form For Participating In The Study²⁹

(Printed on letterhead)

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Title of Research: Girls In Maputo, Mozambique Speak Out: A Case For Exploring Capacity Building Through Participatory Methodologies

Researcher: Zainul Sajan Virgi, Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Contact Information: 258-82-533-3993; email: zainul.sajanvirgi@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Claudia Mitchell

Contact Information: claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca

Yes, I want to take part in this study.

I have read the Facts about the Study with a school staff member and I understand what the study is about and my rights as a study member.

While I am taking part in this study, I will follow the safety and privacy rules. I will not discuss things said in the workshop outside the group. I promise to respect the privacy of everyone in the study. It will be a matter of personal honour for me to keep my word.

Yes, I give my permission to be audio and video-taped during all sessions related to the study.

If I am between the ages of 10 - 17, I will get my parent/guardian to sign this page too.

Participant's Name	Sign here	Date
Parent's/Guardian Name	Sign here	Date
Staff Person's Name	Sign here	Date

²⁹ The ideas for this form were taken from Claudia's Mitchell et al research entitled "Taking Action: Using Arts-Based Approaches To Develop Aboriginal Youth Leadership In HIV Prevention."

Appendix D: Consent Form For Taking Pictures Of Girls Participating In The Study

Students will also use the same form for people they wish to photograph as part of the study³⁰. (Printed on letterhead)

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Title of Research: Girls In Maputo, Mozambique Speak Out: A Case For Exploring Capacity Building Through Participatory Methodologies

Researcher: Zainul Sajan Virgi, Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Contact Information: 258-82-533-3993: email:
zainul.sajanvirgi@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Claudia Mitchell

Contact Information: claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca

Consent for Taking My Picture

I consent to be photographed and video graphed as part of the Speaking Out Study.

I know that means my picture might be published to show the results of the study. For instance, my picture might be used:

- in a dissertation
- in book chapters
- on a website
- in journals
- at a conference presentation
- at photo exhibitions to be held with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc.
- at meetings with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc.
- be provided to media for publishing.

Print name

Sign here

Date

³⁰ The ideas for this form were taken from Claudia's Mitchell et al research entitled "Taking Action: Using Arts-Based Approaches To Develop Aboriginal Youth Leadership In HIV Prevention."

Appendix E: Consent Form Using The Photos Taken By The Girls³¹

(Printed on letterhead)

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Consent for Using My Photos

I agree that the Speaking Out study can use the photos I have taken. You can use it in any way that helps to educate about this study and its message. For instance, you can put it in a dissertation; in book chapters; on a website; in journals; use it at a conference presentation; use it at photo exhibitions to be held with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc.; use it at meetings with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc. You can give it to the media to publish.

At least one school staff person involved with the study and I have looked at my photos very carefully. We both feel that there is nothing that might cause me or anyone I know harm or embarrassment.

I would like my face to be shown ☐

I would NOT like my face to be shown ☐

Please give me credit with my full name at all times. ☐

Never give my name when you show this art. ☐

Please use my "pen name" to credit me. ☐ My pen name is:

Print name

Date

Sign here

³¹ The ideas for this form were taken from Claudia's Mitchell et al research entitled "Taking Action: Using Arts-Based Approaches To Develop Aboriginal Youth Leadership In HIV Prevention."

Appendix F: Consent Form For Caregivers

(Printed on letterhead)

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Title of Research: Girls In Maputo, Mozambique Speak Out: A Case For Exploring Capacity Building Through Participatory Methodologies

Researcher: Zainul Sajan Virgi, Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Contact Information:

258-82-533-3993:

email: zainul.sajanvirgi@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Claudia Mitchell

Contact Information:

claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca

Yes, I would like _____ want to take part in this study.

No, I would not like _____ want to take part in this study.

I have read the Facts about the Study with a school staff member and I understand what the study is about and my child's rights as a study member.

I understand that I can attend the community meetings which will provide me with regular updates regarding the study.

Parent's/Caregiver's Name
Date

Sign here

Staff person's name
Date

Sign here

Appendix G: Consent Form For Taking Pictures Of Caregivers Participating In The Study

Students will also use the same form for people they wish to photograph as part of the study³². (Printed on letterhead)

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Title of Research: Girls In Maputo, Mozambique Speak Out: A Case For Exploring Capacity Building Through Participatory Methodologies

Researcher: Zainul Sajan Virgi, Ph.D. Candidate, Education

Contact Information: 258-82-533-3993: email: zainul.sajanvirgi@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Claudia Mitchell

Contact Information: claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca

Consent for Taking My Picture and Using Information Collected In The Interview

I have read information in relation to Speaking Out Study.

I consent to be photographed and interviewed as part of the Speaking Out Study.

I know that means my picture might be published to show the results of the study and that the information collected during the interview will also be used. For instance, my picture and information collected during the interview might be used:

- in a dissertation
- in book chapters
- on a website
- in journals
- at a conference presentation
- at photo exhibitions to be held with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc.
- at meetings with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc.
- be provided to media for publishing.

Print name
Date

Sign here

³² The ideas for this form were taken from Claudia's Mitchell et al research entitled "Taking Action: Using Arts-Based Approaches To Develop Aboriginal Youth Leadership In HIV Prevention."

Appendix H: Consent Form Caregivers To Be Interviewed And Photographed³³

(Printed on letterhead)

Please note: This form was translated into Portuguese.

Consent for Using Caregiver's Photos and Interview

I agree that the Speaking Out study can use my photos and can record and use information collected during the interview. You can use it in any way that helps to educate about this study and its message. For instance, you can put it in a dissertation; in book chapters; on a website; in journals; use it at a conference presentation; use it at photo exhibitions to be held with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc.; use it at meetings with community, school, church, not for profit, donors, government, academic, civil society groups etc. You can give it to the media to publish.

Please give me credit with my full name at all times. ☐

Never give my name when you show this art. ☐

Please use my "pen name" to credit me. ☐ My pen name is:

Print name
Date

Sign here

³³ The ideas for this form were taken from Claudia's Mitchell et al research entitled "Taking Action: Using Arts-Based Approaches To Develop Aboriginal Youth Leadership In HIV Prevention."

Appendix I: Confidentiality Form To Be Signed By Research Assistants

(Printed on letterhead)

Title of Research: Girls In Maputo, Mozambique Speak Out: A Case For Exploring Capacity Building Through Participatory Methodologies

Researcher: Zainul Sajan Virgi, Ph.D. Candidate, Education **Contact Information:** 258-82-533-3993:
email: zainul.sajanvirgi@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Claudia Mitchell **Contact Information:**
email: claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca

Purpose of the research: The purpose of my study is to develop a bottom-up understanding of the realities related to poverty from the perspective of girls living in abject generational poverty and the challenges they face in developing sustainable and relevant capacity. Specifically, I would like to focus on the necessary skills, opportunities and knowledge required in order to begin the process of climbing out of poverty and into a higher quality of life as outlined by the girls living in abject generational poverty. This research represents the core phase of the writing of my dissertation. Like all such works, the finished text and photos will be available to the public.

Your Involvement: As a research assistant, I promise to follow the safety and privacy rules. I will not discuss things said in the workshop/status update meetings/focus groups outside the group. I promise to respect the privacy of everyone in the study. It will be a matter of professional and personal honour for me to keep my word.

Your signature below serves to signify that you agree to adhere to the confidentiality agreement as noted above.

I have read the above information and I agree to uphold the confidentiality agreement.

Signature: _____ Researcher's signature: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____