

act:onaid

Making her own choices:

young women's rights in poor urban areas



Programme Framework

October 2012

Acknowledgements

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Glossary of key terms

Concepts

Activista: ActionAid's network of youth activists around the world.

Advocacy: The deliberate process of influencing policy-makers.

Campaigning: Harnessing people's power through organisation, mobilisation and communication around a simple and powerful demand, to achieve a measurable political or social change.

Control over body: Empowering women to claim their right to a violence free life, safe and desired sex and informed decision-making about reproduction.

Conscientisation: A process of reflection and action, where people look at the social, political and economic contradictions in their lives and take action against them.

Decent work: Working conditions, supported by appropriate laws, that are safe, provide for leisure time and rest, respect family and social values, involve strong and independent workers' organisation, provide adequate compensation for lost or reduced income and permit access to adequate healthcare.¹

Dignity: The term derives from the Latin *dignitas* and in human rights or developmental discourse is generally understood as a claim that comes with being human, that we are all worthy or deserving of respect. All human beings have a claim to human dignity. Human rights are a mechanism and a practice that can advance the underlying dignity of all human beings. They offer social respect in the form of goods, services, opportunities and protections to each person as a matter of rights. It is through the realisation of these rights that human beings can enjoy human dignity.²

¹ ILO Decent Work Agenda – see <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>

² See http://www.udhr60.ch/report/donnely-HumanDignity_0609.pdf and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dignity>

Livelihoods: The means by which people – individuals and households – achieve well-being. Well-being will be differentially defined according to context and circumstances of an individual or household. Livelihoods includes the acquisition of skills, and the expansion of assets and other resources, required for livelihoods (including the creation of informal work opportunities). *This dimension of livelihoods is, however, not addressed in this specific programme.* Livelihoods also embraces formal work and access to jobs under state social protection schemes. Finally, our concept of livelihoods embraces life skills, health and safety for women.³

Lobbying: Direct attempts to influence policy-makers, public officials or other decision-makers, including, for example, face-to-face meetings or letters.

Social protection: Social protection refers to a collection of policies, programmes and instruments to offset poverty and vulnerability through the transfer of income to marginalised groups, especially those in insecure livelihoods and employment. Social protection includes measures for (a) social security (a programme of benefits, which may include retirement income, disability income, and other payments), (b) social assistance (the transfer of resources to eligible groups (such as cash or food transfers, vouchers, or subsidies for utilities and basic foodstuffs)) and (c) social insurance (actions aimed at reducing people's exposure to risks and vulnerabilities (such as health, life, and asset insurance)).

State employment schemes: Considered part of social protection and embracing Public and Community Works Programmes and Employment or Job Guarantee Schemes. These generally entail programmes oriented to the creation of public or community goods (street lighting, roads, bridges, brush clearing and so forth) through employment, usually of a temporary nature, for those unable to find alternative employment.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: Right to a system of health protection, including health care and the underlying determinants of health, which afford people the opportunity to enjoy the highest attainable standards of sexual and reproductive health.

Unpaid care work: Work principally done by women, which is not paid, provides services that nurture other people and is costly in terms of time and energy.⁴

Urban: An urban area may be a city, town or metropolis. There is no one standardised global definition of the urban, although common criteria generally applied to describe the urban are population numbers and population density, the standard and level of sophistication of public and other services, the main forms of economic activity (i.e. the proportion of non-agricultural activities) etc. The types of urban settlement embraced through this programme include the inner city, informal settlements or slums, and peri-urban settlements. While peri-urban settlements are generally understood to fall somewhere between the city and the countryside, we consider this a form of displaced urbanisation deliberately created through policy (as was the case in apartheid South Africa) or by the unaffordability of more centrally located urban land. We, therefore, include peri-urban settlements in this programme of work with young women.

Youth participation: The 'active, informed and voluntary' involvement of young people in their communities and in all decision-making that impacts them locally, nationally and internationally. It means that young people lead organising, programmes and work that impact them, as opposed to others working on behalf of them. ActionAid subscribes to the UNICEF position that youth participation is a basic right.⁵

3 UNDP and IRP (2005) Guidance Note on Recovery: Livelihood, Japan; and DFID (2010) Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy-Makers - <http://www.restlessdevelopment.org/file/youth-participation-in-development-pdf>

4 UNIFEM. 2000. UNIFEM Biennial Report. New York: United Nations Development Fund for women. <http://www.unwomen.org/facts-figures/#poverty>

5 See <http://www.ygproject.org/glossary/5#letterp> and http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2008/youth_participation.pdf

Programmes/M&E terminology

Baselines: The starting point against which we can measure change in people's lives. We collect baseline data and information about indicators we want to monitor over time.

Critical pathway: A visual representation of how we believe we will achieve impact, linking actions at different levels to outcomes and impact. A tool to help us design strong Human Rights Based Approach programmes.

Evaluation: Taking a more critical and in depth look at a programme or piece of work to assess whether it is meeting its objectives, and understand what outcome and impact (positive or negative, expected or unexpected) the programme is having.

Impact: The change in young women's lives that is achieved over a defined period of time of a strategy or a programme (in this case, three years).

Indicators: The things we choose to track to find out whether we are making a difference. We look at meta-indicators (the impact we make), outcome-indicators (the outcome of our work) and process indicators (the intermediate outcomes we achieve at different points in a programme/project).

Intermediate outcomes: The concrete steps or stepping stones we have identified that will take us towards the outcomes.

Local rights programmes: ActionAid's long term programmes of 10-15 years in particular communities.

Monitoring: The regular and ongoing participatory review, collection and analysis of information on the progress of our work.

Outcomes: The specific changes in young women's lives that will be achieved over the three years and which will assist us to achieve the promised impact.

Outcome indicators: The indicators we select to track our progress towards and achievement of an outcome.

Process indicators: The indicators we use to monitor our progress towards and achievement of the intermediate outcomes or stepping stones (the intermediate steps towards an overarching outcome).

Location of the work

Local urban sites (see definition in glossary) in each of Ghana, South Africa and India; **national** advocacy and campaigns in each of the three countries; and **international** advocacy, campaigns and knowledge development/support work across the three countries. These three countries were selected because they all have large urban centres that are rapidly growing, particularly in Ghana and India where urbanisation rates are 3.5% and 2.7% respectively, and in South Africa in which over 62% of the population already lives in urban areas.⁶ Addressing urban poverty in the countries where ActionAid is located is an emerging area of work for the organisation as outlined in the new global strategy from 2012-2017, *People's Action to End Poverty*.

Duration of the programme

The first phase of the programme is **designed to run over three years**, with a mid-term and concluding evaluation, which will likely lay the basis for a further three to five year programme. The rationale for an initial three year programme is that, assuming a start date of mid-2013, the programme will conclude midway through 2016, during the year of the international strategy evaluation, allowing for insights and lessons to inform the next five year international strategy. As already mentioned this is a very new area of work for ActionAid, and so a shorter first phase implementation period, involving a smaller number of countries, will allow the organisation to 'experiment' with less risk, and evaluate and learn important lessons for a longer-term, deeper and expanded programme of work with young urban women post the first phase.

Background, purpose and application of this programme framework

This programme framework is informed by three country level and international reviews of the literature related to young women, livelihoods and sexual and reproductive health, and empirical research undertaken through focus group discussions and validation workshops involving young women and men in urban and peri-urban areas in Ghana, India and South Africa.⁷ These research processes were undertaken in the period between February to June 2012 under a programme scoping phase supported by the Human Dignity Foundation.



Prashanth Vishwanathan/Bloomberg/ActionAid

Tasleem Sheik, Shabina Sheik and Yasim Sheik, Mumbai

⁶ As cited in ActionAid. 2012. *Young women: life choices and livelihoods in poor urban areas*, London, October 2012

⁷ In India the empirical research was undertaken in a total of eight slum settlements in the cities of Mumbai, Chennai, and Hyderabad. In Ghana, the work was done in two peri-urban areas: Kpobiman (Greater Accra) and Bupela (Northern Region). In South Africa, the research was undertaken in two townships in Cape Town and the inner city of Johannesburg.

At an international programme design workshop held in Johannesburg in July 2012, researchers and programme staff from the three participating countries and the ActionAid International Secretariat (IS) engaged with the research findings and agreed the broad elements of a three-year programme framework. This programme framework presents ActionAid's analysis of the problem to be addressed, outlines what needs to change, how this change will happen, how the change will be monitored and how impact will be assessed, and how the organisation will learn from its performance along the way.

The programme framework addresses what ActionAid aims to achieve and its strategies for getting there at a cross-country level. The IS, and each of the countries and their local rights programmes, will have their own concrete programme of work (framed by this global programme framework) over three years and their own annual plans and budgets. This is a programme framework that applies to ActionAid specifically – donors at international and national levels may have more specific requirements for programme design, including monitoring and evaluation, and reporting, which will be responded to as needed internationally and nationally.

The programme framework, while specifically designed to support the three implementing ActionAid members and international advocacy and support work, could offer inspiration and guidance to other members of ActionAid that wish to take up and develop this programme area in their own contexts.

The problem analysis/statement

The analysis below is drawn from the three in-depth country reports and a global report including a review

of key national and global statistics.⁸ Across the three countries, our research identified the general trend of a rising urban population. In Ghana, 52% of the population live in areas classified as urban in 2010, and this is projected to rise to 62%-63% in 2025. In India, 31% of the population was considered urbanized in 2011, and this is likely to rise 41% by 2030. And in South Africa, the population identified as urban dwellers was estimated at 62% in 2012, and the United Nations predicts that this will rise to 77% by 2050.⁹ The urban population is increasingly youthful across all three countries.

A most significant and common trend across the three countries is that this rapid rise in urban population coincides with the neoliberal trend of a shrinking state and privatisation of basic services. The absence of adequate, affordable and safe water and energy have the greatest impacts on women, including young women, whose burden of unpaid care work increases as the division of labour forces them to fill the gap in public services by providing these services themselves, and deal with the impacts of them being unavailable, such as when children become ill from unsafe water supplies. In addition, the lack of safe and adequate shelter, a common feature across the three contexts, leads to overcrowding, lack of privacy for girls, and importantly, few choices for women to leave dangerous home environments.

Poverty levels are deep and intractable in the communities the research participants come from. In Ghana, the research finds that unemployment amongst the youth is considerably higher than the national rate. The 2008 Demographic and Health Survey reports an unemployment rate of 64% amongst economically active female youth aged 15-19 (as opposed to 60% amongst equivalent male youth) and 26% amongst female youth aged 20-24 (and 24% for males in this age cohort). This compares with a much lower unemployment rate of 22.2%

⁸ Please see ActionAid. 2012. Young women: life choices and livelihoods in poor urban areas, London, UK. October 2012

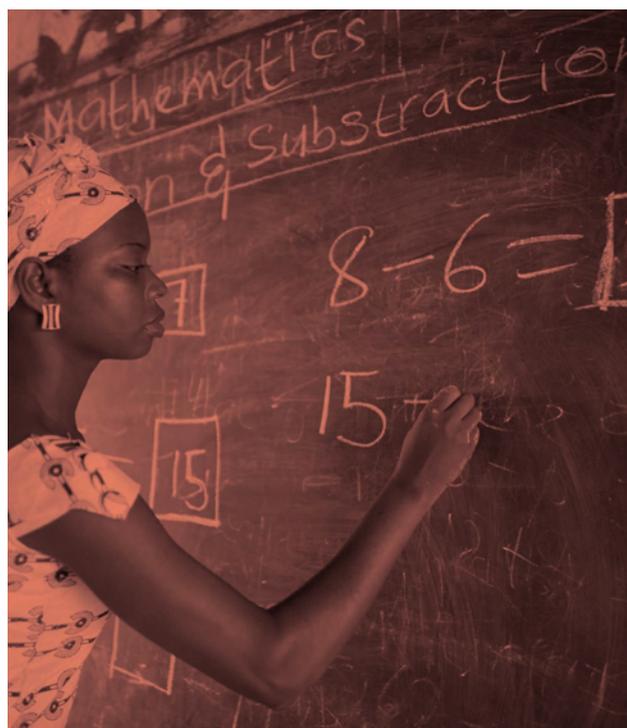
⁹ UN-HABITAT., State of the World Cities 2010/2011. Bridging the Urban Divide. UN-HABITAT. Earthscan, UK. 2010

amongst all females aged 15-49 years. In India, the 2001 Census records that of a total of 92.68 million workers (unspecified), women only constitute 17.37%. In South Africa, the research notes extremely high unemployment levels, with a conservative estimate of unemployment for young people aged 15-24 years sitting at 47%. Across all three countries women constitute the majority of informal workers, whose security of income is tenuous and working conditions extremely poor. In South Africa and Ghana, a common income source for young women is what they derive from 'transactional' sexual relations with men. And in South Africa, research participants report high levels of dependency on social protection grants for child dependents.

We subscribe to the feminist analysis of the 'feminisation of labour', which has arisen from changing labour patterns and the restructuring of the labour market in support of continued capital accumulation, which has characterised this last period of neoliberalism. While there has been a substantial increase in women's participation in paid employment in urban areas in the global South, this has been through outsourced production in either low paid, often unsafe factory work, or in home based production, which externalises many of the production costs to the producer, and their families and communities. Poor women, usually young women, also predominate in different forms of casual or contract work that have come to characterise the labour market and which carry few or no benefits and employment stability for the worker thereby reducing production costs for corporations. These trends have led to the majority of jobs grown in the Global South being deeply exploitative of workers and leaving women workers most vulnerable to sexual exploitation and harassment by male bosses, labour recruiters, and contract worker managers, as well as more at risk when 'shocks', including changes in the global macro-economic situation lead to termination of contracts.

Across all three contexts, the right to education is a common challenge for young women. In Ghana, the research finds that women generally have lower literacy levels than men, and the rates of drop out are higher for girls than for boys. When young girls marry, their male partners generally tend to object to them continuing their schooling. There is no proactive policy facilitating re-entry of girls to schools following marriage or children. In the case of India, the research finds that there is a strong correlation between household wealth, and school attendance rates, especially for girls. Only 29% of women and 38% of men have completed 10 years plus of education. Early marriage and user fees are identified as important factors informing higher drop-out rates for girls.

In South Africa, post-apartheid efforts to improve access to education, especially for the black majority, have borne some fruit, but massive inequalities persist, and pass rates for final school year examinations mask an extremely poor quality of education. Attrition levels in the last two years of secondary schooling are high (47% for girls and 53% for boys), with inadequate household income and



Bicheso Moake Comfort teaches in class, Ghana

poor prospects for employment post schooling being the major underlying factors.

A sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) perspective focuses on women's rights to health and her ability to control and make decisions about her own body, meaning that she should have the right to enjoy her sexuality as she defines it and to make decisions freely about reproduction. A SRHR focus brings in issues of maternal mortality, unsafe abortion, child marriage, access to and informed choice about contraception, sexuality education, female foeticide, gender based violence, sexual harassment and abuse.

In Ghana, prevalence rates for modern contraceptive methods are low (17%) amongst all women, with a 2009 Ghana Statistical Survey showing that 78% of young women (aged 15-19 years) have confronted problems accessing reproductive health services of government. There is a correlation between level of education, household income and contraceptive take-up. Abortion is the second most significant (15%) cause of maternal deaths in Ghana. In India, 59%-77% of married women use a method of family planning, with the contraceptive prevalence rate being lower in slum as opposed to non-slum areas. Child marriages are a particular challenge to SRHR, with 47% of Indian women aged 20-24 years reporting marriage by the age of 18 years. In South Africa, there are extremely high levels of teenage pregnancy and the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS amongst young women with 19% of women aged 15-49 years estimated to be positive. A 2008 Youth Risk Behaviour Survey of 10,000 pupils found that 40% of 13 to 19 year olds had had sex, with 13% reporting their first experience of sexual intercourse while they were under the age of 14 years. Rape statistics are the highest in the world, with one in nine women likely to be raped at least once in their lifetime in South Africa. LGBTI young women are subject to harassment, and to the practice of corrective rape and killings at the extreme. In Ghana, same sex relations are not tolerated.

A theme which emerged as a common thread across the three countries is that young women do not generally have spaces where they come together to talk about their problems, find solutions and receive support to make choices contrary to what their peer groups and family members might be pressuring them to do. Youth networks and movements are generally dominated and led by young men who assert their own interests and agendas, and public policy and even CSO interventions related to 'youth' can generally be read to address young men. The same is true of the youth wings of political parties. One of the most significant contributions a programme such as this could make, therefore, is to support spaces for young women, and nurture their voice and power at community, national and international levels.



Tshidi and Pumeza, South Africa

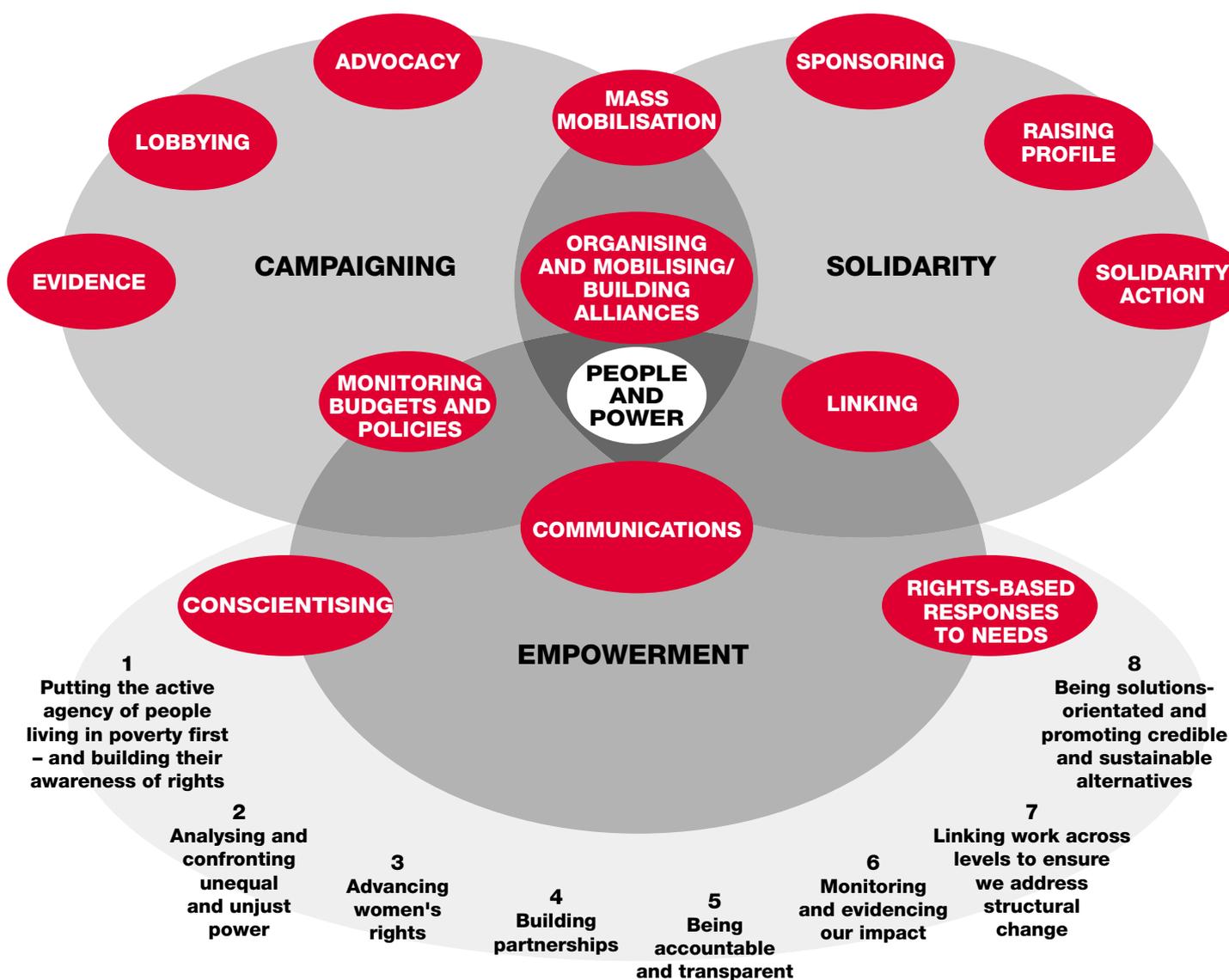
The theory of change

ActionAid's overall theory of change, set out in People's Action to End Poverty, is that:

"...an end to poverty and injustice can be achieved through purposeful individual and collective action, led by the active agency of people living in poverty and supported by solidarity, credible rights-based alternatives and campaigns that address the structural causes and consequences of poverty."

This theory of change, underpinning and driving this programme of work with young women, is expressed in Diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1: Rights-based alternatives



ActionAid works through a human rights based approach (HRBA) to development, which places at the very centre a commitment to building the active agency of people living in poverty. Our approach is one that is deeply concerned about challenging unequal power, which we see as the source of rights violations and injustices visited upon those living in poverty. We take sides with people living in poverty and challenge the abuse of power at local, national and international levels. Our approach asserts the indivisibility and interconnectedness of rights, recognising that for marginalised groups to enjoy their rights means that we must work to challenge policies and laws, as well as practices and behaviours that perpetuate inequality.

Empowerment is at the heart of our approach to change. We empower people living in poverty by supporting them to organise and mobilise in and across their communities and through social movements. We work to empower affected people by helping them build critical awareness of their situation (conscientisation) and develop platforms and capacities to communicate their perspectives to the wider world. We also work to meet basic needs in ways that support organisation, capacity building, conscientisation, and accountability of duty bearers. As our strategy says: “It is through organising... that those living in poverty can engage with formal power structures, develop sustainable relationships and create new spaces to hold governments, the private sector and other actors to account...”

Campaigning creates and harnesses people's power around a simple and powerful demand to achieve a measurable political or social change to the structural causes of poverty. Our analysis is that “many of the fundamental causes of poverty lie beyond the immediate location or borders where the effects are felt” and need to be addressed by mobilising people en masse to change national or

international policies, laws and practices. This work can embrace the lobbying of decision-makers behind the scenes and advocacy. Sometimes the challenges lie not in the policy or law but instead in the attitudes and behaviours of power holders and affected people who have internalised oppressive belief systems. Mass communications and mobilisation are therefore necessary to engage key people, challenge unjust attitudes and beliefs, and motivate others to act to bring about the needed change.

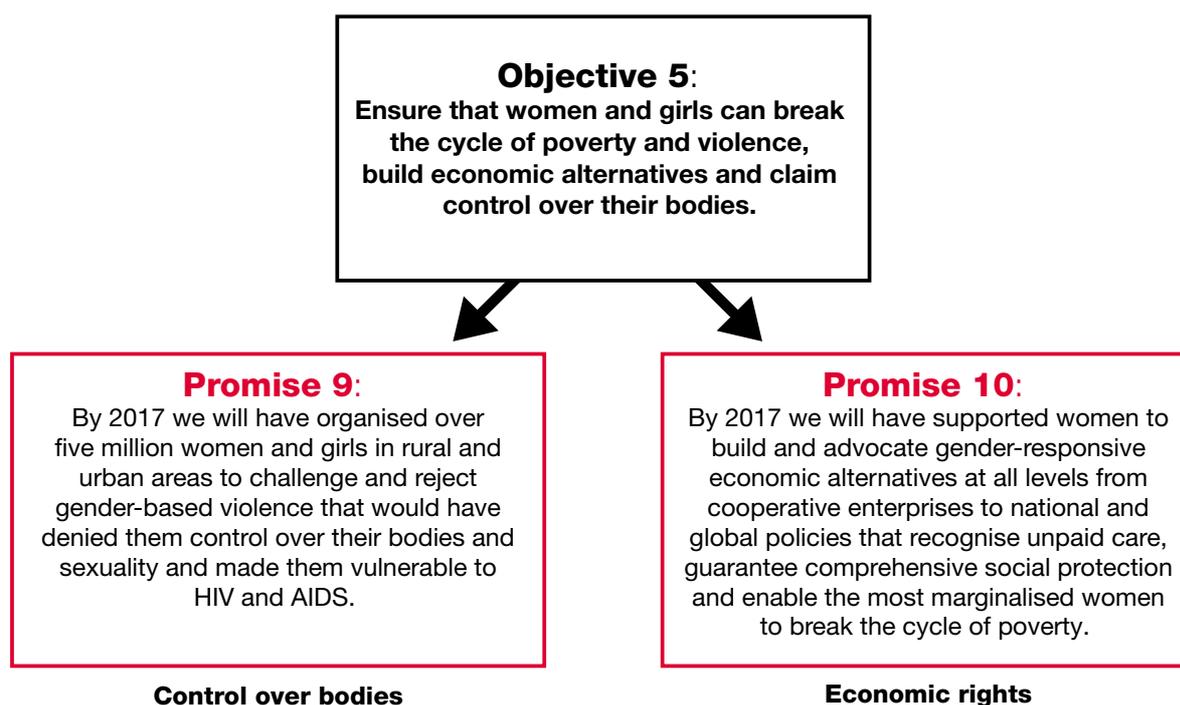
Solidarity involves people and organisations sympathetic to the struggles of people living in poverty supporting and sustaining a movement for change, with people living in poverty taking the lead. We believe that connecting people into global movements of solidarity is essential if we are to build the critical mass needed to challenge the structural underpinnings of poverty. Solidarity takes several forms: sponsoring children and donating money; linking struggles; taking action through demonstrations or letter writing; using communications to raise the visibility of an issue; and building broader alliances.

A final and significant element of our approach in this new strategy period is the focus to uncovering and consciously building **alternatives**. Through all of our programmes we will work with “people living in poverty and our partners and allies, finding and popularising new ways of doing things, challenging dominant paradigms, promoting innovation, piloting, innovating and being solutions-oriented”.

How this programme links to a wider programme of work for change

ActionAid's international strategy 'People's Action to End Poverty' has five strategic objectives and 10 change promises. This particular programme will contribute to ActionAid's Strategic Objective 5 and its change promises 9 and 10.

Diagram 2: People's action to end poverty



This programme will also speak to ActionAid's second and third strategic objectives and related change promises:

Strategic Objective 2: Democratic Governance

- **Change Promise 3:** Holding governments to account on public services
- **Change Promise 4:** Achieving redistributive resourcing of development

Strategic Objective 3: Education and Youth

- **Change Promise 5:** Transforming education for girls and boys
- **Change Promise 6:** Harnessing youth leadership to end poverty and injustice

This programme will have key linkages to two of our three multi-country campaigns on **Tax Justice** and **Safer Cities**. The tax justice campaign will look at how national governments can raise more tax revenue that can be spent on gender-responsive public services in rural and urban areas. The Safer Cities campaign will focus on gender based violence in urban spaces.

Countries each have their own Country Strategies, and related programmes and campaigns which this pilot programme on young women will need to link to, support and in turn, be supported by.

Specific theory of change for this programme:

Our theory of change for this pilot programme of work with young women living in poverty in urban contexts, built upon the scoping research, and expressed through the critical pathway below, is that to bring change in their lives we will have to support the following types of **actions** (a more complete listing can be found on page 17):

Some empowerment actions

- Organise young women into local groups, and structures and support national networks, alliances and movements (local and national).
- Building young women's awareness, consciousness and capacity through training, awareness-raising, creative and popular methodologies (local and national).
- Research/mapping of services and entitlements, the level of take-up/quality of service, challenges and problems etc. (local).
- Build greater self-confidence, esteem, and capacities for young women to recognise their own power, and negotiate with/ challenge those that have more power (mainly local, some national).
- Work with young women to identify strategies or solutions for more immediate redress of their problems (for example, how they might be able to protect themselves from sexual and economic exploitation, how they might 'cooperatise' childcare as an interim solution etc.) (local and national).
- Mobilising national networks and platforms of young women and their 'issues' into Activista and other global youth networks and movements (national and international).

Some campaigning actions

- Research to map out and appraise policies, laws and programmes and the extent to which they meet the needs and interests of young women (local, but mainly national).

- Advocacy and influencing actions to decision-makers and decision-making fora for, for example, inclusion of young women's interests in municipal plans and budgets, and the needed re-entry to school policies and supports for young women (local and national).
- Raising-awareness about the changes demanded by young women during Youth Week (local, national and International).
- Mobilise to bring young women's needs and concerns into campaigns of Activista and other global youth networks and movements (International).

Some key solidarity actions

- Exchanges and solidarity actions between groups/structures (local, national and International).
- Create dialogues/support discussions within families, communities, schools and with religious institutions (local).
- Identify and mobilise allies to join and support advocacy and campaigns efforts (local and national).
- Mobilise solidarity amongst and through global youth networks and movements, including Activista, to national level campaigns (national and international).

These actions connected across local, national and international levels will contribute towards the following **intermediate outcomes**:

- Young women recognise and challenge sexual and economic exploitation in their work
- Young women's responsibility for unpaid care work is recognised and starting to be alleviated by families, communities and the state
- State policies for the creation of decent work by the private and public sector, including through state employment schemes, and which specifically target young women for employment and produce

goods and services that are of benefit to them are initiated.

- Women have a greater sense of entitlement to their income and increased capacity to negotiate how it is spent.
- More young women understand and recognise oppressive norms, values and practices that impact their control over their bodies and ability to earn income and begin to challenge them.
- More young women are accessing appropriate, non-discriminatory, young-women friendly, SRHR information and services.
- More young women have accurate and scientific information about sex, sexuality, gender and reproductive health which they have obtained in safe young women-friendly environments.
- Young women are organised in groups, networks, alliances and movements.
- Young women are participating in and representing their interests to and in decision-making fora, mainly at local level.
- Young women, alongside key allies and stakeholders, are advocating and campaigning for progressive policies and programmes and adequate transparent budgets for young women's economic rights and SRHR.
- Allies and stakeholders recognise young women's experiences related to work, livelihoods and SRHR and support their demands for change.

These in turn will lead to the following more substantial **outcomes**:

- Young women have safe and decent work and livelihoods, and can exercise greater control over their income (outcome 1).
- Young women's informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health are increasingly realised (outcome 2).
- Young women in the areas we programme in are empowered and supported by allies and

responsible stakeholders to effect change in their own lives, their families, their communities and different levels of government (outcome 3).

And ultimately we will achieve our **impact: In three years, 5,800 young urban women living in poverty in at least 17 local urban sites in Ghana, India and South Africa have greater dignity through more economic independence and control over their bodies.**

Our scoping research tells us that change in the lives of young women across the three countries rests on integrated work to address multiple dimensions: the economic (livelihoods and work); sexual and reproductive health rights, including control over bodies; and the right to quality education that advances the interests and needs of young women. ActionAid already has a time honoured reputation for its work on the right to education, and in Ghana and India has well-established programmes of work at local and national level on education. In South Africa the work on education is emergent, but the organisation has working relations with organisations that have a strong standing and practice of work related to education rights.

This new programme of work will be explicitly focused on young women's livelihoods and sexual and reproductive health rights, a gap in ActionAid's work to date, and one which must be addressed if we are to achieve the objectives of our new global strategy. While we acknowledge that education is necessary to support young women's empowerment, this programme will not explicitly build in an education focus. This programme will instead link to and be supported by our existing education programme work.

Who we work with – which young women?

We have agreed that the programme will work to benefit **young women living in urban poverty between the ages of 15 and 25 years** in Ghana, South Africa and India. Specific young women (at least 5,800) will benefit very directly in at least 17 urban sites in these three countries.

This cross-country programme will also very directly work to support changes at national and international levels, and we believe this will start to trigger shifts in policies, laws, and institutional practices that will benefit many more young women. In addition, we will be working to challenge discriminatory ideas, beliefs and practices that oppress young women within the three target countries and possibly beyond through our engagement of global movements and platforms.

We will work directly with young women in their groups, organisations and movements, their communities, and their places of work. And where young women are not organised – which seems to be the reality in many of the communities in which we implemented the scoping work – we will work hard to organise and mobilise young women into the types of organisations and structures that will allow them to build awareness, become more conscious of their socio-economic-political location as well as their capacity to influence change, build and strengthen those capacities and skills, and increase their confidence and self-esteem to lead change efforts.

We will work with young women to identify and reach out to allies (friends) with whom they can build relations of solidarity and support at all levels. These may include young men in their communities, young people in other geographies or other classes, workers that share exploitations, older women, family members, teachers, elected officials etc.



James Oatway/Fanos Pictures/ActionAid

School children from Alexandra Township, South Africa

Impact and outcomes of the programme over three years

Impact

The overall goal (impact) of the programme is that in three years, 5,800 young urban women living in poverty in at least seventeen local urban sites in Ghana, India and South Africa have greater dignity through more economic independence and control over their bodies. All work from local to international across all countries will contribute towards this overall impact. We have selected one meta-indicator at impact level, which will allow us to monitor and aggregate impact on conclusion of the programme across the different levels and geographies for working. See critical pathway and monitoring and evaluation section of this framework for more on this.

Key terms:

Terminology that is critical to us understanding this impact follows and can also be found in the glossary:

Dignity: The term derives from the Latin *dignitas* and in human rights or developmental discourse is generally understood as a claim that comes with being human, that we are all worthy or deserving of respect. All human beings have a claim to human dignity. Human rights are a mechanism and a practice that can advance the underlying dignity of all human beings. They offer social respect in the form of goods, services, opportunities and protections to each person as a matter of rights. It is through the realisation of these rights that human beings can enjoy human dignity.¹⁰

Control over body: Empowering women to claim their right to a violence free life, safe and wanted sex and informed decision-making about reproduction.

Outcomes

This impact will be achieved if:

- Young women have safe and decent work and livelihoods, and can exercise greater control over their income (outcome 1)
- Young women's informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health are increasingly realised (outcome 2)
- Young women in the areas we programme in are empowered and supported by allies and responsible stakeholders to effect change in their own lives, their families, their communities and different levels of government (outcome 3)

The three outcomes are interlinked and mutually dependent – note how they are presented in the critical pathway. There is no hierarchy in the outcomes; any numbering of outcomes in this document is merely for our reference purposes. We believe we must work towards all three in a linked way if our promised impact is to be achieved.

What we refer to as outcome 3 related to the empowerment of young women to effect change is both a change and a means to change. What we mean here is that in and of itself this outcome is critical to the situation of young women having greater dignity. If they are organised, aware, conscious, have more capacity, and greater self-knowledge this is a change that is desirable in and of itself. However, outcome three could also be seen as a means to achieving the other two outcomes; a way of bringing about the change. This makes sense as empowerment is a critical underpinning of our HRBA.

10 See http://www.udhr60.ch/report/donnely-HumanDignity_0609.pdf and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dignity>

Key terms:

Some key terms which are critical to understanding the changes we are working towards in this programme are unpacked below and repeated in the glossary at the beginning of this framework:

Decent work: Working conditions, supported by appropriate laws, that are safe, provide for leisure time and rest, respect family and social values, involve strong and independent workers' organisation, provide adequate compensation for lost or reduced income and permit access to adequate healthcare.

Livelihoods: The means by which people – individuals and households – achieve well-being. Well-being will be differentially defined according to context and circumstances of an individual or household. Livelihoods include the acquisition of skills, and the expansion of assets and other resources, required for livelihoods (including the creation of informal work opportunities). This dimension of livelihoods is, however, not addressed in this specific programme. Livelihoods also embrace formal work and access to jobs under state social protection schemes. Finally, our concept of livelihoods embraces life skills, health and safety for women.¹¹

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: Right to a system of health protection, including health care and the underlying determinants of health, which affords people the opportunity to enjoy the highest attainable standards of sexual and reproductive health.¹²

Intermediate outcomes and actions

The three outcomes will be achieved through work on eleven intermediate outcomes, which will be advanced through specific types of actions.

We expect that countries will work on all intermediate outcomes to varying levels of depth and intensity over the life of the programme as is appropriate.

Intermediate outcome 1: Young women recognise and challenge sexual and economic exploitation in their work.

Intermediate outcome 2: Young women's responsibility for unpaid care work is recognised and starting to be alleviated by families, communities and the state.

Intermediate outcome 3: State policies for the creation of decent work by the private and public sector, including through state employment schemes, and which specifically target young women for employment and produce goods and services that are of benefit to them are initiated.

Intermediate outcome 4: Women have a greater sense of entitlement to their income and increased capacity to negotiate how it is spent.

Intermediate outcome 5: More young women understand and recognise oppressive norms, values and practices that impact their control over their bodies and ability to earn income and begin to challenge them.

Intermediate outcome 6: More young women are accessing appropriate, non-discriminatory, young-women friendly, SRHR information and services.

Intermediate outcome 7: More young women have accurate and scientific information about sex, sexuality, gender and reproductive health which they have obtained in safe young women-friendly environments.

Intermediate outcome 8: Young women are organised in groups, networks, alliances and movements.

Intermediate outcome 9: Young women are participating in and representing their interests to and in decision-making fora, mainly at local level.

Intermediate outcome 10: Young women, alongside key allies and stakeholders, are advocating and campaigning for progressive policies and programmes and adequate transparent budgets for young women's economic empowerment and SRHR.

Intermediate outcome 11: Allies and stakeholders recognise young women's experiences related to work, livelihoods and SRHR and support their demands for change.

¹¹ ILO Decent Work Agenda – see <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>

¹² UNDP and IRP (2005) Guidance Note on Recovery: Livelihood, Japan; and DFID (2010) Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy-Makers - <http://www.restlessdevelopment.org/file/youth-participation-in-development-pdf>

Key:

IO = intermediate outcome

X = this action may apply to this intermediate outcome

Possible actions	IO 1	IO 2	IO 3	IO 4	IO 5	IO 6	IO 7	IO 8	IO 9	IO 10	IO 11
Some key empowerment actions											
Organise young women into local groups, and structures and support national networks, alliances and movements (local and national)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Linking groups to trade unions, worker associations, and other appropriate formations (local and national)	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X
Building young women's awareness, consciousness and capacity through training, awareness-raising, creative and popular methodologies (local and national)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Identify and train youth leaders and peer educators (local and national)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Support young women to identify and claim social entitlements and benefits to which they are entitled (local)		X	X								
Exposure and learning visits (local)			X		X	X	X	X			X
Research/mapping of services and entitlements, the level of take-up/quality of service, challenges and problems etc. (local)		X	X			X				X	
Build greater self-confidence, esteem, and capacities for young women to recognise their own power, and negotiate with/ challenge those that have more power (mainly local, some national)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		
Work with young women to identify strategies or solutions for more immediate redress of their problems (for example, how they might be able to protect themselves from sexual and economic exploitation, how they might 'cooperativise' childcare as an interim solution etc.) (local and national)		X		X							
Building annual or more regular national forums of young women for exchange, solidarity, strategizing, movement-building (national)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Mobilising national networks and platforms of young women and their 'issues' into Activista and other global youth networks and movements (national and international)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

Possible actions	IO 1	IO 2	IO 3	IO 4	IO 5	IO 6	IO 7	IO 8	IO 9	IO 10	IO 11
Some key campaigning actions											
Research to map out and appraise policies, laws and programmes and the extent to which they meet the needs and interests of young women (local, but mainly national)		X	X			X				X	
Advocacy and influencing actions to decision-makers and decision-making fora, for example, inclusion of young women's interests in municipal plans and budgets, and the needed re-entry to school policies and supports for young women (local and national)	X	X	X			X			X	X	X
Raising-awareness about the changes demanded by young women during Youth Week (local, national and international)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Working with UNICEF and other UN agencies to create greater attention to the rights and demands of young people (international)	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X
Mobilise to bring young women's needs and concerns into campaigns of Activista and other global youth networks and movements (International)	X	X	X			X		X		X	X
Some key solidarity actions											
Exchanges and solidarity actions between groups/ structures (local, national and international)	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Create dialogues/support discussions within families, communities, schools and with religious institutions (local)		X		X	X						X
Awareness raising about the problems of young women to other interest groups/ potential allies (local and national)		X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Identify and mobilise allies to join and support advocacy and campaigns efforts (local and national)	X	X	X			X			X	X	X
Mobilise solidarity amongst and through global youth networks and movements, including Activista, to national level campaigns (national and international)	X	X				X		X		X	X

Possible actions	IO 1	IO 2	IO 3	IO 4	IO 5	IO 6	IO 7	IO 8	IO 9	IO 10	IO 11
Some key cross-cutting actions (combined solidarity, empowerment and campaigns)											
Support strategic communication platforms (media, such as radio and TV, social networking platforms, and/or video as appropriate) to link young women to one another on a sustained basis, and to communicate their experiences and demands outwards to decision-makers and allies (local, national and international)		X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Undertake action research on problems affecting young women, monitor budgets/incidents of exploitation, and publicise the results of this research through the media and other appropriate platforms, and to responsible local authorities (local and national)	X	X	X			X			X		X
Mobilising media, building a cadre of sympathetic journalists, and undertaking capacity building/training (local and national)		X	X	X	X	X				X	X

Monitoring and evaluation

ActionAid now requires that every programme has an M&E framework, which the organisation defines as *an accountability, learning and quality improvement tool that informs and guides the organisation (and others) about what is to be monitored and evaluated, and how to ensure we can track whether we are making progress, make the needed adjustments to our work, assess impact, and promote learning.*

Organisational guidance on the development of M&E frameworks outlines the following as core arguments for why a framework is needed:

- To ensure that we consistently and systematically track our work, for both accountability and learning purposes, providing evidence of the value of our efforts and investment while also getting feedback to improve our work and adjust it according to changes where necessary.
- To cost effectively and systematically gather information to meet the needs of different stakeholders (donors, supporters, board, colleagues), avoiding duplicate parallel systems.
- To provide data and analysis to support our advocacy work.
- To generate insights and learning on which strategies and approaches are more or less effective in different contexts and circumstances leading to ongoing improvement of programme quality

- To help track and take account of the changing context and ensure a timely response.
- To help us move our attention away from activities to the broader picture and long term changes we are working towards.
- To ensure we make the most effective use of time, effort and money.
- To demonstrate to internal and external audiences what our work and their support can achieve.

An M&E framework covers the following elements:

- Key changes we are working towards – impact, outcomes and intermediate outcomes
- Key indicators (quantitative and qualitative)
- Baseline data
- Numbers of people reached
- Data collection methods and tools to support the indicators and questions you have prioritised.

Additional information on M&E framework development can be found [here](#).

Programme indicators

Programme impact, outcomes and intermediary outcomes tell us what change we want to bring about, and the indicators support us to know if we are making progress. They also tell us what evidence and data we must collect to support our monitoring. We look at different indicators: meta-indicator (the impact we make), outcome-indicators (the outcome of our work) and process-indicators (the intermediate outcomes we achieve at different points in a programme/project). ActionAid does not identify indicators at action level, although this may be required by some funders we will work with internationally and/or at country level.

Meta indicator

The meta-indicator for the overall impact promised

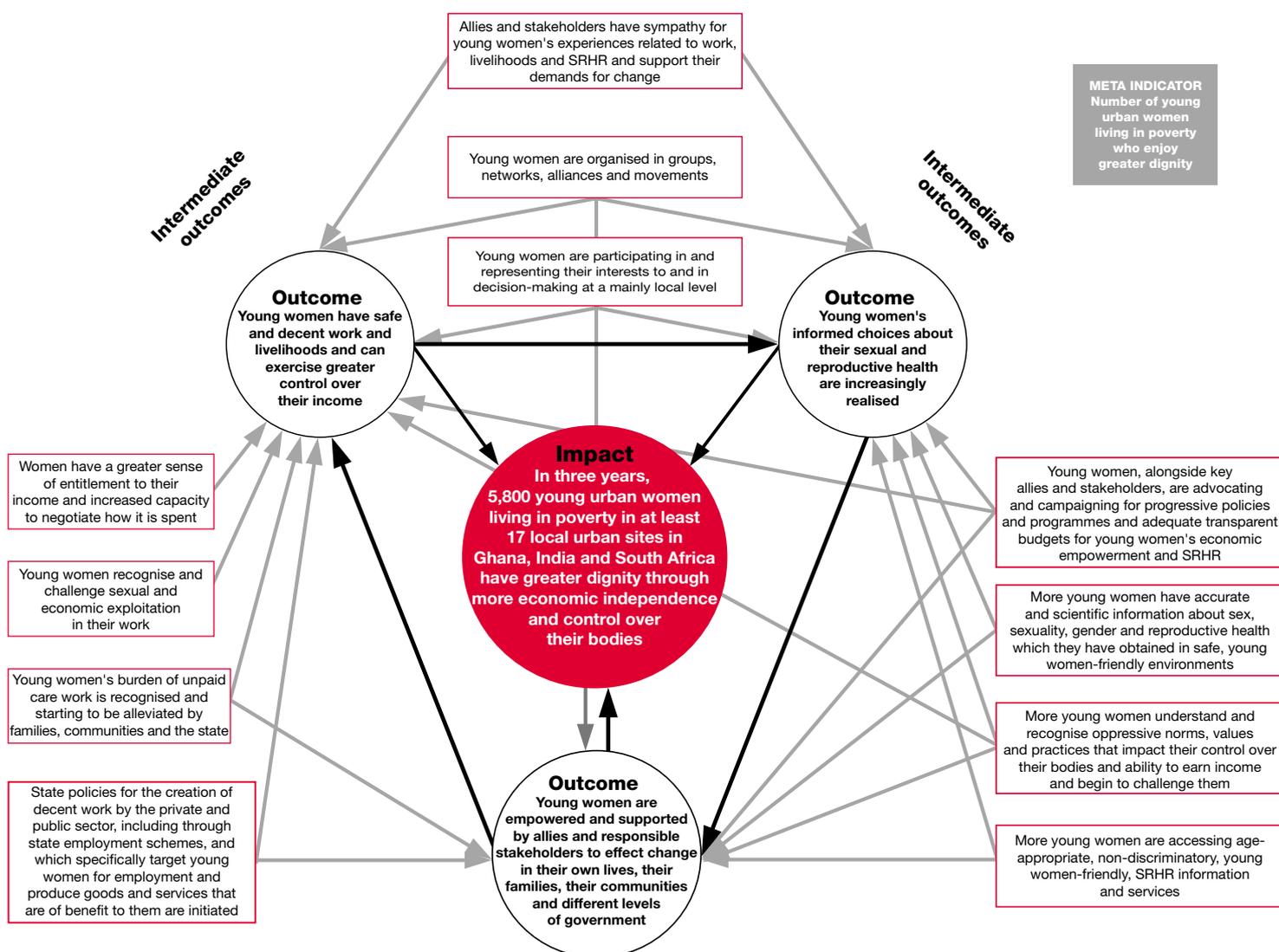
under this programme is the number of young urban women living in poverty who enjoy greater dignity. The seven outcome indicators we have selected 'add up' to this meta-indicator so that when we come to assessing impact the indicators and the data we have been gathering can tell us whether we have achieved the promised impact.

Outcome indicators

We have selected the following seven outcome indicators that are applicable to all of our contexts and which we can monitor collectively:

1. Increase in the number and quality of public goods and services (such as crèches, water, sanitation, lighting etc.) that benefit young women.
2. No of young women who report cases of sexual and economic exploitation within their watch groups, trade unions and associations, and organise to take action.
3. Number of young women accessing appropriate, non-discriminatory, young-women friendly, SRHR information and services in programme areas.
4. Young women report that they have greater knowledge about sex, sexuality, gender and reproductive health which they have obtained in safe young women-friendly environments and are better able to assert their choices.
5. Evidence of young women advocating and campaigning for progressive policies and programmes and adequate transparent budgets for young women's economic empowerment and SRHR.
6. Evidence of family and community members, civil society and business leaders, and government leaders voicing out their support for young women's experiences related to work, livelihoods and SRHR and supporting their demands for change.
7. Number of organised young women who report a greater sense of well-being, pride, happiness and greater control over their own income and resources.

Diagram 3: Intermediate outcomes and actions



Process indicators

Possible process indicators include the following:

- Number of young women's groups, networks, alliances and movements formed and sustained over time.
- Increased visibility of young women leaders and political demands of young women in mixed youth movements and alliances.
- Number of organised young women informed about their rights and entitlements, the policies and programmes of government, and with a conscious analysis of why they are excluded from power as young women.
- Number of informed and strategic lobbying and advocacy efforts undertaken by groups of young

women for policy reform, programmes and adequate budgets for their economic empowerment and SRHR.

- Increased number of municipal plans and budgets reflect some of the interests and needs of young women.
- Number of collective actions taken by young women's groups and 'watch structures' and supported by unions/associations of workers, against companies guilty of exploitative practices.
- Greater legal and regulatory enforcement actions undertaken against offending companies by government.
- Organised young women increasingly report that

they have more time for paid work and recreation.

- Young women have more disposable income for the goods they need for their reproduction.
- Targets set and adhered to for young women in state employment schemes in programme areas we work in.
- Number of local level campaigns, supported by community/church/school/government leaders, which challenge beliefs and practices harmful to young women and call on local citizens to change
- Young women report higher quality SRH services and more respectful treatment by health service providers in local clinics and hospitals in the areas we work in.
- Number of young women that secure social protection entitlements due to them.

The process indicators relate to actions and will hence vary from country to country. There are no standardised and common processes indicators in the global programme framework.

Baselines¹³

Once we have identified the changes and their indicators it is important to assess the current situation to give us a baseline against which to monitor progress. Baselines help us measure the scale and depth of change over time, with a clear understanding of what the starting point was. Baseline data must be relevant to the indicators that have been agreed.

For the purposes of this programme we will require baseline data at the following levels:

- 1. Basic statistical data related to impact (international, national and local):** A lot of data has already been gathered through the scoping work – literature survey, focus group discussions and validation workshops – undertaken in 2012. We have statistics related to violence against young women, teenage pregnancies, levels of unemployment etc.; we have mapped out relevant

policies and programmes of government and related actors; and we have a sense of the levels of youth organisation, and young women's organising specifically etc. This work has addressed the specific geographies in which we undertook the scoping and will continue to work, and the broader national context, in which we also hope to achieve some impact. This context analysis therefore already gives us a significant chunk of our baseline.

- 2. Conditions and rights of rights holders (local):**

The baseline must have systematic data and information on the conditions and rights of the young women living in poverty in the specific localities we will be working in. This should address the rights that are violated, why they are violated (the causes), the legal entitlements due to them and whether these are being enjoyed, the blockages to enjoyment of entitlements etc. It will provide a situational analysis of which rights are being fulfilled at the time, which rights are not fulfilled, and which rights should be fulfilled according to national and local legislation and policy. By assessing changes in the rights situation we can test the assumptions underpinning ActionAid's theory of change and programming approach.

- 3. Our agreed core seven outcome indicators and additional indicators you may choose (international, national and local):**

The baseline must include specific data, which describes the current situation against the indicators we have agreed to monitor progress towards our promised impact. Our programme indicators should also address our three programme areas – empowerment, solidarity and campaigning. Baseline should thus include initial levels of empowerment as perceived by young women themselves. For our campaigning and solidarity work it may include levels of support for the campaign objective, the politics of the issue, power dynamics, and the views and positions of the various stakeholders, including the

13 Much of the content here is drawn from ActionAid's guidance for the development of M&E frameworks.

perspectives and voices of young women, stakeholders, decision-makers, influential people and organisations, potential allies and opponents.

Numbers of young women we reach

At the meta-level we have promised that 5,800 young women living in urban poverty will enjoy greater dignity. We have clearly defined young women as being between the ages of 15 and 25 years. The 5,800 young women will be directly reached through our work in specific communities in at least seventeen urban localities. We acknowledge that we will impact many more young women indirectly at the local and national levels over the period of this programme. Indirect impacts at local level will be achieved through, for example, successful campaigning for young women's interests and needs to be incorporated in municipal plans and budgets, or through wide enjoyment of new SRHR services at local level. National level work to build and support networks, or strengthen movements of young people could indirectly benefit other young women through, for example, the cultivation of greater public awareness and sympathy for young women working or having greater control of the income they

earn. While we anticipate impact well beyond the target number of 5,800 this impact will be extremely difficult to track and measure and we have, therefore, not included indirect impact numbers in our total target.

Data collection methods and tools

Data collection methods depend on the indicators that have been selected, and what is needed to assess progress towards these. Particularly important is to be clear on who will gather the information, when this will take place and that they have the needed skills, resources, and knowledge to perform this role.

There are many tools and methods we can use, see Table 1 below.

Evaluation and impact assessment

A light mid-term review will be undertaken with a full impact assessment on conclusion of the three-year pilot programme. The mid-point review will be designed and implemented internally, with inputs from young women, partners, some key allies/stakeholders and programme staff working at local, national and international levels. The final impact assessment will be led by an external consultant.

Table 1: Data collection methods and tools

Quantitative	Qualitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participatory appraisal processes – such as mapping ■ Before/after surveys, questionnaires, measurements, and analyses ■ Central data sources such as government officials, departmental and agency reports and statistical records ■ Local government official statistics ■ Research papers, data from academics and university departments ■ Research papers, data from think-tanks, policy institutes, research and advocacy organisations ■ Data from trade association civic unions and business groups ■ Data from other international and national NGOs ■ Data, research papers, strategies from international donors and research organisations ■ Published articles (in newspapers, journals, magazines) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stakeholder perspectives gathered through participatory review and reflection processes ■ ActionAid Rights Registers ■ Sponsorship reports ■ Diaries ■ Field observation visits ■ Stakeholder meetings ■ Interviews ■ Group discussions, focus group discussions ■ Case studies ■ Stories of change ■ Action research ■ Citizen report cards ■ Outcome mapping ■ Participatory video ■ Timelines ■ Community mapping ■ Records of reflect facilitators

Risk analysis/management

The risks will vary greatly from context to context, and so the exercise of identifying programme risks and ways to manage or minimise these will need to be undertaken at all programme levels.

Table 2: Risk analysis

Risk	Risk management strategy	Responsible actor
<p>Backlash and resistance from those stakeholders that benefit from the oppression of young women – young men, family members, partners and husbands, managers/business owners etc.</p>	<p>The programme has already identified all of these and others as critical stakeholders that we will need to work with to build their active support, or to manage their resistance. Strategies for working with them will vary but will include awareness-raising including through local campaigns, and targeted lobbying and advocacy.</p>	<p>Young women and their organisations Partners and ActionAid staff at local rights programme and national programme levels</p>
<p>Leadership of mixed youth organisations and movements at provincial, national and international levels do not support young women's liberation efforts</p>	<p>The programme is designed to build young women's groups, organisations, networks and alliances at local and national levels. The major thrust therefore is supporting the separate organising of young women. These formations will, however, engage mixed youth organisations and platforms, such as Activista, with a view to influencing their thinking and cooperating on joint initiatives/campaigns.</p>	<p>Young women and their organisations Partners and ActionAid staff at local, national and international levels</p>
<p>The state is either too weak/dysfunctional to respond to young women's needs, and/or carries the vested interests of those with power and resists/undermines change efforts</p>	<p>The programme is designed to address this challenge through its emphasis to the three prongs of ActionAid's HRBA – empowerment of young women, building solidarity with allies and stakeholders, and influencing duty bearers (in this case and very specifically the state) for the needed structural or systemic changes. It is our belief that this will create the needed power on the side of young women, supported by allies, to press for change and deal with resistance/repression.</p>	<p>Young women and their organisations Partners and ActionAid staff at local and national levels</p>

Programme sustainability, learning and management

The first phase of the programme will run over a three-year cycle for reasons outlined in detail earlier. We hold no notion that the programme will be 'sustainable' (i.e. that the work could be sustained without ActionAid and the funding we secure to implement the programme) at the conclusion of this first phase. As discussed, this programme addresses a very new area of work for ActionAid, and indeed for civil society more generally, and a 'constituency' that is poorly organised, if at all. There is not a strong existent practice to build on, and so we will have to innovate and experiment, learning from and with the young women we work with, our civil society allies, and peers doing similar work as we go along.

The second dimension of 'sustainability' is that related to the environment. With the world speeding towards a four to five degree global temperature rise over the next few decades, a programme such as this cannot ignore the question of climate change. The programme will search, where at all relevant, to build knowledge and support actions where the livelihoods of young women and/or their ability to access basic services (such as water and sanitation) are or will be impacted by climate change. In addition, in the detailed programme design stage at local, national and international levels, countries and the IS will consider ways to minimise environmental impacts through reduced air and road travel, the use of electronic platforms and tools for programme learning and management etc.

Our major thrust from a programme 'management' perspective is to innovate and learn. This is a particularly critical dimension as this programme focus is new to ActionAid, and to civil society organisations more generally. Learning and innovation will be critical to support deepened

practice, strengthened programming, and the emergence of innovations and alternatives. At local, national and international levels we will encourage face to face and online platforms for solidarity, support and exchange between young women, with similar learning oriented platforms being encouraged for interchange between the support organisations. Solidarity linkages and exchange between young women and support organisations will also be encouraged through people to people exchange trips.

Programme management – coordination, capacity building and reporting – will be geared to identifying innovations/emergent alternatives, documenting these, and exchanging them between the implementing partners and other civil society support organisations. The programme is committed to sharing and exchanging knowledge beyond the 'boundaries of the programme', that is within the wider federation and beyond this to other civil society organisations. This 'sharing' will be achieved through ActionAid's intranet, website, other relevant internet-based platforms, and through the participation of young women and support organisations in appropriate forums, platforms, and meetings at all levels of work. The mid-term and end of programme evaluation also present important opportunities for documentation, knowledge production and exchange.



ActionAid is a partnership between people in rich and poor countries, dedicated to ending poverty and injustice. We work with people all over the world to fight hunger and disease, seek justice and education for women, hold companies and governments accountable, and cope with emergencies in over 40 countries.

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ActionAid

International Secretariat
4th Floor West
158 Jan Smuts Avenue
Rosebank
Johannesburg
South Africa

ActionAid International is registered under Section 21A of the Companies Act 1973

Telephone

+27 (0) 11 731 4500

Facsimile

+27 (0) 11 880 8082

Email

mail.jhb@actionaid.org

Website

www.actionaid.org