Welcome
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MERCY CORPS

INTENTIONALLY INCLUSIVE

Find, Listen and Design with Girls in Resilience Initiatives

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Young people are coming of age during turbulent times

Largest generation of adolescents & youth the world has ever known.

In Asia and the Pacific, there are 717 million young people aged 15 to 24, comprising 60% of the world's youth.

There are 21.3 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18

And more...

- Sierra Leone: 63%
- Northern Uganda: 70%
- Middle East: 50-65% (more than 100 million 15-29)

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During Disaster

- What is usually a time of life set aside for learning and the development of livelihood skills is **disrupted**
- Young people are keenly aware of the possibility that this **loss** will never be recovered.

(Betancourt & Khan, 2008).

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During Disaster

- Adolescents tend to be ignored as a target group during times of emergencies.

- Conceptualized as passive victims or active security threats.

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During Disaster

Breakdown of social and cultural systems

Exposure to violence and chaos

Personal traumas such as the loss of family members, loss of protection mechanisms

Disruption of school and friendships

Absence of role models

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Everyone else has a head start

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In crisis, girls:

- Less access to resources and services
- High burden of care
- High rates of sexual violence
- Physical and mental health
- More likely to die during or after natural disasters (relates to gender balance in country/socio-economic status)
- Lack of skills/training to navigate disaster (i.e. climb, run, swim, resist assault)

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Fact.

Of the 830 women and adolescent girls who die every day from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, 507 die in countries that are considered fragile because of conflict or disaster (UNFPA, 2015)

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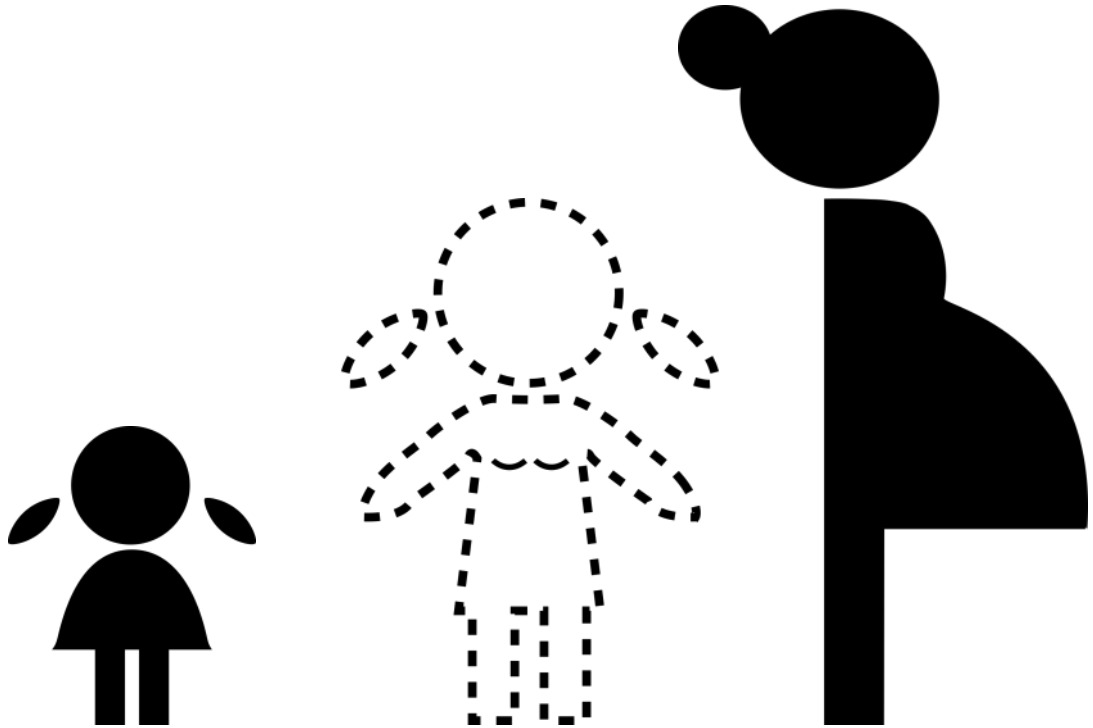
WE'VE LEARNED:
WE DON'T REACH GIRLS
BECAUSE WE THINK HAVE



IF WE BUILD IT

IF DISTRIBUTE IT

IF PROVIDE IT

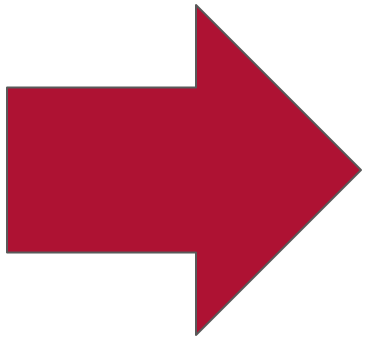
GIRLS WILL COME

IF WE BUILD IT

IF DISTRIBUTE IT

IF PROVIDE IT

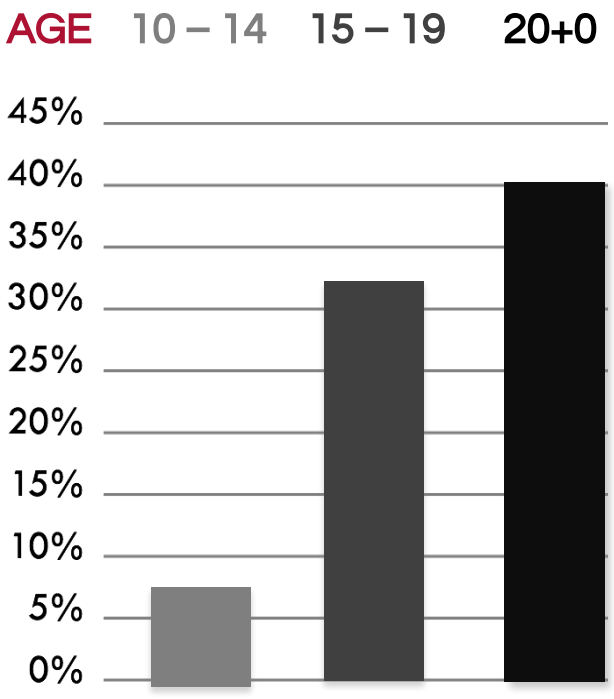
GIRLS WILL NOT COME

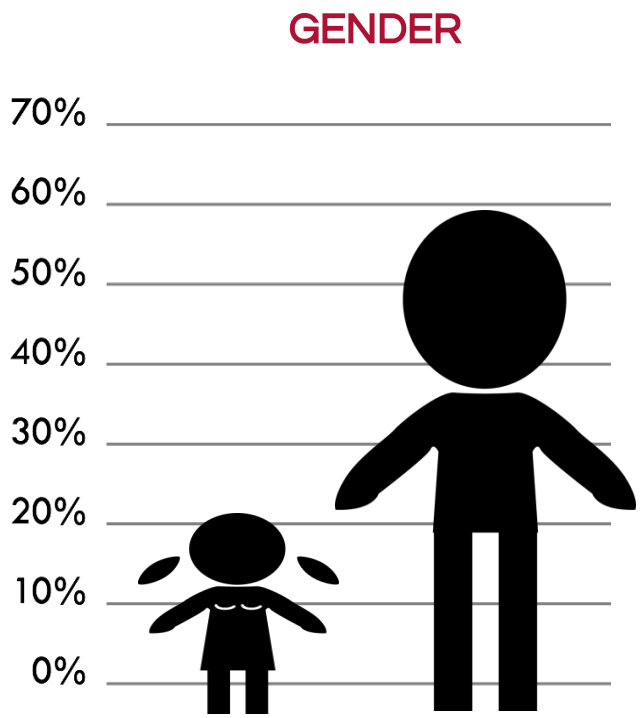


we have
to be
intentional

CHILD ≠ GIRL
YOUTH ≠ GIRL
WOMAN ≠ GIRL

Youth Programs Miss the Mark





Source: Weiner, Adam. 2007. "Assessing equity of access in youth programs," *Promoting Healthy, Safe, and Productive Transitions to Adulthood Brief* no. 28. New York: Population Council.

Girls are NOT ALL THE SAME

- Younger girls, ages 10-14
- Older girls, ages 15-19
- Young women, ages 20-24
- In-school girls
- Out-of-school girls
- Girls ages 10-14 who live without their parents
- Girls with disabilities
- Displaced girls
- Domestic workers
- Married adolescent girls
- Orphan girls
- Commercial sex workers
- Pastoralist girls
- Girl-headed households

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Igniting Impact on Girls Empowerment

We aim to...

unleash the real potential of girls living in poverty and fragility **through** helping development practitioners improve their practices

Girl Centered Design

FIND HER Which girls and why those girls

LISTEN TO HER Question assumptions

DESIGN WITH HER Their ideas, not ours

Sawki Development Food Aid Program, Niger

Context:

- Food insecurity
- Intergenerational poverty
- High fertility rates
- Poor maternal and child health outcomes
- **Consecutive droughts and natural disasters due to climate change** contribute to food insecurity and malnutrition

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Sawki Development Food Aid Program, Niger

Girls & Resilience in Sawki:

- Sawki is one of the first DFAPs globally to deploy the **Safe Space methodology** for adolescent girls as a strategy to increase food security.
- Through mentors and Safe Spaces, the program currently targets 3,100 adolescent girls
- Age-specific content delivered to adolescent girls in safe spaces, including nutrition, reproductive health and livelihood training.

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Sawki Development Food Aid Program, Niger

Results:

- **Girls' Social Capital:** meaningful, non-family friendships and a place to meet
- **Girls' Economic Activity:** more income, greater decision-making power, more likely to save specifically in case of emergency.
- **Early Marriage and Reproductive Health:** suggestions of changes in parents' attitudes
- **Food Security and Nutrition:** minor short-term impact on health and nutrition behaviors

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Sawki Development Food Aid Program, Niger

Lessons learned:

- Incorporating an **economic component** into the Safe Space model won gatekeeper support
- Prioritise **community involvement**.
- Leverage **local traditions** of mentoring
- Mentors need adequate **incentives** and support
- A detailed and **standardized curriculum** is necessary
- Safe Spaces should strive for **inclusivity**

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Supporting the Education of Marginalized Girls in Kailali (STEM I & II), Nepal

Context:

- Mercy Corps' **Strategic Resilience Assessments** (STRESS) highlighted the importance of building marginalized groups' participation, agency and voice
- Dalit and Janajati girls in the Kailali District are some of the most marginalized and disadvantaged in terms of access to education, social and economic life.

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Supporting the Education of Marginalized Girls in Kailali (STEM I & II), Nepal

Girls & Resilience in STEM I & II:

- **STEM II Theory of Change:** if girls are supported to make safe, healthy and successful transitions through secondary school and/or into secure livelihoods, then girls will have increased individual and community resilience

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Supporting the Education of Marginalized Girls in Kailali (STEM I & II), Nepal

Results:

- **Greater agency and decision-making power**
- **Increased access to education**
- **Increased access to financial services:**

"The GTF loan and the support I have received in these past months has changed my life. Now I earn NRs 1500 a day. I am self-reliant, and I can support my whole family".

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Supporting the Education of Marginalized Girls in Kailali (STEM I & II), Nepal

Lessons Learned:

- **Marginalisation** intersects with factors such as age, gender and power dynamics in the district
- Importance of **involving community members** in the implementation of the project activities to help ensure child safeguarding and Do No Harm
- Provide **psychosocial support** for girls, particularly the most isolated and vulnerable

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Girls Improving Resilience with Livestock (GIRL), Kenya & Uganda

Context:

- Pastoralist communities in Karamoja, Uganda and in Turkana and West Pokot, Kenya.
- Post-conflict environment with high rates of violence against women and girls
- **Climate change** has resulted in prolonged and worsening dry spells
- In the face of unpredictable rainy seasons, families are increasingly relying on girls to contribute to household income

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Girls Improving Resilience with Livestock (GIRL), Kenya & Uganda

Girls & Resilience in GIRL:

- Empowering 12,000 pastoralist girls to improve livelihoods and agency, contribute to food security and the adaptive capacity of households and the resilience of their communities
- Through Safe Spaces, girls develop critical assets for household and community resilience
- Working with key gatekeepers and private sector actors, the program aims to create an enabling environment for girls' access to markets

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Girls Improving Resilience with Livestock (GIRL), Kenya & Uganda

Results:

- **Increased access to and use of financial services:** the proportion of girls accessing financial services more than doubled
- **Increased social capital:** 90% of girls could identify safe locations to meet and discuss their issues
- **Increased agency and decision-making power:** 210% increase in proportion of girls in West Pokot reporting greater ability to make decisions

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WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT GIRLS

SHE IS UNIQUE,
NOT JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER GIRL

SHE IS READY FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT A LOT EARLIER THAN WE THINK

SHE HAS TO OVERCOME MORE BARRIERS

SAFETY MATTERS FOR HER,
FIRST AND FOREMOST!

SHE. IS. A. GIVER.

Thank You!
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