

# Stemming girls' chronic poverty

Catalysing development change  
by building just social institutions





# Stemming girls' chronic poverty

**Catalysing development change  
by building just social institutions**

Nicola Jones, Caroline Harper and Carol Watson

with

Jessica Espey, Dhana Wadugodapitiya,  
Ella Page, Maria Stavropoulou,  
Elizabeth Presler-Marshall, Ben Clench



**Chronic Poverty  
Research Centre**

# About the authors and acknowledgements

**Dr. Nicola Jones** is a Research Fellow in the Social Development Programme at the Overseas Development Institute and coordinates ODI's Gender Theme.

**Dr. Caroline Harper** is the Social Development Programme Head at the Overseas Development Institute and an Associate Director of the Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

**Dr. Carol Watson** is an independent consultant, specialising in children's rights, gender and social protection.

**Jessica Espey** is a Development Policy Advisor at Save the Children UK and is involved in the gender policy stream of the Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

**Dr. Dhana Wadugodapitiya** is a Research Officer with the Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

**Ella Page** is an independent consultant with an MA in Gender and Development.

**Maria Stavropoulou** is an independent consultant with an MSc in Medical Anthropology and Development Studies.

**Dr. Elizabeth Presler-Marshall** is an independent consultant with a PhD in Sociology.

**Ben Clench** is an independent consultant with an MSc in Development Management.

We would like to thank five expert peer reviewers for their very helpful feedback and inputs: Kate Bird, Overseas Development Institute Research Associate; Professor Sylvia Chant, Professor of Geography and Environment from the London School of Economics; Jennifer Grant, Global Child Rights Advisor and Advocate from Save the Children UK; Ravi Karakara, Child and Adolescent Participation Specialist from the United Nations Children's Fund New York; and Eliana Villar, an independent gender expert from Peru. We also wish to acknowledge indispensable editorial support from Roo Griffiths; valuable design and layout support from Portia Reyes; and project management support from Julia Brunt and David Walker.

This document is an output from the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) which is funded by UKaid from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of DFID. The CPRC gratefully acknowledges DFID's support.

---

## Cover photo credits

**Top left:** © Mark Henley / Panos Pictures

**Top right:** © Yannis Kontos / Polaris / Panos Pictures (2001)

**Bottom left:** © Alfredo Caliz / Panos Pictures (2009)

**Bottom right:** © Jenny Matthews / Panos Pictures (2005)

# The Chronic Poverty Research Centre

**The Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC)** is an international partnership of universities, research institutes and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), established in 2000 with initial funding from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

## *CPRC Director:*

Dr. Andrew Shepherd, Overseas Development Institute

## *CPRC Associate Directors:*

Dr. Caroline Harper, Overseas Development Institute  
Professor David Hulme, University of Manchester  
Professor Andy McKay, University of Sussex

## *CPRC Programme Manager:*

Julia Brunt, Overseas Development Institute

## *CPRC is administered from:*

Brooks World Poverty Institute  
School of Environment and Development  
The University of Manchester  
Humanities Bridgeford Street  
Manchester, M13 9PL  
UK

Phone: +44 (0)161 306 6436

Fax: +44 (0)161 306 6428

email: [cprc@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:cprc@manchester.ac.uk)

website: [www.chronicpoverty.org](http://www.chronicpoverty.org)

## **CPRC Partners**

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) – Programme of Research on Chronic Poverty in Bangladesh (PRCPB), Dhaka, Bangladesh

Brooks World Poverty Institute (BWPI), University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

Department of Economics, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, UK

Development Initiatives (DI), Somerset, UK

Development Research and Training (DRT), Kampala, Uganda

Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC), Kampala, Uganda

HelpAge International, London, UK

Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi, India and CPRC-India partners:

- Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Gujarat, India
- Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India
- National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi, India

Innovation, Environnement et Développement en Afrique (IED Afrique), Dakar, Senegal – Regional Coordinator CPRC West Africa.

Country focal points:

- Centre d'Étude, de Documentation et de Recherche Économique et Sociale (CEDRES), Faculté des Sciences Economiques et de Gestion, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- Department of Economics, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana
- Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire (IFAN), Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal
- Réseau MARP (Méthode Accélérée de Recherche Participative'), Niamey, Niger

Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

Overseas Development Institute (ODI), London, UK

Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa

## **CPRC Affiliates**

Institute for Development Studies (IDS), Nairobi, Kenya

---

This report can be downloaded from the CPRC website: [www.chronicpoverty.org](http://www.chronicpoverty.org)

Copyright 2010 © Chronic Poverty Research Centre

# Acronyms and abbreviations

AGI	Adolescent Girls' Initiative	FGC	Female Genital Cutting
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
ARI	Acute Respiratory Infection	FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	FSP	Female Stipend Programme (Bangladesh)
CAR	Centre for Advocacy Research (India)	GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	GCEDAW	Gambia Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEDPA	Centre for Development and Population Activities (US)	GDI	Gender-Related Development Index
CGD	Center for Global Development (US)	GDP	Gross Domestic Product
CHIP	Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre (UK)	GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
CIDA	Canadian International Development Association	GEM	Girls' Education Movement
CLADEM	Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defence of the Rights of Women	GFEP	Global Financial Education Program
CPG	Children Participating in Governance (South Africa)	GNP	Gross National Product
CPRC	Chronic Poverty Research Centre	GPA	Grade Point Average
CRENoS	Centre for North South Economic Research (Italy)	HAI	HelpAge International
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women	HDI	Human Development Index
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration	HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN)	IAC	Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)	IANWGE	Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (UN)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey	IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo	ICC	International Criminal Court
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education	ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services (India)
EFA	Education For All	ICRW	International Center for Research on Women (US)
ELA	Employment and Livelihood for Adolescents (Bangladesh)	IDA	International Development Association
EPAG	Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls & Young Women (Liberia)	IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	IDRC	International Development Research Centre (Canada)
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists	IDS	Institute of Development Studies (UK)
		IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs (UK)
		IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
		IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (US)



IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute	RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development (UK)	SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
IIPS	International Institute of Population Sciences (India)	SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (Ethiopia)
IIPS	Paris Institute of Political Studies	STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
ILO	International Labour Organization	TRY	Tap and Reposition Youth (Kenya)
IMAGE	Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity (South Africa)	UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Mexico)	UCW	Understanding Children's Work
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation	UK	United Kingdom
IOM	Institute of Medicine (South Africa)	UN	United Nations
INMUJERES	National Institute of Women (Mexico)	UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/ AIDS
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women	UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
IPC	International Poverty Centre (Brazil)	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IRC	International Rescue Committee (US)	UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ISDS	Institute of Social Development Studies (Vietnam)	UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services	UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation (US)	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
MDG	Millennium Development Goal	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action	UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
NBER	National Bureau of Economic Research (US)	US	United States
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation	USA	United States of America
NIPORT	National Institute of Population Research and Training (Bangladesh)	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
NRC	National Research Council (South Africa)	VAG	Violence Against Girls
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)	VAW	Violence Against Women
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas (UK)
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organisation (US)
OSAGI	Office of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues (UN)	WFP	World Food Programme
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme (Ethiopia)	WHO	World Health Organization
REDE HOPEM	Men for Change Network (Mozambique)	WIDER	World Institute for Development Economic Research
		WSSCC	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

# Stemming girls' chronic poverty

## Catalysing development change by building just social institutions

**A**ddressing gender inequalities is often among the more intractable policy and political issues of our time, not least in countries where many women and girls are absolutely poor, and is a critical aspect of the struggle against chronic poverty. Teenage girls and young women are a key group, whose experience and progress, or lack of it, at this point in their lives not only shapes their own adulthood but also the life chances of their children.

Beyond 2015, the chronically poor must certainly be better included in the world's efforts to eradicate poverty. To do this, it is important to learn the lessons from practice on what works in the more difficult policy areas that must be tackled during the coming period. The richness of this report lies in the many examples of programmes and policies that address the institutional barriers faced by teenage girls and young women in the realisation of their potential. It will be different combinations of such approaches that will make a difference in the widely varied contexts where girls and women face discrimination and disadvantage, and that will ultimately play a role in changing social norms and institutions.



**Andrew Shepherd**

*Director, CPRC*

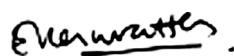
**T**his report is an excellent resource for all who seek transformative and lasting progress in eradicating chronic poverty, and it will be of real value in getting the social dynamics of poverty better understood. Adolescent girls are usually invisible in development programmes, even those designed specifically for youth and women. By ignoring the social dynamics, which systematically undermine girls' ambition and agency, we are missing a huge opportunity to solve poverty before it reaches the next generation.

The report explains how social norms, beliefs and institutional barriers rob girls and young women of their potential. It provides an evidence-based analysis of why teenage girls' vulnerabilities in relation to poverty are different to those of boys and to those of adult women. By the time she reaches puberty, a girl living in poverty has to negotiate multiple traps. She faces a far higher chore burden than her brother,

restrictions on her mobility, the probability of dropping out of school with limited literacy and skills, of being married as a child to alleviate her family's poverty. She is likely to be socially isolated and at danger of sexual violence, teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. This has a huge cost. Babies born to girls under 15 are twice as likely to die before reaching their first birthday than those born to women over 20. Girls under 15 are five times as likely to die of pregnancy related causes than those in their 20s. Among girls aged 15 to 19, pregnancy is the leading cause of death. HIV prevalence is 3 to 5 times higher for teenage girls than for teenage boys. Abuse of girls is commonplace, especially in conflict zones, even by the people who are supposed to protect them.

The good news is that the reform of discriminatory social institutions is possible. In fact, social norms and beliefs are constantly changing. We can enable positive change by encouraging social mobilisation, bringing girls together with peers and mentors to build their assertiveness, their capacity to voice their own problems and to negotiate for themselves. We can support conversations across the generations and with men and boys, and community leaders, to reshape laws, beliefs and behaviour. We can integrate girls' perspectives and priorities into international legal and human rights frameworks, as well as bringing them into the design and evaluation of development programmes. In order to make girls visible in monitoring and evaluation, we have to use data disaggregated by both age and sex.

This report is rich in examples of programmes and policies to address the barriers faced by girls – and these can have dramatic results. A girl who completes secondary education can increase her lifetime earnings by 30 percent, helping her family, community and nation. Investing in girls stimulates multiplier effects, and is central to achieving broader development goals. Money and technology, however, are not enough. As this report so ably illustrates, sustainable progress requires communities, governments, the private sector, religious leaders, development activists and agencies to reform the social institutions that otherwise perpetuate chronic poverty at immense economic and social cost.



**Ellen Wratten**

*Deputy Managing Director, Girl Hub, Nike Foundation/ UK DFID  
Former Head of Profession for Social Development, UK DFID*



# Executive Summary

## Girls, chronic poverty and social institutions

Childhood, adolescence and early adulthood remain for many girls and young women a period of deprivation, danger and vulnerability, resulting in a significant lack of agency and critical development deficits. In many cases, overlapping and intersecting experiences of deprivation, foregone human development opportunities and abuse or exploitation serve to perpetuate and intensify poverty for girls and women over the life-course. Girls' vulnerabilities in relation to poverty dynamics are different to those of boys and to those of adult women. This is in part because of their relative powerlessness and the particularities of their life stage. What happens at this critical time in their lives can reinforce their poverty status and that of their offspring, or influence their movement into or out of poverty.

Poverty research has historically focused on material manifestations of poverty (measured by income and basic human development indicators such as educational enrolment and nutritional status). However, the role that social risks and vulnerabilities play in perpetuating chronic poverty and propelling people into poverty has gained recognition over the past decade. Accordingly, in this report we focus on social institutions – the collection of formal and informal laws, norms and practices that have an effect on human capabilities by either limiting or enabling individual and collective agency. These social institutions, we suggest, have far greater influence on developmental outcomes than is generally appreciated.

Social institutions are part of the wider culture that informs multiple aspects of our behaviour and our societies. They play a key role in determining girls' and young women's life opportunities and capabilities, by either limiting or enabling individual and collective agency. Social institutions are not inherently good or bad, but when they result in processes that lead to inequality, discrimination and exclusion, they generate a myriad of development deficits and physical and psychological trauma. These barriers to human development

**Investing in girls is one of the smartest moves a country can make: today's girls will be half of tomorrow's adults, but investing in them offers returns that will go to all of humanity.**

can lead to and perpetuate chronic poverty and vulnerability over the course of childhood and adulthood, and potentially inter-generationally.

In this report, we identify five critical social institutions, broadening and modifying the Social Institutions and Gender Index of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation

and Development (OECD). Within this set of institutions, we pay particular attention to how gender intertwines with other forces of exclusion (class, caste, ethnicity, urban/rural locality, disability, etc). We also highlight the importance of local context, which matters both in the analysis of constraints and in the identification of solutions.

Our key modifications to the SIGI are as follows: first, we extend the SIGI range to cover girls rather than just women. Second, we consider a broader definition of well-being beyond the economic, one which captures a range of capabilities and outcomes as well as the complexities of supporting girls and women to both avoid and exit chronic poverty. Third, we give our own labels to the institutions, and also modify some of the component variables, in order to better capture the range of norms and practices that underpin them. Below is a brief overview of each of the characteristics of the five institutions we cover.

## Discriminatory family codes

Family code is taken to mean formal and informal laws, norms and practices that influence the capabilities and related decision-making power of women and men, boys and girls in the household. Family codes include parental authority,

inheritance laws, marriage practices and family structure and resulting rights and responsibilities. In their negative form, these have particularly significant impacts by preventing girls from developing their capabilities and agency, leading to poverty.

In particular, discriminatory family codes can result in: early marriage; separation of girls from maternal presence, influence and authority; lack of decision-making influence by girls themselves; denial of vital material assets through ownership and inheritance; and, in some cases, physical harm. The ensuing negative development outcomes include: reduced capabilities, educational attainment, employment potential and job quality; increased fertility and maternal and infant mortality rates; increased ill-health and physical harm; and increased poverty and potential for increased incidence of life-course and intergenerational poverty.

## Son bias

Amartya Sen (1990) hypothesised that international distortions in sex ratios equated to as many as 100 million ‘missing women’, explained by female foeticide and ‘gendercide’ – the systematic and often lethal neglect of and underinvestment in girls and women.

We conceptualise son bias more broadly, to refer to unequal investments in the care, nurture and resources allocated to sons and daughters within the household. This encompasses a spectrum of negative developmental outcomes, from mortality through to human capital development deficits, time poverty linked to labour roles and psychosocial ill-being. These general intra-household differentials between sons and daughters are widespread, and there is good evidence that they exist across regions. Son bias is not shaped by poverty alone, but there are important linkages between poverty, vulnerability and son bias over the life-course and in intergenerational terms.

## Limited resource rights and entitlements

Under this social institution, we focus on girls’ and young women’s access to and control over land, microfinance, property and natural resources, in order to examine the causes and consequences of girls’ lack of entitlements, rights and access to resources.

Discriminatory inheritance systems and particular practices of bride wealth and dowry, as well as legislation which defines and limits married women’s property rights, have historically disadvantaged women. Family and community norms may contribute to this, particularly if they are founded on patriarchal value systems. Meanwhile, gender disparities in education, along with unequal access to and preparation for productive employment opportunities, segmented labour forces, lower wages, poor access to financial services and

tensions between reproductive and productive work impinge on young women’s ability to accumulate wealth and achieve economic empowerment.

## Physical insecurity

Physical insecurity is a harrowing reality for millions of girls, of all ages, ethnicities and religions. This institution encompasses laws, norms and practices which condone or fail to challenge gender-based violence in the household, school, workplace and community. Physical insecurity as a consequence of gender-based violence is also a particular risk in times of conflict and social upheaval.

Physical insecurity is manifested in unchallenged norms and practices of domestic and school-based violence, sexual abuse, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and traditional practices of ‘honour’ killings and ‘femicide,’ among others. Violence against girls causes long-term and often irreversible physical and psychological harm. It deprives girls of their human capabilities as well as their agency – suppressing their voices, constraining their choices and denying them control over their physical integrity and future. It also increases girls’ risk of sliding into, and remaining trapped in, chronic poverty.

## Restricted civil liberties

This institution includes laws, norms and practices which result in restrictions vis-à-vis freedom of movement, freedom of association and participation in collective action.

Practices which limit girls’ ability to claim an independent identity through birth registration have knock-on effects with regard to other civil rights and liberties. Restrictions on mobility, linked to deeply rooted traditions and customs, can perpetuate gender disparities in access to social and economic resources and contribute to processes of disempowerment of women. In addition, girls’ and young women’s limited voice in family matters can lead to a particular gender-based experience of the poverty trap of limited citizenship in their own societies. This is characterised by limited opportunities to participate in associative groups, leisure activities, educational programmes and/or extra-curricular activities and both political and economic development processes

## Is social transformation possible?

Culture is constantly being shaped by human interaction, which means that transformative social change to enable equitable development and social justice is possible. Promising policy and programme approaches that are emerging globally give evidence to this. However, girls and young women are currently weakly incorporated within international legal and

human rights frameworks, and there is limited availability of gender- and age-disaggregated data, impeding social transformation efforts. Debates about chronic poverty also need to be enriched by more systematic attention to gender dynamics throughout the lifecycle, both within and outside the household, and in particular the role that discriminatory social institutions play in constraining girls' life opportunities and the exercise of their full human agency.

This report underscores the importance of taking social institutions and culture seriously and making them more visible components of development debates to better tackle the poverty traps facing girls and young women – not only in childhood and early adulthood, but also potentially across their life-course and that of their children. Although it is widely accepted that gender is a social construct imbued with power relations, too often there is a disconnect with policy and programme development. In other words, if we want to promote progressive social change, we need to think carefully about how best to reform or reshape discriminatory social institutions which structure the realm of the possible for girls, their families and communities. Along with our strengthened focus on girls and young women, we must also consider in more depth the specific poverty and vulnerability experiences of boys and young men, and the role they can play in reshaping and reforming gender discriminatory social institutions.

There is compelling evidence that progressive social change is possible, although much more needs to be done to take promising initiatives to scale, as well as to effectively monitor, evaluate and learn from such experiences cross-nationally. Because of the context specificity of social institutions, different models of change will be essential in different places and at different times. Nonetheless, the report identifies a number of crosscutting findings about the linkages between gendered social institutions and girls' and young women's experiences of chronic poverty. These inform the report's recommendations for action, which are inspired by some of the effective policy, programming and advocacy approaches discussed in the individual chapters.

The recent focus in development circles on girls and young women is clearly very positive. It does, however, present a number of analytical and programming challenges.

- Gender- and age-disaggregated data on girls' poverty experiences over time in developing country contexts are very limited, constraining well-tailored policy and programme interventions.
- Within international legal and human rights frameworks, female youth in particular are not well covered (either in the United Nations Convention on

the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW)), limiting the specific measures that need to be developed or strengthened to protect them from the poverty traps besetting them at this stage of the life-course.

- Definitions and understandings of childhood, adolescence and youth vary considerably according to cultural context, with important implications for development interventions.
- It is also important to consider in more depth the specific poverty and vulnerability experiences of boys and young men, and in particular the role that they can play in reshaping gender discriminatory social institutions.

Given these complexities, a multipronged, long-term commitment is essential, involving strategic partnerships with state and non-state actors alike. Approaches that overlook the multi-dimensionality of gendered and generational experiences of chronic poverty and vulnerability are more likely to flounder and to fail to support girls and young women in new pathways to empowerment. Moreover, families and wider communities are likely to miss out on the potential multiplier effects of investing in girls and achieving development goals more broadly.

To more effectively tackle chronic poverty and promote progressive social change, six key recommendations for action are highlighted. More details on these can be found within the main report.

1. Develop and enforce context-sensitive legal provisions to eliminate gender discrimination in the family, school, workplace and community.
2. Support measures to promote children's and especially girls' right to be heard and to participate in decisions in areas of importance to them.
3. Invest in the design and implementation of child- and gender-sensitive social protection.
4. Strengthen services for girls who are hard to reach, because of both spatial disadvantage as well as age- and gender-specific socio-cultural barriers.
5. Support measures to strengthen girls' and young women's individual and collective ownership of, access to and use of resources.
6. Strengthen efforts to promote girls' and women's physical integrity and control over their bodies, especially in conflict and post-conflict settings.



# Table of contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Acronyms and abbreviations	iv
Executive summary	vii
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Discriminatory family codes</b>	<b>11</b>
1 Introduction	13
2 Family codes and national legal systems	13
3 Gendered dimensions of discriminatory family codes	17
4 Addressing discriminatory family codes: Initiatives and challenges	23
5 Lessons learnt and policy implications	26
<b>Chapter 2: Son bias</b>	<b>29</b>
1 Son bias and poverty dynamics	31
2 Accounting for son bias	32
3 Impacts of son preference on poverty dynamics	34
4 Promising policy and programme initiatives	42
5 Lessons learnt and policy implications	48
<b>Chapter 3: Limited resource rights and entitlements</b>	<b>51</b>
1 Gender, resource rights and entitlements and poverty dynamics	53
2 Dimensions of deprivation: Statistics and lived realities	55
3 Promising policy and programme initiatives	58
4 Lessons learnt and policy implications	64
<b>Chapter 4: Physical insecurity</b>	<b>67</b>
1 Introduction	69
2 Chronic poverty and physical insecurity	69
3 Violence at home	71
4 Violence in the community	72
5 Intensification of gender-based violence in conflict situations	77
6 Addressing physical insecurity: Promising policies and programmes	82
7 Lessons learnt and policy implications	87
<b>Chapter 5: Restricted civil liberties</b>	<b>89</b>
1 Gender, restriction of civil liberties and poverty dynamics	91
2 Dimensions of restricted civil rights and liberties: Statistics and lived realities	92
3 Promising programme and policy initiatives	100
4 Lessons learnt and policy implications	104
<b>Conclusions and policy recommendations</b>	<b>107</b>

<b>References</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Annexes</b>	<b>129</b>
Annex 1: Recent international agency reports on girls and poverty	129
Annex 2: Advantages of different strategies/instruments for addressing vulnerability	130
Annex 3: Conceptual framework for potential effects of the formalisation of women's property rights in land	131
Annex 4: Initiatives to improve the position of women in owning and controlling land	131
Annex 5: Restricted decision making on visits outside the household	132
<b>Index</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Boxes</b>	
Box 1: Multidimensional vulnerabilities faced by adolescent girls living in poverty	2
Box 2: Gender and chronic poverty across the life-course	3
Box 3: Social institutions and human capabilities	6
Box 4: Progress in understanding and measuring gendered experiences of poverty	8
Box 5: Family code and Muslim law	14
Box 6: The pain of early marriage: voices of young Hausa girls in Africa	21
Box 7: Girls' education as a tool to counter discriminatory family codes	24
Box 8: Engaging with men around family planning	26
Box 9: Links between son bias and changing economic systems	33
Box 10: Traditional proverbs about son bias	34
Box 11: Religious underpinnings of son bias	34
Box 12: Immunisation and gender bias	35
Box 13: 'A girl never finishes her journey' – bias against daughters' education in rural Ethiopia	37
Box 14: 'Fate favours me and plays big jokes on my sister'	38
Box 15: Existing evidence on gender differences in children's time use	39
Box 16: Daughters disproportionately shoulder the care of relatives living with HIV/AIDS	40
Box 17: The invisibility of girl domestic workers in West Africa	40
Box 18: Links between the value of work and girls' self-esteem	42
Box 19: The challenges of legal enforcement	42
Box 20: The power of the media in reshaping gender-biased attitudes	43
Box 21: Strengthening demand for education	45
Box 22: The multiplier effects of empowering adolescent girls	46
Box 23: Engendering energy policy and investment priorities	46
Box 24: Gendered patterns of asset transfer in Bangladesh	53
Box 25: Intertwining asset inequalities	54
Box 26: Death, divorce and poverty – stories of young women from Zimbabwe and the West Bank	56
Box 27: Portraits of poverty for young women lacking access to credit	59
Box 28: Improving girls physical and economic security in a slum in Nairobi	60
Box 29: Promoting adolescent girls' livelihood skills and access to financial services	61
Box 30: Gender-equitable land registration	63
Box 31: Girls carving out a role as ambassadors against climate change	64
Box 32: The World Bank Adolescent Girls' Initiative	65
Box 33: Exercising choice can be fatal for some girls	70
Box 34: Links between HIV/AIDS and domestic violence	72
Box 35: Violence against domestic workers in Latin America	72
Box 36: Links between general political violence and school sexual violence	73
Box 37: Sexual violence in schools	74
Box 38: FGM/C is linked to understandings of adulthood and citizenship	77



Box 39:	FGM/C and social status	77
Box 40:	Conflict and the use of female bodies as a tactic of war	78
Box 41:	The abusive peacekeeper	80
Box 42:	The story of a girl combatant in Sierra Leone	81
Box 43:	Localising international commitments	82
Box 44:	Sensitising authorities to gender-based violence	83
Box 45:	Reshaping masculinities	83
Box 46:	Reaching girls affected by war through reproductive health services	84
Box 47:	Circumcision with words	84
Box 48:	Ensuring school is a place of learning, not violence	85
Box 49:	Let Us Speak Out	86
Box 50:	Demobilising girl combatants – the Liberian case	86
Box 51:	Links between birth registration and child well-being	92
Box 52:	Gender, ethnicity and birth registration in Thailand	94
Box 53:	Closing vistas for adolescent girls	94
Box 54:	Gender differences in mobility – country examples	95
Box 55:	Extreme cases of restricted mobility and autonomy for women and girls	96
Box 56:	Mobility and gender-based violence in conflict settings	97
Box 57:	Social isolation and exclusion	98
Box 58:	Categories of exclusion	99
Box 59:	Birth registration and cash transfers – examples from India and Bolivia	100
Box 60:	Safe spaces and schools for girls and women in Nepal, Pakistan and Yemen	101
Box 61:	Changing lives/changing perspectives	101
Box 62:	Mobilising girls through sport	102
Box 63:	The importance of voice and leadership	103
Box 64:	Girls' clubs and other initiatives to break down obstacles facing girls	103
Box 65:	Engaging with national budget processes	103

## Figures

Figure 1:	Levels of gendered social discrimination in developing countries	7
Figure 2:	Primary school-age children out of school by mother's education and region, 1996–2003	15
Figure 3:	Husbands making decisions about their wife's health	16
Figure 4:	Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 married or in union before age 18, 1987–2006	20
Figure 5:	Child marriage – substantial variation within regions	21
Figure 6:	Likelihood of child marriage by wealth quintile	22
Figure 7:	Percentage of agricultural land titles held by women	56
Figure 8:	Gendered access to bank loans	57
Figure 9:	Early marriage and Human Development Index (HDI) rank	58
Figure 10:	FGM/C in Africa and the Middle East	76
Figure 11:	Births not registered	92
Figure 12:	Constricting circles for married girls	96
Figure 13:	Young women and girls with little say in life decisions	98

## Tables

Table 1:	SIGI son preference scores by geographical region	32
Table 2:	SIGI son preference scores by country income level	35
Table 3:	Examples of violence against women throughout the lifecycle	70
Table 4:	Girls' vulnerabilities to chronic poverty	110

I am A girl  
I love school

© Giacomo Pirozzi / Panos Pictures (2007)

Rwanda, Kigeyo. A Grade 4 student writes on the blackboard during an English class in the primary school in the village of Kigeyo in Western province.