LEARNING REVIEW

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A REVIEW OF OXFAM'S PROJECT - CREATING SPACES TO TAKE ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

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1. Executive Summary

1.1   PROJECT DESCRIPTION

"Creating Spaces to Take Action on Violence Against Women and Girls" (Creating Spaces) is a five-year project (2016-2021) being implemented by Oxfam and focusses on reducing violence against women and girls (VAWG), and the prevalence of child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) in six countries in Asia (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines). The overall project framework is built around <u>three interconnected Intermediate Outcomes</u>:

> **Outcome 1:** Strengthened engagement of key religious, community, private sector and political actors and youth in advancing women's leadership, women's rights and in reducing violence against women and girls.

> **Outcome 2:** Greater access to support services and economic opportunities for women and girls affected by violence and early and forced child marriage

> **Outcome 3:** Increased use of innovative knowledge, including best and emerging practice, and accountability systems to end violence against women and girls

These three Intermediate Outcomes aim to support a holistic and integrated approach to transformative change, and ultimately lead to the project's Ultimate Outcome - **Reduce violence against women and girls and child, early and forced marriage in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and Philippines.**

1.2   LEARNING REVIEW

In October 2018, Oxfam Canada hired an external consultant team to conduct a mid-term learning review of the *Creating Spaces* project. The main purpose of this learning review was to:

1. To assess the performance of the project to date; and,
2. To identify key learning and provide recommendations to improve implementation and enable the project to achieve optimal results.

The following table shows the methods used for data collection and analysis for the learning review.

Data collection tool/ process	Data Source	Sample	Data Analysis and Interpretation
Desk Review	Project Reports and key documents	A total of 27 documents were reviewed.	Information in project documents was organized and synthesized according to the key learning questions. Oxfam Country teams and partners engaged in a separate peer-to-peer mid-term learning review process (MTLR), which focused on specific project learning questions.[1] The five MTLR reports from county teams were a key input to the desk review (India, Nepal, Philippines, Indonesia and Bangladesh) and the.[2]
Online Survey (Using Google Forms)	Staff involved in the CS Project	39 staff completed the survey from seven countries.	An online survey (using Google forms software) was sent out to Oxfam staff involved in the CS project in January 2019, to collect quantitative and qualitative feedback on project results and learning and to inform follow-up interviews with country teams.
In-person Focus Group Discussion	Oxfam Canada Staff involved in the Project	6 Oxfam Canada staff engaged in a three-hour focus group discussion	A focus group discussion was held with Oxfam Canada staff. Results from Oxfam Canada's staff responses to the online survey were shared back and discussed to draw out key learnings and issues.
Online Semi-structured Interviews with Oxfam Country Teams	Oxfam Country Team staff involved in the Creating Spaces Project	27 Oxfam staff from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Nepal, and Indonesia.	In February 2019, eight on-line interviews were held with Oxfam country teams. An interview guide was created to guide the discussion.

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[1] The tools and methods varied by country, and included a literature reviews, focus group discussions (FGD), key informant interviews (KII), 'I' stories collection, Most Significant Change methodology (MSC) and household surveys (HHS).

[2] Two of these country-led MTLR processes (the India and Nepal Oxfam country reports) had a lot of learnings identified in them, and analysis to draw from that has helped to shape and inform this report. The MTLR reports from the Philippines, Indonesia and Bangladesh (Bangladesh did not undertake a HH survey in time) were more limited in their scope, and articulation of key learnings/lessons. Pakistan did not conduct an MTLR report. The availability of information generated from the country-level MTLR process directly influenced the scope of this report and has weighted results and findings more heavily towards India and Nepal.

Kathmandu Learning Event	Oxfam staff and partners involved in the CS project	Oxfam Staff and partners attended the learning event	Following the interviews, some initial data analysis was carried out by the consultant team, and these preliminary findings were presented by Oxfam Canada to participants at an annual all-country learning event held in Kathmandu, Nepal in March 2019.

1.3 KEY FINDINGS

Learning Questions: Has the engagement of actors and youth in advancing women's leadership, women's rights and in reducing violence against women and girls been strengthened?

CS activities have shown strong evidence of increasing key influencers capacity to enact, change and implement laws and policies that reduce VAWG and support women's rights. Building stakeholders' capacity on existing laws and policies through training, workshops and roundtables on legal frameworks, and engaging in advocacy at the national level, has shown to be effective in advancing policy change (although training on legal frameworks in Indonesia appeared to be less successful). Considerable progress has been made over the past two and a half years in establishing legislation and policies to counter VAWG and CEFM (both formal and informal), however as can be expected, implementation of these laws will take more time.

Workshops and trainings on norm modeling and women's rights and leadership provided though the CS project helped shift attitudes and behavior by influencers (in particular youth).[3] The CS training provided under the project taught through community and youth/child groups has helped challenge the normalization of violence against women and successfully opened up spaces for discussion around taboo topics such as VAWG, marital rape and CEFM in the public sphere.[4] Project reporting and the country MTLRs show key influencers have improved awareness and understanding of women and girl's rights and entitlements after participating in CS training and initiatives, and in turn, there are examples in all countries of influencers putting awareness into action, and modeling behavior that supports social norms to prevent VAWG and CEFM.[5] Oxfam staff noted that youth have increased their engagement in women's rights and social norm change more than any other key actor,[6] and their sustained engagement in CS activities has led them to actively address gender-biased attitudes, norms, behaviors and in some cases, local laws.[7] In many cases youth have proven to be important and effective influencers at both the household and community level, and have been actively discussing information from CS trainings with their parents and siblings, gradually leading to gender norm shifts at the household level (including girl's schooling, sharing of household work and reducing VAWG).

Although Pillar 1 appears to be mostly on track given the mid-way point of the project, increased awareness around women's rights and CEFM is yet to be reflected across all project locations (particularly in relation to women's economic and sexual rights within the household),[8] and some key influencer groups (i.e. male community influencers in India and religious leaders) have shown more limited change in behaviour to actively counter VAWG and CEFM. In India the MTRL noticed limited change in the behavior and actions of community influencers (particularly males) and raised an important question as to whether there needs to be a minimal level of awareness and interest of community influencers in VAWG and women's rights to be engaged with the project.[9]

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[3] Workshop participants provided positive feedback on norm modelling workshops, particularly in Nepal (100% provided positive feedback), Bangladesh (87%), India (83%), and less so in Indonesia (59%). CS Annual Report PMF Year 3, Reporting of this feedback was not sex or age disaggregated so it is difficult to assess how CS activities have affected participants differently. There is no feedback from workshop participants from the Philippines or Pakistan.

[4] Respondents to the survey and interviews from all countries; India MTLR

[5] Evidence from reports, the MTLRs and interviews with Oxfam staff

[6] 63% of respondents observed a significant increase in youth engagement over the project period to date, and 21% observed a modest increase. Online Oxfam staff Survey 2019. Respondents from every Oxfam country team noted significant increases in engagement of youth, with Oxfam India noting the most significant change. Religious leaders and some key male community leaders were slower to model positive behavior.

[7] All countries online survey and interviews with country teams

[8] Evidence from reports, the MTLRs and interviews with Oxfam staff. For example, survey results from the MTLR in the Philippines show there is generally more awareness about VAWG and women's rights among respondents, however, there are a significant number of respondents with a neutral (or undecided) stance on key statements about women's rights and VAWG, especially in Maguindanao, one of the project areas. Moreover, women's sexual rights are not yet clearly defined and understood by both sexes; sexual consent is "considered" within domestic relationships; however, men and women have opposing views on the sexual rights attributable to women. Philippines MTLR

[9] Partners observed that there has been limited change in the behavior and actions of male community influencers so far. Though they seem to be aware of the need to counter VAWG and CEFM, many male influencers deny the existence of VAWG and child marriage in their areas and are rather passive in countering the issues. Finding from India MTLR

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PILLAR 1

Target Key Influencers More Strategically: Several country teams noted a challenge around targeting too many overall influencers (too wide a scope for project resources available), a lack of clear vision for what was expected of these stakeholders once they were engaged in the project, and a need to keep stakeholders motivated.

- Host a wider conversation with Oxfam country offices and partners on how influencers have been selected under the CS project and what has been useful to date.[10]
- Strategically target fewer overall key influencers, with more focused efforts and expected impact. Each country team could refine their targeting of the different change agents with partners and identify specific actions and clarify what results are expected by key actor.
- Revise interventions with religious leaders to be more frequent and focused to gain their support and design activities to specifically address the religious groups, recognizing that working on attitudinal change with religious leaders often requires longer time frames and reinforcement of messages.[11]
- Develop and build upon linkages with human rights ministries at federal, provincial, district and union council level.[12]
- Boost motivation of key influencers to take action on VAWG and CEFM by providing project recognition or awards (where appropriate).
- Include elected women representatives as community influencers as they may be able to connect more with women and bring attention to issues of VAWG and CEFM more effectively in public spaces.
- Invite motivated influencers to regional workshops, roundtable discussions where they are informed on the latest developments on VAWG and CEFM and get more involved.[13]

Update & Adapt Training provided by the CS project to better Tailor Content to Audience: CS trainings are experienced differently by participants, and influenced by people's multiple identities (gender, age, ethnic, religious, economic, cultural) and their social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege.

- Oxfam Country teams and partners should reflect on how intersectionality plays out in their different communities when the CS trainings are given and contextualize/update the curriculum where needed, in order to make sure that the most marginalized (such as tribal and Muslim women and girls are not left behind or adversely affected).
- Address the continued gender norm preference for a male child over a female child which is common to many members of the women's collectives.[14] Partner reports from India suggest that this is a critical issue which needs to be discussed as part of the CS curriculum on VAWG.
- Adjust advocacy/info-graphic materials to contain not only the CS concepts but also explain these in the context of Islam (where appropriate) to make them more relevant to the communities.
- In India (and likely other CS countries) the issue of bigamy, polygamy, live-in and extra marital relationships are often accepted as part of the culture, and so not perceived as a violation of women and girl's rights. Relevant Oxfam country teams and partners should consider how to appropriately incorporate discussions on harmful gender-based social practices into trainings and workshops.

Encourage a Larger CS Discussion amongst Oxfam Country Teams and Partners around the Framing of CEFM: It has proven useful to frame CEFM to policy makers in economic or developmental terms, but Oxfam must be careful to ensure a focus on the rights of women and girls is not lost. Framing the advocacy campaign around CEFM on the importance and value of girls' education and negative implications of teenage pregnancy has been shown to be a useful strategy in the Philippines for moving the advocacy movement forward. However, taking a health-focused approach explicitly, while potentially successful in the short-term for motivating influencers, can detract focus from a rights-based approach grounded in social justice. "On the one hand, framing it as gender-based

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[10] The India Oxfam team and partners recommended to "choose community influencers with care, based on their knowledge of the issues and relevant legislation on countering VAWG and CEFM and their motivation to be positive role models." India MTLR

[11] Bangladesh and Pakistan raised the issue of more strategic engagement with religious leaders however, this recommendation may be relevant to other country teams.

[12] Bangladesh and Pakistan raised the need for developing better linkages, however this may be relevant to other country teams.

[13] Recommendation in India MTLR

[14] Evidence from reporting shows this is a strong norm preference from women's collectives in India, and very likely occurs in other countries across CS as well.

violence in and of itself alienates the target audience of the intervention, an audience culturally and historically marginalized. The advocacy is seen as an imposition of 'western' values on traditional norms, and thus may be poorly received. On the other hand, framing CEFM from an impact perspective – as a practice that can result in adverse consequences such as unwanted pregnancies – draws attention away from the harmful asymmetrical power relations."[15] Discussing key strategies and successes around the appropriate framing of CEFM is a valuable discussion for CS project implementers (Oxfam officers and partners) to have.

> ➡ Host a CS discussion across countries/partners to share ideas and learnings around the framing of CEFM.

Build on Progress made with Youth (particularly Girl's) Leadership:[16] Youth,

particularly adolescent girls, were noted to have a higher inclination and determination for positive gender norm change and played a role as influencers within their households. It is therefore important that youth engagement (particularly female youth) is increased in countries where youth leadership results are already strong (i.e. India), and youth engagement is strengthened in countries where youth engagement results are more limited (i.e. Pakistan). While the India MTLR directly reflected this trend, it will be useful to follow-up on this point with other CS teams.

> ➡ Increase engagement of youth, particularly in countries where youth outreach was more limited (i.e. Pakistan) and catalyze cross-learning between countries that have seen strong results on youth engagement.
> ➡ Document how some partners (i.e. in India) have engaged with schools and colleges to reach out to a wider pool of young people and share strategies across the program.
> ➡ Plan to address migration of boys for seasonal work and drop-out of men and boys from the groups in the CS projects outreach/mobilization strategy.
> ➡ Include sports, training on use of social media and other vocational skills for both boys and girls in order to attract younger stakeholders. Linkages may need to be made with other networks and institutions for this.
> ➡ Ensure vocational skills training transcends gender stereotypes, particularly for girls (i.e. not just tailoring and teaching but also computer skills training).
> ➡ Explore opportunities for group members (within CDCs, child clubs, etc.) to assume leadership positions in community and public entities such as school management committees, health post management committees, community forest users' groups etc. so that they can use their leadership skills in practice.[17]

Improve Partner and Community Mobilizers Capacity to address deep-rooted

gendered prejudices: In India, a gap was identified in the capacity of some local partners and community mobilizers to effectively motivate, and catalyze positive change in their group members and local influencers, with regard to adopting positive gender norms and countering VAWG and CEFM.[18] In particular, they struggled to address deep-rooted gendered prejudices in women and men (i.e. preference for sons over daughters, acceptance of inferior status of women at home and spending more on son's education than daughters).

> ➡ Provide more direct training/guidance to partners and community mobilizers in India (and other project locations where relevant) on how to effectively address deep-rooted gendered prejudices (i.e. practical advice on how to address preference for sons over daughters, acceptance of inferior status of women at home and spending more on son's education than daughters). The details of how to develop training provided under the CS project should be discussed with Oxfam teams and partners. It would also be useful to review other NGO guides/training materials that contain similar methodologies.

> **Learning Questions:** Has access to support services and economic opportunities for women and girls affected by violence and early and forced child marriage improved?

Evidence shows the project has had a modest, yet important, increase in access to support services for women and girls; outreach of support services in rural areas has been improved (some examples of this include mobile health and legal services in Bangladesh) and in India a unique and successful community level mapping exercise was initiated (the Community Score Card Initiative), which has improved both

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[15] Oxfam Philippines knowledge product on Lessons and Reflections on Promoting SRHR and Addressing VAWG in the Philippines, Year 3 Annual Report.

[16] Some findings from India MTLR

[17] Nepal MTLR

[18] Finding from India MTLR

access and quality of support services. In India and Bangladesh CS trainings, exchange visits and the financial and capacity building support provided to organizations was well received and trainings were reported to contribute to improving access to support services (in India). Training on gender sensitivity and psycho-social support provided to service providers (in Philippines), along with learning exchanges with government officials, also effectively initiated a shift towards improved quality of services available in CS project areas.

CS activities were also shown to be successful in improving the economic skills and knowledge of women and girls, and there is evidence their skills are starting to be put into action. Early indicators show that the direct entrepreneurial support provided to women and girls has translated into some women taking on new livelihood initiatives, however it is too early to assess how many women and girls will go on to create viable and profitable businesses.

Linking women to various government supported programs (livelihood programs, local microfinance/savings groups) and actively engaging government in women's economic needs and rights was an effective strategy for increasing access to economic training and livelihood opportunities in some countries and has likely boosted longer-term impact of the project (although the overall scope of women engaged and linked with services was limited). There are stories of women receiving valuable inputs from government agencies and new enterprises starting in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Philippines. Furthermore, the project shows evidence in Nepal of valuable economic knock-on effects due to CS activities success in building community member's voice and agency, resulting in CDCs _initiating_ collaboration and engagement with government offices for economic support.

There are also signs workshops with key influencers have started to create an enabling environment for women's economic rights (particularly in Bangladesh and India). In India in particular these workshops (which have engaged over 1,000 women and men) shifted support for women's economic engagement and provided a base of supporters who promote women's economic rights and potential. Evidence also shows that boys and young men engaged in the CS project trainings have promoted positive gender norms regarding women's right to education and paid work within their family and the local community.

As Pillar 2 has currently been designed, some progress has been made in two years of implementation, however, the overall limited scope and scale of economic activities under Pillar 2 (i.e. limited amount of resources invested, limited number of countries implementing activities) has meant that Pillar 2 was not originally designed to have a significant impact on women's economic independence and resilience. There is a question as to whether the overall limited package of economic support provided by the CS project is doing enough to help build women and girls' economic independence and resilience, and to address the enabling environment for women to be successful - unequal gendered power dynamics that infringe on women's rights within the economic sphere, including negative social norms that continue to limit women's participation in economic activities, their ability to keep and control income, and maintain women's care burden and gendered work roles.[19]

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PILLAR 2

Clarify the Project's Economic Engagement Strategy: Currently the CS project's activities around economic engagement have raised concerns as to whether they are translating into viable and sustainable economic opportunities for women and girls – both in terms of scale (limited number of women reached) and in terms of the quality and sustainability of the economic opportunities provided (both directly through the CS project and indirectly through government linkages). So far, evidence shows that the economic support to women in several countries has been limited to "surface level" support and will require more strategic, rights-based and resourced engagement to make a lasting impact.

- Reflect on the possible links with the WEE strand of Oxfam engagement work, while also recognizing the limited resources and scope for revision mid-way through the project.
- For those countries with limited band-with and capacity to effectively implement Pillar 2, re-think whether resources could be better utilized directed towards other activities.
- Consider whether providing assets/capital for women to start enterprises would be strategic (for some country teams and partners). A gap highlighted by several staff from different countries was the lack of seed money for real economic opportunities. "Right now, we link them up with other services, but we aren't providing any assets or tangible support whereas they can start their small business. This is a gap." Oxfam Nepal Staff (Online Survey and Interview).
- Consider supporting women in business planning for those who are actively involved in livelihood activities.[20]

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[19] Several project staff questioned whether Pillar 2 was doing enough during the online survey and follow-up interviews
[20] Finding supported by Bangladesh MTLR

Prioritize Women's Rights and Gender Justice in Economic Programming: There is an indication that CS Pillar 2 economic activities did not always strongly reflect women's rights and were at risk of having a limited (unsustainable) impact. In particular, the strategy of linking women to government schemes and the economic training provided by the CS project tended to respond to the immediate needs of women (more income) but in the process didn't always address the longer-term goals of women's empowerment (more decision-making power in the household, control over own income, more equal division of labour, reducing women's care burden).

➡ Update the training to prioritize women's rights (not just economic rights) and ensure economic training is accompanied by re-enforcement of positive gender norms that empower women (related to women's mobility, decision making power in the household, and control over money they earn).

➡ Improve integration of women's rights and control over income into community groups (women's, men's and boy's groups) and CDC discussions. This also involves promoting positive masculinity and norms.[21]

Address and Track resistance from Family members around Women's Economic Engagement:
Evidence from the country-led MTLRs shows there is resistance from family members around women's engagement in economic activities.[22] Providing women with economic opportunities, without effectively addressing the deeply rooted prescribed gender roles and relations of power, could raise conflict and tensions at the household level.[23]

➡ Since economic rights training for key stakeholders was seen as a difference-maker in India, it would be useful to increase and roll-out further workshops in other countries to raise the awareness of local stakeholders and women and girls on the importance of supporting women's economic rights. Address the low ratings from stakeholders that have participated in women's economic rights training in Pakistan and Nepal.

➡ Track if and how economic programming within the CS project contributes to or reduces VAWG (potentially as part of the annual reporting process). It would also be valuable to understand more about the extent to which CS livelihood generation interventions have supported survivors of violence in exiting the cycle of violence.

Integrate Issues of Women's Care Burden into CS trainings Under Pillar 1 and 2: In all countries prominent attitudes persist that view women's primary role as being in the domestic sphere, which can influence women and girl's ability to effectively participate in economic activities (as well as acting as a barrier to their social and political empowerment).[24] Some Oxfam Staff noted during the online survey and interviews, that the issue of women's care burden was not being adequately addressed.

➡ Hold discussions with partners on how the project can better address women's unequal burden of care through CS activities and trainings.

Build Community Groups Capacity in Promoting Service Provision and Accountability: CDCs in Nepal and community groups in India have proven to be effective community structures with notable influence. Well established and functioning community groups within the project may be able to take on more systematic efforts in sharing information about services, monitoring delivery and quality and helping to report and discuss agreed actions toward improving outreach and quality of those services.[25] These groups can also play a role in ensuring local level policies, plans and programs include provisions to put an end to harmful social norms such as VAWG and CEFM.

➡ Formalize and Strengthen Community Development Committees in Nepal. It may be strategic for CDCs to seek more formal recognition (i.e. Municipality/Rural Municipality's formal recognition as women's rights groups and strategic partners in Nepal) so that their say in local government plans and policy making is strengthened.[26]

> **Learning Question**: Has there been an increased use of innovative knowledge, including best and emerging practice, and accountability systems, to end violence against women and girls?

Activities related to increasing use of innovative knowledge are in early stages (as expected in the project life cycle) (i.e. research and innovation fund initiatives) or have yet to be ramped up in most countries and therefore key learnings, best practices and results are more limited than the other two

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[21] Finding from India MTLR

[22] MTLRs

[23] Women's economic engagement can contribute to raising and also lowering the risk of domestic violence (or have no affect at all).

[24] "The recognition, reduction, redistribution and sharing of care responsibilities, as well as other forms of unpaid work (e.g. collecting firewood), are essential to addressing 'time poverty' and allowing women the space to engage in paid work but also to network, organize, participate in policy and decision making or rest." - A Feminist Approach to Women's Economic Empowerment; HOW CANADA CAN LEAD ON ADDRESSING THE NEGLECTED AREAS OF WEE, Oxfam Canada, January 2019

[25] Finding from the India MTLR

[26] Nepal MTLR finding

Outcomes of the project Pillars. Oxfam staff noted that facilitating linkages and alliances and building capacity of organizations were two of the most successful activities in the CS project in generating knowledge to end violence against women and girls. The collective power of alliances and networks (facilitated and supported by the CS project) was highly effective in influencing and campaigning against violence and child marriage and has led to valuable change in local and government policy and legislation. The organizational capacity self-assessment tool (Capacity Assessment Tool for ending VAWG or CAT4EVAWG) has also been very useful in facilitating reflection, identifying gaps in organizational programming for VAWG and CEFM and tailoring capacity strengthening. There has been a strong level of buy-in and ownership over the tool from partners and the tool appears to have helped to increase the capacity of partner CSOs and WROs to deliver effective, transparent and accountable programs that contribute to reducing VAWG and prevalence of CEFM (particularly in India and Nepal).

Valuable learning is happening within countries (between partners and Oxfam teams and community groups and CS stakeholders), and in some specific cases, across country teams (i.e. during the annual learning events). Partner learning reviews and exchanges were seen as useful for sharing innovative knowledge, insights, and practices and the peer-to-peer mentoring and exchanges to support learning also received positive feedback by a high percentage of participants. The recent peer-to-peer Mid-term learning review undertaken by several countries (except Pakistan due to government research restrictions) also stands as a valuable example of strengthening partners capacity to undertake and lead evaluative learning reviews. Country teams and partners are creating valuable and important training modules and knowledge products, and there are opportunities to further package and share learnings both within and across country teams and partners.

To date, the Innovation fund has had limited success in catalyzing new innovations for VAWG and CEFM, and the flexible, responsive design originally envisioned has not been capitalized on by partners. However, the two partners that did receive funding (in Nepal and Bangladesh) are showing valuable efforts and results; for example, in Bangladesh, the funds were used to raise awareness of the importance of girls' education through engaging School Management Committees, partners and girls in a series of debates and a team competition. A review and next steps are underway for improving the Innovation fund vision, strategy, process and roll-out and it is expected that this will operate more effectively in future. While promising, the creation of ICTs for monitoring social services are still in early stages in Bangladesh and India and therefore it is not possible to assess their effectiveness at this point.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PILLAR 3

Expand Knowledge Sharing Between Different Oxfam Teams: Country teams and partners are creating valuable and important training modules, however learning and sharing of these modules seems to be limited, particularly across the project. In many cases, Oxfam country teams seemed unaware of the research and knowledge products or innovations being initiated in other countries.[27]

- ► Host regular (Quarterly) coordination calls between Oxfam country teams enabling every country team to share their best practices, interesting research or success; Other Oxfam projects have utilized this model and it's been reported to be useful.[28]
- ► Hold quick focused one-off webinars led by different country teams on specific innovations and methodologies to share key practices across the project to those interested. Oxfam Country offices should consider taking the lead on cross-country team communication and organize themselves to share learnings.
- ► Generate Knowledge products (i.e. 3-4-page briefs) on specific best practices/innovations and share them across country teams and externally. Consider hiring an outside consultant to ensure this gets documented and disseminated in a timely fashion.
- ► Consider revising the Oxfam Canada GAC reporting template for partners to report back to Oxfam Canada on both section 4 on Outcomes "highlights of Outcomes Achieved" and Section 6 "Lessons Learned" in Annual reports in order to better capture *higher level outcomes* and key *lessons learned* from country teams' perspectives. This could include revising the reporting template to include clearer instructions, examples and facilitated exercises for staff reflection on learnings. If done right, it can provide an important opportunity for partners to reflect on lessons semi-annually and implement and course-correct for improved programming.
- ► Share the country CS training resources that have been developed with all country teams and partners.

Increase Knowledge Sharing at the Country Level: Country teams have struggled to find the time to effectively lead, manage and report on learning processes; for example, several countries were delayed in completing the country-led MTLR processes, and the quality and level of completion differed significantly

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[27] Interviews with Oxfam Teams
[28] Oxfam India Team (Interview)

across the different countries. It was reported that Oxfam Country teams (and partners) are also struggling to re-package research products for different audiences that have been completed (for example the baseline survey, research on reproductive health).

➡ Consider whether added human resources (i.e. outside support or a dedicated learning officer) are needed to achieve Pillar 3 and the learning objectives under the project. Learning takes time and dedicated incentives, and staff that are already challenged with the daily tasks of project management and implementation will have limited bandwidth to take on further responsibilities and deliverables.

➡ Consider hiring local level consultants to help support knowledge product packaging of key research that has been undertaken to date. The **Philippines** team hired a consultant to do this recently, and this approach may be an important value-add moving forward for country teams that have limited bandwidth to take on new initiatives.

➡ Revisit and strengthen the communication and knowledge sharing strategy at the country team level in order to define outreach and learning internally and externally with planned activities and budget. This should include bbetter documentation of the change stories and strategic and planned sharing with policy influencers. Some partners (Indonesia) also noted low visibility of the Oxfam CS project at the national level; especially when compared to other organizations working on child and forced early marriage.

➡ Create scope within the CS project for capacity building of country teams; particularly around documenting lessons learned, data analysis and learning from data. Teams need more guidance on how to improve and strengthen learning and dissemination.

➡ Create an Annual learning event within countries that engages an external audience for sharing results and learning with other stakeholders and influencers/link more closely with Oxfam VAWG programming. It was reported that there is limited coordination and learning between NGOs at the local level that are engaging in similar VAWG and women's rights programming (i.e. Care) and broader campaigns (Enough Campaign).

➡ For those Country teams and partners with the current capacity and time, consider undertaking more action research around key project issues – access to support services and areas not being adequately addressed by the project – women's care burden and sexual rights.

Roll-out the Feminist MEAL Strategy: The MEAL Strategy notes an aim to "empower stakeholders to analyze the change process and ensure ownership and sustainability."[29] To enable local partners and community stakeholders to play a more active role in monitoring, documenting and engaging in learning networks in the context of VAWG and CEFM, some steps could be taken:

➡ Build the capacity of Oxfam teams and local partners in gender-sensitive data analysis, documentation and understanding *how* to learn from data.

➡ Build the capacity of local partners and adolescent girls, boys, and youth in written, photo and video documentation (potentially using Most Significant Change Process or Photo Voice) which could be shared through social and web-based media with other project partners across the program and wider networks such as Girls not Brides, Sheroes, and StoryCenter's Silence Speaks initiative.[30]

➡ Integrate partners' and community leaders' concerns in planning/adapting learning and M&E activities for the next final evaluation (i.e. more time, finances, skills training for capacity building – particularly for those Oxfam teams or partners that will need more support and up-front planning).

> **Learning Question:** What promising/innovative practices have emerged through project implementation?

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) for Support Services in Bangladesh

An interesting initiative for improving access to support services is being tested in **Bangladesh** where the project is collaborating with a mobile company to establish a local Interactive Voice Response (IVR) as a potentially valuable innovation for boosting access to support services through better information. The available support services for women were mapped at the local level and a scoping study on economic opportunities completed; based on the research findings, local level services were categorized, and a platform is in the development stage which aims to more easily share resources to local communities. The project envisions the system as key to ensuring greater access to information in rural areas where communication and availability of services is limited.

Gender Awareness Raising workshops for Service Providers in Bangladesh

The MTLR in Bangladesh found that gender awareness raising and positive norms modelling workshops for service providers increased empathy of the staff, and this in turn helped boost access for women to support

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[29] CS MEAL Strategy
[30] Finding from India MTLR - https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/ ; https://sheroes.com ; https://www.storycenter.org/ss-about

services. The intense face-to-face interactions between service provider staff and women and girls that have faced violence catalyzed awareness and motivation to deliver more effective services.[31]

Community Score Card (CSC) Initiative in India

In India Oxfam and partners supported a unique community level mapping exercise called the Community Score Card (CSC), which has been successful in improving both access and quality of support services. The Community Score Card (CSC) was designed by the CS project in India and implemented in Year 2 and 3 of the project. The tool was designed for mapping domestic violence and child marriage in communities and assessing the delivery of services by the government functionaries. The tool captured the perspective of a community on how they see violence within their community, and how women learn about and access support services and aimed to empower the community to demand and facilitate change actions to promote women's rights. The findings from the CSC were shared with service providers to encourage shared learning and promote further accountability and outreach

Oxfam India staff noted the Score Card has been an effective tool for informing the community of their perceptions on gender norms, and increasing awareness, accountability and transparency between the community members and service providers. The CSC was viewed as an important tool to develop social accountability of local communities on gender-based violence and after roll-out, service providers were observed taking further actions and negotiating more support for women. [32]

Film Appreciation Model in India

In India the CS project supported a research study assessing the effect of Bollywood films on gender and identity on Indian youth. Based on the findings, a tool called the film appreciation model was designed to support students from different universities and colleges in analyzing and understanding media studies and deconstructing gender stereotypes. The findings of the study were widely disseminated through the Feminism of India website, which ran a 6-week campaign 'Unstereotype Cinema,'which gained significant traction.[33] The project is also working with the film industry (i.e. the Mumbi film festival) to promote films that portray women with agency and change how the film industry is portraying women.

The Film Appreciation Model is an innovative CS project activity that has potential for wider impact outside of just the Oxfam India team. The India country team noted there have been a lot of lessons and best practices from designing this model. It would be useful to document and share learnings from the model, to assess whether other country teams could learn and implement a similar approach. There may be an opportunity to develop a film engagement strategy for the CS project and roll this out as a similar campaign across the country offices.

Strategic Engagement with Religious Networks and Alliances in Indonesia

In Indonesia a strategic effort was made to build networks with interfaith religious leaders and institutions that are expects in religious texts. This enabled partners to obtain additional knowledge and experience from these interfaith groups and provided a connection and entry point for influencing fundamentalist groups, as these interfaith religious figures were able to directly engage with fundamentalist groups.

Forum Theater in Nepal

Forum Theater[34] in Nepal has been highly instrumental in spreading positive messages at school, family and community levels and in raising awareness on the causes of VAWG and CEFM. In Nepal, over 290 forum theater performances took place (in Year 2 and 3). Child Clubs and the Community Discussion Centers (CDCs) used Forum Theatre as an effective tool for promoting community discussions on issues of VAWG and CEFM and prompting actions against it. The Mid-Term Evaluation from Nepal notes that Forum Theatre has been an effective element of the CDC's success in preventing child marriages, settling local cases of domestic violence and increasing awareness around girl's treatment during menstruation.

Establishing Youth & Child Clubs in Bangladesh and Nepal

Peer-to-peer learning through the establishment of Youth Groups and Child Clubs (CC) contributed significantly to enhancing youth members' awareness, confidence and leadership skills, as well as to the campaign against CEFM and VAWG, especially at the school level. The youth and child groups supported by CS project provided adolescents with the opportunity to hone their life-skills, expand and strengthen their social networks, and become agents of change in their own communities.[35]

Political Mapping in the Philippines

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[31] Bangladesh MTLR
[32] India MTLR, India Staff Interviews and Online Survey
[33] India MTLR
[34] The aim of forum theatre is to explore real practice scenarios in a way that empowers students to rehearse solutions and change the outcome of a scenario for the better. It is a form of interactive drama.
[35] Bangladesh MTLR and Nepal MTLR and Year 3 Report

In the Philippines one partner has been conducting political mapping of different influencers' knowledge and attitudes towards ending child marriages targeting national policy makers through a survey. Results from the survey have yet to be discussed and analyzed; but there is potential for it to be a useful practice for identifying key entry points for strategic engagement. If this tool proves useful, it may be useful to a) potentially adapt to the local level in Philippines in order to provide a more localized view of how local leaders and influencers perceive child marriage and b) share the tool within the CS project country teams to build on best practices

Recommendations

The recommendations listed below have been derived from the consultant's findings, and also incorporate some direct suggestions from Oxfam teams.[36] The final list of recommendations need to be reviewed, validated and discussed with Oxfam teams and partners as part of the larger learning process.

Learning Question: What are the recommendations to improve future programing?

Ensure critical pathways of change (in TOC) and core activities are being implemented Across the Project: There is a significant variation in the scope, scale and modality of activities under Pillar 1 and Pillar 2; the project is implemented through diverse implementation modalities and approaches and the roll out of activities under all Outcomes of the project are widely different from country-to-country. While it is essential that strategies and activities are customized to each country context (given that CS operates across significantly different cultural, social and political contexts), the highly flexible and customized approach risks a piece-meal, pick-and choose approach to the TOC. The huge variation in implementation across the project raises questions as to why certain seemingly important outputs, outcomes, and TOC Pillars are left off the agenda in some countries. For example, youth engagement varied significantly; no youth exchanges are planned for in Philippines (when youth is a critical influencer group for CS and 70 exchanges have been carried out by the rest of the countries so far).[37] The number of workshops targeted in different countries to support women and girls to empower them to advocate for their rights also varied significantly; up until year 3, 507 workshops have already been conducted in Nepal, and only 1 has been planned for and held in India. Pillar 2 in particular has widely different activity implementation. With multi-country projects, it is important to have best practices, methodologies and critical activities that are expected to lead to project outcomes (and transformative change) that all countries implement.

Strategic Selection of Local Partners: The Indonesian country team noted the need for more diversity and strategic selection of partners when working on VAWG programming. When choosing partners to support CS activities, they partnered with conventional women's rights organizations, as oppose to faith-based organizations. The staff team noted that working with at least one faith-based organization (i.e. a Muslim FBO) may have provided a stronger entry point for understanding, targeting and engaging with traditional and religious leaders on VAWG and CEFM.

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[36] Recommendations were provided during the online survey and the interview process
[37] Others include: Number of workshops with "change agents" – 494 have been carried out by other countries and 0 planned for in India. Number of local community groups targeted and supported (overall 662 have been supported across the program with only 6 in the Philippines). There have been 171 local decision-making events and meetings attended by women and girls across the program, yet Philippines carried out 3 meetings and India carried out none (with none planned for).

Engage Youth Early: VAWG programming should consider targeting activities and outreach (particularly around norm change) to those in both teens and also those in early adolescence (age 10 to 14). Research shows that early adolescence (age 10 to 14) is a pivotal period of rapid development where important social knowledge is gained, lifelong behaviors are established, beliefs and attitudes are shaped, and the foundation is built for adulthood.[38] "This period offers a window of opportunity for program interventions to help shape the life trajectories of boys and girls and to improve the future physical and economic health and well-being of entire communities." New programs should consider different targeting approaches in order to work with both teenagers and young adolescents (i.e. those under 14).

> **Learning Question**: What are the key takeaways for CS in order to improve project implementation for the remainder of the project?

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PILLAR 1

Target Key Influencers More Strategically: Several country teams noted a challenge around targeting too many overall influencers (too wide a scope for project resources available), a lack of clear vision for what was expected of these stakeholders once they were engaged in the project, and a need to keep stakeholders motivated. In India in particular, the MTRL noticed limited change in the behavior and actions of community influencers (particularly males) and raised an important question as to whether there needs to be a minimal level of awareness and interest of community influencers in VAWG and women's rights to be engaged with the project. [39]

➡ Host a wider conversation on how influencers have been selected under the CS project and what has been useful.[40]

➡ Strategically target fewer overall key influencers, with more focused efforts and expected impact. Each country team could refine their targeting of the different change agents with partners and identify specific actions and clarify what results are expected by key actor.

➡ Revise interventions with religious leaders to be more frequent and focused to gain their support and design activities to specifically address the religious groups, recognizing that working on attitudinal change with religious leaders often requires longer time frames and reinforcement of messages.[41]

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[38] Population Council research has shown that from ages 15-19, too many adolescent girls experience a rapid confluence of negative events, including school dropout, marriage, violence, and early birth, that can see their lives go off track. Intervening early in those formative years between ages 10-14 has more potential to positively impact their lives and put them on a powerful path. https://www.popcouncil.org/research/investing-when-it-counts-reviewing-the-evidence-very-young-adolescents

[39] Partners in India observed that there has been limited change in the behavior and actions of male community influencers so far. Though they seem to be aware of the need to counter VAWG and CEFM, many male influencers deny the existence of VAWG and child marriage in their areas and are rather passive in countering the issues. Finding from India MTLR

[40] The India Oxfam team and partners recommended to choose community influencers based on their knowledge of the issues and relevant legislation on countering VAWG and CEFM and their motivation to be positive role models. As a recommendation within their MTLR they put forward the need to monitor whether influencers had internalized positive norms *before* engaging them in achieving the project objectives. It would be useful to explore this further with the India country team and share learnings with other Oxfam county teams. India MTLR

[41] Bangladesh and Pakistan raised the issue of more strategic engagement with religious leaders however, this recommendation may be relevant to other country teams.

- Develop and build upon linkages with human rights ministries at federal, provincial, district and union council level.[42]
- Boost motivation of key influencers to take action on VAWG and CEFM by providing project recognition or awards (where appropriate).
- Include elected women representatives as community influencers as they may be able to connect more with women and bring attention to issues of VAWG and CEFM more effectively in public spaces.
- Invite motivated influencers to regional workshops, roundtable discussions where they are informed on the latest developments on VAWG and CEFM and get more involved.[43]

Share and Further adopt the Strategy of targeting different family members in CS Activities:
Some CS partners in India and Pakistan have found that encouraging more than one member of one family to join the CS community groups is an effective strategy to encourage internalization of positive social and gender norms, leading to transformative change at individual, family and community level.

- Assess whether engaging with the family as a unit for multiple interventions is a worthwhile project-wide strategy to share and adopt for other partners within India and Pakistan, and whether other countries that are engaging with groups (for example Nepal) would benefit from this approach.

Engage and Build Coalitions:
Partners and Oxfam country teams need to continue to engage in advocacy with other networks to counter deep-rooted social norms.

- Now that the project is mid-way through, it may be a good opportunity to link the project activities to other regional or global campaigns around VAWG and CEFM.

Continue to Build Skills of Community Mobilizers:
Several MTLR reports noted the importance of building awareness in women about different forms of VAWG, especially mental, emotional and sexual violence and violence due to economic deprivation.[44] It was reported that women are especially reticent to talk about sexual violence openly and the India MTLR noted specifically that further skill-building needed to happen for community mobilizers to adequately create safe spaces for women to share.

- Improve on the training provided to community mobilizers in order to improve their communication and facilitation skills so that they are effective in creating safe spaces for women to discuss issues and experiences around violence.[45]

Update & Adapt Training provided by the CS project to better Tailor Content to Audience:
CS trainings are experienced differently by participants, and influenced by people's multiple identities (gender, age, ethnic, religious, economic, cultural) and their social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege. The MTLR in India reported that Muslim minority groups face a constant threat of communal violence, and Muslim women and girls in particular face triple discrimination (gender, religion, economic).[46]

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[42] Bangladesh and Pakistan raised the need for developing better linkages, however this may be relevant to other country teams.

[43] Recommendation in India MTLR

[44] Indonesia, India, Philippines MTLR

[45] This was a finding from the India MTLR but may be applicable to other countries.

[46] Some of these recommendations were noted in the MTLR in India and in Philippines

- Oxfam Country teams and partners should reflect on how intersectionality plays out in their different communities when the CS trainings are given and contextualize/update the curriculum where needed, in order to make sure that the most marginalized (such as tribal and Muslim women and girls are not left behind or adversely affected).
- Address the continued gender norm preference for a male child over a female child which is common to many members of the women's collectives.[47] Partner reports from India suggest that this is a critical issue which needs to be discussed as part of the CS curriculum on VAWG.
- Adjust advocacy/info-graphic materials to contain not only the CS concepts but also explain these in the context of Islam to make them more appropriate to the communities.
- In India (and likely other CS countries) the issue of bigamy, polygamy, live-in and extra marital relationships are often accepted as part of the culture, and so not perceived as a violation of women and girl's rights. Relevant Oxfam country teams and partners should consider how to appropriately incorporate discussions on harmful gender-based social practices into trainings and workshops.

Sustain Student Wins: There have been many important gains in building youth agency and leadership through clubs and school groups and it will be important to sustain the wins.
- Encourage school administrations that are hosting Youth/Child clubs/groups to endorse CS school-activities; this is already starting to happen in Nepal, which has enabled CC activities to become part of the regular school activities, ensuring their sustainability beyond the project scope.
- Consider specific follow-on activities for engagement of student leaders post-schooling.

Encourage a Larger CS Discussion amongst Oxfam Country Teams and Partners around the Framing of CEFM: It has proven useful to frame CEFM to policy makers in economic or developmental terms, but Oxfam must be careful to ensure a focus on the rights of women and girls is not lost. Framing the advocacy campaign around CEFM by focusing more on the importance and value of girls' education and negative implications of teenage pregnancy has been shown to be a useful strategy in Philippines for moving the advocacy movement forward. However, taking a health-focused approach explicitly, while potentially successful in the short-term for motivating influencers, can detract focus from a rights-based approach grounded in social justice. Discussing key strategies and successes around the appropriate framing of CEFM is a valuable discussion for CS project implementers (Oxfam officers and partners) to have.
- Host a CS discussion across countries/partners to share ideas and learnings around the framing of CEFM.

Review and Re-Explore the CS Theory of Change: One important consideration for the CS project Theory of Change (TOC) are women and girl's education. Education plays a role particularly in Outcome 1 (advocacy on ending child marriage) and Outcome 2 (economic empowerment). Limited educational opportunities for girls is a key contributing factor in girls' early child marriage. It may also be useful for the project to consider stronger advocacy and outreach for girls' education in particular countries (i.e. advocacy with Education Departments for local government to support girls with scholarships, support for transportation, school supplies, safe environment) and support systems (school teachers, guidance counsellors, parents) to shift societal support towards girls' schooling.

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[47] Evidence from reporting shows this is a strong norm preference from women's collectives in India, and very likely occurs in other countries across CS as well.

➥ Hold review session to revisit CS project TOC to assess assumptions, what's missing, and whether it is valuable to incorporate women and girl's access to education more prominently.

Build on Progress made with Youth (particularly Girl's) Leadership:[48] Youth,
particularly adolescent girls (in India), were noted to have a higher inclination and determination for positive gender norm change and played a role as influencers within their households. It is therefore important that youth engagement (particularly female youth) is increased in countries where youth leadership results are already strong (i.e. India), and youth engagement is strengthened in countries where youth engagement results are more limited (i.e. Pakistan).

➥ Increase engagement of youth, particularly in countries where youth outreach was more limited (i.e. Pakistan) and catalyze cross-learning between countries that have seen strong results on youth engagement.

➥ Continue to provide leadership training to youth to develop strong influencers and role models from within the community.

➥ Document how some partners (i.e. in India) have engaged with schools and colleges to reach out to a wider pool of young people and share strategies across the program.

➥ Plan to address migration of boys for seasonal work and drop-out of men and boys from the groups in the CS projects outreach/mobilization strategy.

➥ Include sports, training on use of social media and other vocational skills for both boys and girls in order to attract younger stakeholders. Linkages may need to be made with other networks and institutions for this.

➥ Ensure vocational skills training transcends gender stereotypes, particularly for girls (i.e. not just tailoring and teaching but also computer skills training).

➥ Explore opportunities for group members (within CDCs, child clubs, etc.) to assume leadership positions in community and public entities such as school management committees, health post management committees, community forest users' groups etc. so that they can use their leadership skills in practice.[49]

Better prepare and support youth in Overcoming Backlash to Gender Change:
While youth can be important and effective influencers at household and community level, they also face resistance when challenging deep-seated gender norms, and their actions taken against CEFM have in some cased had wider negative implications.[50]

➥ Provide stronger support to partners in order for them to better prepare and guide girls and boys groups in their messaging towards their community when countering GBV and CEFM. Also support better sensitization within communities to build up youth's voice and place within the community.

Improve Partner and Community Mobilizers Capacity to address deep-rooted gendered prejudices: In India, a gap was identified in the capacity of some local partners and community mobilizers to effectively motivate, and catalyze positive change in their group members and local influencers, with regard to adopting positive gender norms and countering VAWG and CEFM.[51] In

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[48] Some findings from India MTLR
[49] Nepal MTLR
[50] MTLR India, MTLR Bangladesh, Online Survey
[51] Finding from India MTLR

particular, they struggled to address deep-rooted gendered prejudices in women and men (i.e. preference for sons over daughters, acceptance of inferior status of women at home and spending more on son's education than daughters). The MTLR in India outlined how weak capacity in this regard has undermined some of the project outcomes. While this was highlighted as a key issue in India, it may be a relevant challenge for other country teams as well.

➡ Provide more direct training/guidance to partners and community mobilizers in India (and other project locations where relevant) on how to effectively address deep-rooted gendered prejudices (i.e. practical advice on how to address preference for sons over daughters, acceptance of inferior status of women at home and spending more on son's education than daughters).

Improve Tracking on women and girl's Leadership: While there was clear evidence from the CS project around advancing women's rights and reducing VAWG (both through legal and norm change), it was more difficult to ascertain from the information available the impact the CS project has had around advancing women's leadership. There were specific activities to target and support women's leadership; workshops on women's rights and leadership for key influencers (including women and girls) and ones held specifically with women and girls to empower them to advocate for their rights, practical tools and leadership training materials developed for women and girls, engagement of women and girls in legal roundtables and policy advocacy, and engaging women and girls in community-level decision-making events and meetings[52]; However, there was more limited reporting and monitoring around how these activities have *translated* into furthering women's advocacy, voice and decision-making power – for example – has there been a shift in women's voice and agency (in addition to attendance) within the community-level decision-making events and meetings? Have women and girls played an important leadership role within the groups established under the CS project, and if so, has this increased sense of agency enabled women and girls to engage in further informal or formal leadership/decision-making roles within their communities? The MTLR in Nepal showed evidence of the CDC model enabling women to shift into further leadership positions within local community and political structures, however, this was the only country that reported on it, and it wasn't a formal project indicator.[53]

➡ Improve tracking on women and girl's leadership within the project. While it is likely to late in the project to adjust the PMF, some questions around women's leadership could be added to the endline to ensure learning around this strategic focus.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PILLAR 2

Build-up Community Groups Capacity in Promoting Service Provision and Accountability: CDCs in Nepal and community groups in India have proven to be effective community structures with notable influence. Well established and functioning community groups within the project may be able to take on more systematic efforts in sharing information about services, monitoring delivery and quality and helping to report and discuss agreed actions toward improving

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[52] It is noted that there are also many other CS activities (i.e. positive norm modelling, targeted media engagement, etc.) that contribute to advancing women's leadership more broadly by transforming power relations and structures within the CS project.

[53] 893 women and adolescent girl members of CDCs are serving in various capacities in local public entities such as school management committees, community forest user group executive committees, health post management committees, women's development committees and cooperatives. Reporting around these new leadership positions in Nepal didn't provide information on whether these positions have been valuable and important for women and girls (increasing their confidence or influence in the community/being worth their effort and energy).

outreach and quality of those services.[54] These groups can also play a role in ensuring local level policies, plans and programs include provisions to put an end to harmful social norms such as VAWG and CEFM.

➧ Formalize and Strengthen Community Development Committees in Nepal. It may be strategic for CDCs to seek more formal recognition (i.e. Municipality/Rural Municipality's formal recognition as women's rights groups and strategic partners in Nepal) so that their say in local government plans and policy making is strengthened.[55]

Work with Village Councils to improve Support Services at the Local Level: Within communities, the village council (or religious leaders) are often the first point of contact for women facing violence, and there may be an opportunity for the CS project to more directly educate and build their capacity in order to improve local support for women and girls facing violence. This is happening to some extent in several countries already, however, it would be useful to expand this work and make the approach and plans for engaging with village councils more explicit.[56]

➧ Expand and make more explicit the approach and plans for working with local structures (i.e. village councils) or local religious leaders to sensitize them and support existing community structures to be more accessible and supportive to women's needs.

Consider Training Local Women and Girls in Informal Dispute Resolution: Across the CS project there are different examples of women and girls' groups that have been involved in informal resolution of VAWG cases and child marriage; Oxfam India has also worked with *nyay panchayats* (informal village-level courts run by women) to resolve cases related to VAWG.

➧ Consider whether it would be useful and appropriate for CS women's groups to be trained in informal resolution of VAWG and CEFM (this is particularly relevant to India).

Improve information and training for key influencers on available support services and procedures to address VAWG and CEFM. While important gains have been made in India around awareness raising and direct support to two service providers, the India MTRL notes that many potential influencers are still not aware of support services and procedures to address VAWG and CEFM.[57] For example, in Chhattisgarh and Odisha, the MTLR noted that the police staff was not aware of the Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA), and despite the existence of several parallel structures to address VAWG, most survivors were getting little to no support from them. "Survivors are often referred to Family Counseling Centers, where staff are not trained on feminist counseling and push aggrieved women to reach compromises with little improvement for their situation."[58]

➧ Improve information and training for key influencers and government functionaries on support services and gender-sensitive procedures for addressing VAWG and CEFM.

Consider wider value of VAWG Data: There is some valuable information being collected through the CS project on VAWG and service provision, in particular through the quantitative and qualitative MTLR data collection processes.

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[54] Finding from the India MTLR
[55] Nepal MTLR finding
[56] MTLR India
[57] India MTLR
[58] India MTLR

- Consider using and re-packaging some of the VAWG-related data to share with local government to promote informed advocacy, planning, and implementation of services.[59]
- In line with the CS project's MEAL strategy, the data could also be made available to community members and local women's groups to promote accountability.[60]

Clarify the Project's Economic Engagement Strategy: Currently the CS project's activities around economic engagement have raised concerns as to whether they are translating into viable and sustainable economic opportunities for women and girls – both in terms of scale (limited number of women reached) and in terms of the quality and sustainability of the economic opportunities provided (both directly through the CS project and indirectly through government linkages). So far, evidence shows that the economic support to women in several countries has been limited to "surface level" support and will require more strategic, rights-based and resourced engagement to make a lasting impact.

- Reflect on the possible links with the WEE strand of Oxfam engagement work, while also recognizing the limited resources and scope for revision mid-way through the project.
- For those countries with limited band-with and capacity to effectively implement Pillar 2, re-think whether resources could be better utilized directed towards other activities.
- Consider whether providing assets/capital for women to start enterprises would be strategic (for some country teams and partners). A gap highlighted by several staff from different countries was the lack of seed money for real economic opportunities. "Right now, we link them up with other services, but we aren't providing any assets or tangible support whereas they can start their small business. This is a gap." Oxfam Nepal Staff (Online Survey and Interview).
- Consider supporting women in business planning for those who are actively involved in livelihood activities.[61]

Prioritize Women's Rights and Gender Justice in Economic Programming: There is an indication that CS Pillar 2 economic activities did not always strongly reflect women's rights and were at risk of having a limited (unsustainable) impact. In particular, the strategy of linking women to government schemes and the economic training provided by the CS project tended to respond to the immediate needs of women (more income) but in the process didn't always address the longer-term goals of women's empowerment (more decision-making power in the household, control over own income, more equal division of labour, reducing women's care burden).

- Update the training to prioritize women's rights (not just economic rights) and ensure economic training is accompanied by re-enforcement of positive gender norms that empower women (related to women's mobility, decision making power in the household, and control over money they earn).
- Improve integration of women's rights and control over income into community groups (women's, men's and boy's groups) and CDC discussions. This also involves promoting positive masculinity and norms.[62]

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[59] Collections of best practices and success stories, according to government stakeholders in Philippines, were requested in order to provide a good bases for enhancing or developing policies of the regional government related to VAWG.
[60] Philippines and India MTLR
[61] Finding supported by Bangladesh MTLR
[62] Finding from India MTLR

Address and Track resistance from Family members around Women's Economic Engagement: Evidence from the country-led MTLRs shows there is resistance from family members around women's engagement in economic activities.[63] Providing women with economic opportunities, without effectively addressing the deeply rooted prescribed gender roles and relations of power, could raise conflict and tensions at the household level.[64]

- ▶ Since economic rights training for key stakeholders was seen as a difference-maker in India, it would be useful to increase and roll-out further workshops in other countries to raise the awareness of local stakeholders and women and girls on the importance of supporting women's economic rights. Address the low ratings from stakeholders that have participated in women's economic rights training in Pakistan and Nepal.
- ▶ Track if and how economic programming within the CS project contributes to or reduces VAWG (potentially as part of the annual reporting process). It would also be valuable to understand more about the extent to which CS livelihood generation interventions have supported survivors of violence in exiting the cycle of violence.

Integrate Issue of Women's Care Burden into CS trainings Under Pillar 1 and 2: In all countries prominent attitudes persist that view women's primary role as being in the domestic sphere, which can influence women and girl's ability to effectively participate in economic activities (as well as acting as a barrier to their social and political empowerment).[65] Some Oxfam Staff noted during the online survey and interviews, that the issue of women's care burden was not being adequately addressed.

- ▶ Hold discussions with partners on how the project can better address women's unequal burden of care through CS activities and trainings.

Build Partner's Capacity in Economic Programming Where Needed: In India effective implementation of Pillar 2 has been affected by partners experience and capacity around economic empowerment programming. During the MTLR in India some partners reported more limited progress on the creation of sustainable livelihood options, in part, due to lack of experience in economic programming.[66]

- ▶ Build partners' capacity in economic programing where needed (and integrate into CAT process).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PILLAR 3

Update and Revise the Innovation Fund Vision and Process: To date, the Innovation fund has had limited successes in catalyzing new innovations for VAWG and CEFM, and the flexible, responsive design originally envisioned has not been capitalized on by partners. Oxfam will need to reframe the Innovation Fund to ensure its well defined, strategic and useful.

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[63] MTLRs

[64] Women's economic engagement can contribute to raising and also lowering the risk of domestic violence (or have no affect at all).

[65] "The recognition, reduction, redistribution and sharing of care responsibilities, as well as other forms of unpaid work (e.g. collecting firewood), are essential to addressing 'time poverty' and allowing women the space to engage in paid work but also to network, organize, participate in policy and decision making or rest." - A Feminist Approach to Women's Economic Empowerment; HOW CANADA CAN LEAD ON ADDRESSING THE NEGLECTED AREAS OF WEE, Oxfam Canada, January 2019

[66] The partner in Jharkhand was given a very low score, indicating that the CS project strategy on economic empowerment needs a major revision for their context whereas the local partner in Odisha (NAWO) was considered to be more successful due to their previous experience in developing successful livelihood generation options for community stakeholders. India MTLR pg. 26

- Host a workshop on what innovation means within the CS program; create a clear guideline, with definitions on what "innovation" means and discuss/engage with partners.
- Simplify the process for application and proposal development for the Fund and extend timelines for implementation.
- Build the capacity of partners to develop, articulate and formulate their ideas for the Fund.
- Redefine the scope and focus of the Innovation Fund to consider:
    - Funding the documentation, dissemination/scale-out/up of a project innovation that are promising/already working well.
    - Funding the investment in capacity building as identified through CAT exercises.
    - Providing partners with access to (immediate) responsive funding in order for them to mobilize, influence, advocate or react to issues or events surrounding VAWG and CEFM.
    - Using the fund to strengthen the capacities of partners in generating and disseminating knowledge (i.e. enable funds for participation in conferences so that partners and Oxfam could share learning from the project).[67]
    - Funding multi-country innovations. There is an opportunity for the fund to support partners applying across countries in order to foster a cross-learning experience (for example, Pakistan and Bangladesh partners could apply together to mutually implement or scale an innovation).
- Oxfam Canada could engage with other projects that are implementing innovation funds to share learnings on what model has worked well, what could be improved, and explore further funding opportunities for scaling-out/up innovations tested under the CS project.[68]

Expand Knowledge Sharing Between Different Oxfam Teams: The CS project has developed some notable training modules, research, and innovative approaches that have shown an improvement in VAWG and CEFM prevention and response including the Capacity Assessment tool, the Film Appreciation Model and the Community Score Card (CSC) Initiative (India). However, learning and sharing of these products is limited, particularly across the project. In many cases, Oxfam country teams were unaware of the research and knowledge products or innovations being initiated in other countries.[69]

- Host regular (Quarterly) coordination calls between Oxfam country teams enabling every country team to share their best practices, interesting research or success; Other Oxfam projects have utilized this model and it's been reported to be useful.[70]
- Hold quick focused one-off webinars led by different country teams on specific innovations and methodologies to share key practices across the project to those interested. Oxfam Country offices should consider taking the lead on cross-country team communication and organize themselves to share learnings.
- Generate Knowledge products (i.e. 3-4-page briefs) on specific best practices/innovations and share them across country teams and externally. Consider hiring an outside consultant to ensure this gets documented and disseminated in a timely fashion.[71]

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[67] Several county teams noted during the online survey and interviews that they would like to do more around engagement in knowledge sharing events and that there are no funds to do so, and that the Innovation Fund currently won't fund attending conferences/participation in events.

[68] There may also be some valuable opportunities for scaling-up and out innovations that have been tested under the CS project. Note that MCIC has just launched an innovation fund (FIT) that may allow Oxfam partners to gain access to further funding.

[69] Interviews with Oxfam Teams

[70] Oxfam India Team (Interview)

[71] In particular it would be useful for Oxfam country teams to share the methodology and CS training materials used for gender norm change by different county teams and partners (i.e. in India a training module has been developed focusing on positive norm modelling for adolescent boys)

- There is so far limited information on testing CS innovations for scale-up/out and moreover, how the innovations would fare given different conditions or context. The project could help address this by supporting more studies or research that looks specifically on factors affecting success and replication of CS promising practices.
- Consider revising the Oxfam Canada GAC reporting template for partners to report back to Oxfam Canada on both section 4 on Outcomes "highlights of Outcomes Achieved" and Section 6 "Lessons Learned" in Annual reports in order to better capture *higher level outcomes* and key *lessons learned* from country teams' perspectives. This could include revising the reporting template to include clearer instructions, examples and facilitated exercises for staff reflection on learnings. If done right, it can provide an important opportunity for partners to reflect on lessons semi-annually and implement and course-correct for improved programming.
- Share the country CS training resources that have been developed with all country teams and partners.

Increase Knowledge Sharing at the Country Level:
Country teams have struggled to find the time to effectively lead, manage and report on learning processes; for example, several countries were delayed in completing the country-led MTLR processes, and the quality and level of completion differed significantly across the different countries. It was reported that Oxfam Country teams (and partners) are also struggling to re-package research products for different audiences that have been completed (for example the baseline survey, research on reproductive health).

- Consider whether added human resources (i.e. outside support or a dedicated learning officer) are needed to achieve Pillar 3 and the learning objectives under the project. Learning takes time and dedicated incentives, and staff that are already challenged with the daily tasks of project management and implementation will have limited bandwidth to take on further responsibilities and deliverables.
- Consider hiring local level consultants to help support knowledge product packaging of key research that has been undertaken to date. The **Philippines** team hired a consultant to do this recently, and this approach may be an important value-add moving forward for country teams that have limited bandwidth to take on new initiatives.
- Revisit and strengthen the communication and knowledge sharing strategy at the country team level in order to define outreach and learning internally and externally with planned activities and budget. This should include bbetter documentation of the change stories and strategic and planned sharing with policy influencers. Some partners (Indonesia) also noted low visibility of the Oxfam CS project at the national level; especially when compared to other organizations working on child and forced early marriage.
- Create scope within the CS project for capacity building of country teams; particularly around documenting lessons learned, data analysis and learning from data. Teams need more guidance on how to improve and strengthen learning and dissemination.
- Create an Annual learning event within countries that engages an external audience for sharing results and learning with other stakeholders and influencers/link more closely with Oxfam VAWG programming. It was reported that there is limited coordination and learning between NGOs at the local level that are engaging in similar VAWG and women's rights programming (i.e. Care) and broader campaigns (Enough Campaign).
- For those Country teams and partners with the current capacity and time, consider undertaking more action research around key project issues – access to support services and areas not being adequately addressed by the project – women's care burden and sexual rights.

Roll-out the Feminist MEAL Strategy: The MEAL Strategy notes an aim to "empower stakeholders to analyze the change process and ensure ownership and sustainability."[72] To enable local partners and community stakeholders to play a more active role in monitoring, documenting and engaging in learning networks in the context of VAWG and CEFM, some steps could be taken:

➡ Build the capacity of Oxfam teams and local partners in gender-sensitive data analysis, documentation and understanding *how* to learn from data.

➡ Build the capacity of local partners and adolescent girls, boys, and youth in written, photo and video documentation (potentially using Most Significant Change Process or Photo Voice) which could be shared through social and web-based media with other project partners across the program and wider networks such as Girls not Brides, Sheroes, and StoryCenter's Silence Speaks initiative.[73]

➡ Integrate partners' and community leaders' concerns in planning/adapting learning and M&E activities for the next final evaluation (i.e. more time, finances, skills training for capacity building – particularly for those Oxfam teams or partners that will need more support and up-front planning).

Track backlash and resistance to the change process:

➡ Given the value of Oxfam's non-linear view of change within the TOC and explicit recognition that attempts to reduce VAWG and CEFM are likely to provoke backlash or attempts to push back or reverse pervious gains, it could be useful for OCA to adjust the Semi-Annual/Annual Reporting template to encourage partners to reflect and track backlash/resistance, and moreover strategize and share learnings on how to overcome it.

Improve Tracking and Reporting on Change: Overall CS project reports demonstrate strong evidence of reporting on activities, delays are identified, and achievements by country are detailed and clearly articulated. However, it was more difficult to assess reporting against indicators and their associated targets vs. baseline, both at a country and programmatic level. Many of the indicators were not reported on by all countries as expected, based on the PMF and based on the CS Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) strategy. Some critical indicators were not effectively reported on; for example, 1100.2 Perspectives of beneficiaries on VAWG and CEFM, and women's rights and leadership. Moreover, indicators lacked disaggregation (gender/age/influencer), which would have provided much more valuable insight into differences of opinions and experiences between women and girls, men and boys. This has been due to a number of issues; time constraints, resource and capacity issues, restrictions on data collection (Pakistan), and likely limitations around ease of data collection, analysis and data aggregation. In several cases the targets across indicators for different countries also seemed very low.[74]

➡ Review targets to ensure they appropriately reflect the change expected.

➡ Provide more support and resources for partners for proper and timely data collection and reporting.

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[72] CS MEAL Strategy

[73] Finding from India MTLR - https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/ ; https://sheroes.com ; https://www.storycenter.org/ss-about

[74] For example, indicator 1200.3 for" % of women and girls accessing economic opportunities" the India baseline reported 3% are accessing economic opportunities. The Year 5 target for India is a 5% increase. A 5% increase of 3% is the Target for Year 5 is 3.15%. That means by year 5 it's expected that 3.15% of women and girls will be accessing economic opportunities. There are similar issues for "% of women and girls reporting satisfaction with quality support services" and with "% of partners who use best practices to improve linkages." This made it not useful to compare against targets.

➡ Although the CS project is already challenged by timely and accurate reporting based on the Performance Measurement Framework, it would be useful to think about whether disaggregating data based on age and potentially other variables, for a select number of indicators, would be feasible. Some indicators should at least be disaggregated based on sex, as currently it is not possible to tell with the data that has been reported whether there was a difference in opinions for males and females – this is particularly relevant for questions on income, spending, views on sexual rights, etc. In some cases, disaggregation is essential to understanding what change happened for who (for example indicator 1121.2 which assess the percentage of influencers, youth, men and boys that report positive feedback on norm